

in with the litter and blankets. They reached the accident scene at 4:30 p.m. to find that the victim's pain had increased, but still there were no signs of shock. However, he did complain of a grating in his left ribs. They wrapped the victim in blankets and set him in the litter. As the pain in his ribs was quite severe, one man was sent out to get a doctor. By this time, several more men had arrived on the scene.

Since the victim was fully conscious and had apparently suffered no brain injury, and could report when movement increased the pain, Blinn decided to begin the evacuation. In addition, it was getting dark, they had some rough steep terrain to cross, and the doctor's time of arrival (if one could be found at all) was unknown. The evacuation was begun at 5:00 p.m. As the first 200 feet of the route lay over steep terrain consisting of large boulders, a double belay was set up on the litter from above. At 5:30 p.m. they were nearly through the rocks when they were met by Park Rangers Tom Meier, Bob Powell, and Gene Welch, who reported that a doctor was on his way in. It was not dark, so Meier scouted ahead to pick a route. When they reached the base of the rocks (about 6:00 p.m.) the doctor arrived. The victim was examined and given a sedative. The evacuation was then continued, and the campground was reached at 7:05 p.m. A waiting ambulance took McAllister to the hospital in Twentynine Palms. Five left ribs were found to be broken. The victim seems to be recovering nicely.

*Source:* Gilbert Blinn, Ranger Naturalist, Joshua Tree National Monument.

*Analysis:* Inexperienced person climbing unroped.

*California, San Gabriel Mountains (1)*—On November 19, Joseph Highcove (18), and Walter Reber (18) left Icehouse Resort, in the San Gabriel Mountains, for a climb up Icehouse Canyon to Icehouse Saddle. From there the pair planned to climb any one of a group of peaks accessible from that location, depending on conditions. The weather was fair and windy, and the climbing conditions were ideal.

In the afternoon the boys deviated from the improved trail and set out directly up the canyon walls for the saddle. This proved to be their undoing inasmuch as meltwater from the snow that had fallen a week previously had frozen over some of the rocks. The boys were not experienced mountaineers, and were improperly prepared both in equipment and ability to cope with verglas on steep rock.

At approximately 3:30 p.m. Highcove slipped and slid down a steep chute to the canyon floor, breaking his leg. He called to Reber above, advising him that he was injured. Reber, in attempting to reach Highcove, slipped on icy snow and practically duplicated Highcove's fall, resulting in numerous cuts and bruises and a possible broken ankle.

Other hikers in the canyon heard the boys' calls and summoned help. It was approximately 7:30 p.m. and well after dark by the time the San Bernardino County Mountain Rescue Team reached the scene. After first aid was administered and the boys were made as comfortable as possible in sleeping bags, it was rather late. Inasmuch as the boys were in no danger, it was felt advisable to delay the evacuation until morning, as

the route would be quite hazardous on a moonless night. The following morning the evacuation was completed without incident and the boys removed to a hospital for treatment. Both will recover fully.

*Source:* Robert C. Gardiner, Altadena Mountain Rescue Squad.

*Analysis:* Snow and ice conditions in a mountain range that is dry nine months of the year poses a particular hazard. For the most part, local climbers have little experience under such conditions, and thus accidents are more prone to happen. In the case of this accident the boys used poor judgment in choosing their route, not realizing their lack of equipment (no ice axe or rope) and lack of experience would make a difference.

*California, San Gabriel Mountains (2), Mt. San Antonio*—David Connors (20), Daniel Ramsey (19), and Rose Marie Kennedy (18) of Pomona, California and Donna Mesell (18) of West Covina, California, left the Stockton Flats campground in the San Gabriel Mountains about mid-day on November 20, to climb Mt. San Antonio (10,800). They planned to follow the north slope of Mt. San Antonio to Baldy Notch, then up the east ridge to the summit. The weather was clear and warm and climbing conditions were excellent for the season of the year. One week previously, however, a moderate snowfall had blanketed the mountain above the 8,000 foot level. Subsequent warm days and cold nights had created an icy crust on the snow that was particularly apparent on the northern slopes, the route followed by the party.

At approximately 4:30 p.m. during the ascent the group crossed an icy slope at the 8,000 foot level, Connors slipped and plunged approximately 1,200 feet into the bottom of Coldwater Canyon. Inasmuch as the slope was slightly convex the party could not see Connors' fate. When no sound was heard from Connors following the fall, Ramsey climbed a short distance down the slope in an effort to see Connors and if need be, go to his aid. Ramsey also slipped and fell into Coldwater Canyon.

When the men did not answer their calls, Miss Kennedy hiked to the ski lift terminal at Baldy Notch and notified the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office. Miss Mesell remained at the site of the accident.

The Ontario substation of the Sheriff's office notified San Bernardino County Mountain Rescue of the situation at 5:45 p.m., and a team of twelve men was dispatched immediately to the scene. At 10:45 p.m. the rescue team advised that they had located the bodies of Connors and Ramsey. Death had apparently been instantaneous as both had impacted at great speed into jagged rocks on the canyon floor. The cause of death was tentatively established as severe head and back injuries. The team worked the remainder of the night recovering the bodies by standard mountaineering procedures and radioed that all was secure at 8:00 a.m.

It is very obvious that the party was inadequately equipped for travel over snow and ice. Proper footgear was not worn and a rope was not carried. Furthermore, they had no previous experience under such conditions, and used very poor judgment in attempting such a route. The party carried none of the ten essentials, and even had death not been an immediate result, it is doubtful that they could have survived the night in the depths of Coldwater Canyon.