

the accident. Had the party had crampons a quick, safe descent would have been possible.

*Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park*—On July 31, Lester Reeble (45), Mrs. Al Spencer, George Lowe, and Amel Landgraf (leader), attempted to climb Chief's Head (13,579) in Rocky Mountain National Park. The group left the parking area at 6:30 a.m. and began the seven mile hike into the base of Chief's Head. The group had been scheduled to climb McHenry's Peak but after looking at the two, Chief's Head appeared the easier. They continued their ascent; arriving on the ridge between the two peaks at 1:00 p.m.

By this time, the weather began to deteriorate. To avoid the danger of lightning the party turned back. In the descent, Les Reeble was in the lead and Landgraf followed the group. They were making good progress; Les was getting a little ahead of the group. At about 1:35 p.m. Landgraf heard a large rock start sliding down the slope. It came from a point about 100 feet below him and in the vicinity of where Les Reeble was last seen. He stopped to watch for the rock to appear on the snow slope below. Instead he saw Les rolling and sliding out of control down the snow slope; then over the edge of another cliff to a snow field below. He came to rest at the base of this snow field.

Landgraf tied the others into a rope to avoid panic. They descended to the point from which Les had fallen. They found the site where a large rock had been. He evidently was using this as a hand-hold to lower himself to the lower ledge. They traversed this point and descended sixty feet to a ledge that they had used in the ascent and followed this down to where they could traverse back to where Les lay. He was dead.

They returned to the parking area. Landgraf hurried on ahead of the others to notify Park authorities. They immediately organized an evacuation team. Poor visibility and rugged terrain prevented their locating Les's body until about 1:00 a.m. They completed the evacuation the next morning.

*Source:* Amel E. Landgraf.

*Analysis* (Landgraf): "As leader of the group, I am to be held responsible for the events leading to the accident. As I look back at it now, I should have kept the group closer together during the descent. A rope was not actually needed except at the point where Les fell from. Had he or we traversed sixty feet to our left the descent would probably have been without mishap. Les Reeble was a man of good judgment. I'm certain he would not have tried anything beyond his capabilities. I feel he would not have continued his descent if he didn't think he could have done it safely."

*Colorado, Dome Peak, Boulder Canyon*—On August 7, Dan Sawtelle (17) and Larry West (17) climbed Dome Peak. They established a rappel by driving in two pitons and running a sling between them. West rappelled first successfully. Sawtelle then rappelled. As soon as he applied his weight a piton pulled out and he fell nearly vertically 75 feet to the