

Source: Dick Tagg, Manager, University of Colorado Hiking Club.

*Analysis and Comments by Tagg:* Tagg pointed out that if St. Clair had not used the register and had suffered more serious injuries, this accident might have had more serious consequence. Following the accident St. Clair is reported to have said, "I sure learned my lesson. I am taking a first aid course now, and will take the climbing course in the Spring. I don't see any reason to quit climbing altogether."

*Colorado—Maroon Bells near Aspen:* On September 3, 1952, Larry Hackstaff (20), Gordon Schindel (19), Martin Barrett and Bob Mason ascended the North peak of the Maroon Bells. The first two were students at Williams and Yale respectively and had had some climbing experience together during the summer. Hackstaff was a member of the Colorado Mountain Club. They began their climb with one rope and one ice axe. They ascended the North peak by a snow field which ended in a tongue leading to the ridge between North Maroon and Buckskin pass. Access to the ridge was more difficult than they had expected. The rope was used as an aid for the inexperienced climbers. It was midafternoon by the time the four reached the summit of North Maroon. They then began the traverse from North Maroon to South Maroon which is over difficult and bad rock.

At the low point in the ridge Barrett and Mason decided they were too fatigued and it was decided to split the party. Barrett and Mason took the rope while Hackstaff and Schindel took the ice axe and planned to complete the traverse over South Maroon and then swing around to West Maroon Pass and come down the Valley to Crater Lake. Barrett and Mason made a slow descent because of their inexperience and the actual difficulty of the descent. Night overtook them so they wisely decided to remain rather than proceed in the dark. Their descent was completed the next morning uneventfully. The other two did not return to their camp by afternoon so they drove to Aspen and alerted a search and rescue party.

Hackstaff and Schindel in the meantime ascended the summit of South Maroon and started the descent toward West Maroon Pass. When they reached a low point in the ridge they decided there was insufficient time to complete their original plan, so they descended the snow filled couloir which led from the notch to the slopes below. As they had only one ice axe it was necessary for Schindel practically to ride on Hackstaff's back. Hackstaff used the ice ax as a brake. Somewhere in the descent they lost control and gained too much momentum. They slid off the side of the snow into some rocks. Hackstaff who was underneath during the slide was badly injured. After they made a place for themselves to spend the night Hackstaff lapsed into stuporous sleep. When he awakened next morning, Schindel was gone. In retrospect what probably happened was that Schindel either during the night or at daybreak started to go for help alone. What happened is not known. He was later found dead with a fractured skull. His watch had stopped at 7:20, but it isn't known whether this represented the time of his first fall or the second one. Hackstaff was too weak and his legs too badly injured to do much. He had melt water near him. He

saw search planes over him on the two days after the accident. He displayed the white side of his jacket, and finally realizing he was not being seen he crawled from his resting place and started down the mountain. It is not known how far he crawled but he was found lying 75-100 yards below the body of Schindel. The rescue party carried them out on stretchers. Hackstaff suffered a dislocated foot, a badly contused knee, and multiple lacerations.

*Source:* Dr. Robert C. Lewis, Jr. a member of the rescue team.

*Analysis and comments by Dr. Lewis:* One can point out several mistakes that were either direct or indirect factors in the accident: 1. Attempting too difficult and too extensive a climb for inexperienced climbers. 2. Splitting party and equipment. 3. Poor judgement in choice of descent route. Dr. Lewis also felt that the failure of the search planes to locate the boys delayed their rescue, and that it would have been better to have a ground party operating in conjunction with the aerial search. Dr. Lewis, however, pointed out that fortunately the delay was not serious. He further commented that the party failed to report the intent of their climb and expected time of return. If they had, they would undoubtedly have been referred to a local climber who could have told them that there was more than the usual amount of snow on the face of the mountain, which would increase the hazards of climbing.

*Colorado—Stonewall Canyon, near Fort Collins:* On April 6, 1952, Dr. R. H. Udall fell 20 feet breaking his right leg and suffering internal injuries. The cause of the accident was a rappel point which gave way. This point had been chosen and the rope placed by an experienced rock climber. This was on a CMC trip. The point had been tested before the rappel was attempted.

*Source:* Robert W. Swartz, Safety Chairman, 1952, CMC.

*Colorado—Waterwheel Falls, Idaho Springs:* On July 5, 1952, Edward Parry, Jr. slipped when half way up a 100 foot cliff and fell head first onto rocks below. He died shortly thereafter as a result of his fall. No other data available from newspaper clippings.

*Source:* Robert W. Swartz, Safety Chairman 1952, CMC.

*Analysis:* Insufficient data in newspaper account.

*Colorado—Stanley Peak, near Berthoud Pass:* On August 10, 1952, William Eaton fell a total of 8 feet breaking a hip and suffering a brain concussion. This mishap took place on a CMC Mountain trip, and the leader felt that there was no danger at the point involved especially when the