

during the descent with the result that the climber is tripped and in all probability will fall.

The pattern of accidents has been relatively constant over the years. Rock climbers are involved in more accidents than snow climbers probably because there are more rock climbers. The descent is still more dangerous than the ascent; here such factors as fatigue, decreased attention after reaching the summit, and others such as deterioration of weather are all active.

In order to enjoy climbing, one must be in good physical condition and obey the various safety regulations and precautions. Climbs on the bigger peaks such as Rainier, or winter climbs on peaks like Mt. Washington in N. H. require extra clothing as well as proper equipment and emergency food rations as a minimum. Sleeping bags or equivalent bivouac equipment could also be included as an extra safety precaution. This past summer two Canadian climbers were assisted off Mt. Rainier which they had attempted clothed in light cotton shirts, light jackets, tennis shoes, and no emergency food or bivouac equipment. One must not underestimate the experience and equipment required to climb a major peak.

Climbers should be aware of their capacities and try not to exceed them. The accident which involved Whitmore demonstrates that one's emotional state is important and if disturbed can endanger one and/or his companions.

We climb mountains because "they are there" and for the joy of effort and accomplishment. A certain humbleness and respect for the powers of nature will permit reaching this goal safely.

### ACCIDENTS, 1955 (NOT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED)

*California, Berkeley*—On April 3, 1955 Alfred E. Young (20) was involved in an accident at Pinnacle Rock, a site frequently used for training and practice by the Sierra Club. This, however, was a private climbing party and not sponsored or supervised by the Rock Climbing Section of Sierra Club. The rock is sound, about 25 feet high, and on the day of the accident it was dry. The rappel rope had been tied to a permanent, heavy, steel anchor and had been used several times prior to the accident. When Young started his rappel, the rope had accidentally become detached from the anchor. He used a seat sling and carabiner rappel arrangement and was not belayed. Young fell about 25 feet facing the rock, and landed on the sloping ground at the base, which helped reduce the impact. He suffered a fractured ankle, two sprained ankles, and torn ligaments in the groin. Recovery has been complete.

*Source:* William Siri.

*Analysis:* (William Siri) Rappel rope was not properly anchored and became detached from anchors before climber started rappel. No belay was used. General inattention to sound climbing practice.

*California, Yosemite (1)*—On April 2, 1955 a two-man team of George Sessions (22) and Richard Calderward attempted Rixon's Pinnacle by an extremely difficult 6th class route that had been climbed once previously by another team. They were fully and properly equipped and possessed adequate skill and experience for the climb. At a questionable point a round expansion bolt was placed and Sessions then proceeded placing pitons beyond. Each piton was tested but because they were driven behind an over-