

clear of the rock for the last 50 ft. When his fall stopped, he immediately sat up and shouted that he was all right but would require assistance. His left arm appeared to be broken (later found to be deeply bruised). He had assorted deep bruises and abrasions over his body, and contusions of the kidneys. He noted several symptoms of shock. The two started down immediately and were forced to pick a poor route between slabs and sloping ledges. Route finding was difficult and steps had to be retraced frequently. Roper was in great pain, had lost his glasses, and had difficulty in maneuvering. He credits Sacherer with doing a superb job of helping him down. Roper was hospitalized for 2 weeks but has completely recovered.

*Source:* Wayne P. Merry, Park Ranger, and Will Siri.

*Analysis:* Roper noted that he thought that they used extremely bad judgment both in regard to lack of equipment and in attempting to climb the thinly-covered slabs. Investigating rangers concurred.

*California, San Gabriel Mountains, Thunder Mountain.* On the morning of December 26, Michael Bressler (16), Brian Milman (17), and Richard Schuster (17) embarked on a ridge climb up the lower western slopes of Thunder Mountain. The boys did not intend to climb Thunder by this route, but only to reach some steep rocks about 500 ft. above their starting point at Manaket Flat. Climbing conditions were excellent at this time—the day was comfortably cool and fair and the route was free from snow except for some icy patches that could be avoided. The boys, however, had neither rope, ice axe, nor crampons and had little experience in such terrain. Earlier in the day they had been advised by a forest ranger to avoid the snow patches because of icy conditions. In any case, Bressler attempted to cross a fairly high angle snow slope. He immediately slipped and fell over the brink of an 80-ft. cliff. He landed some seventy-five feet from the base of the cliff and was dead by the time his companions reached him. The cause of death appeared to be a basal skull fracture. His body came to rest approximately 75 yds. from a nearby chair-lift line. Employees of the ski concession and Forest Service personnel evacuated the body with no difficulty.

*Source:* Robert Gardner, Altadena Mountain Rescue Squad.

*Analysis:* Obviously the boys used very poor judgment and showed little knowledge of good mountaineering practice.

*California, San Gabriel Mountains, Mt. Baldy.* Early in the morning of December 14, James Northrup (19) and two male companions attempted to climb Mt. Baldy. Inasmuch as the lift was not yet in operation, the group decided to hike up the lift line to the upper terminal, where the trail (covered with snow at this time of year) left for the summit. The men were warmly dressed except for inadequate footgear. They carried neither ice axe nor rope and were apparently unaware of the icy conditions that prevailed from the 7500-ft. level to the summit. The day was ideal for climbing. Near the top of the ski lift the slope steepens abruptly and most climbers depart from the lift line and follow lesser slopes to the upper terminal. Northrup and party, however, chose to climb directly