minutes Joe Donohue, the representative at the cliffs of the owners of the property, arrived with several climbers and first aid equpiment. Several people worked at giving Geisser mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for almost an hour and packing a gaping hip wound. However, it was observed by all present that Geisser showed no signs of life from the moment he was first found. He had fallen over two hundred feet and probably died instantly. Dr. Hans Kraus was on the scene within ten minutes after the accident and examined the body, which was later taken to the highway to be picked up. The local police were notified and Dr. Kraus pronounced Geisser dead.

*Source:* David B. Ingalls.

*Analysis:* (Ingalls) It is probable that either Geisser tied a false knot in attempting to tie the bowline-on-a-coil, or else tied it correctly but loosely and without securing the end with an overhand knot, in which case it might have worked loose in the chimney on the fourth pitch. Climbers should be aware that it is often very difficult to observe whether a bowline-on-a-coil has been tied correctly unless one has tied it himself or seen it being tied.

While the individuals involved in this accident were not negligent toward each other in any regard, it is generally best for the leader to see that things are in order with the other members of the party and with his belay before starting to climb.

*Wisconsin, Bascom Hall (University of Wisconsin).* On 26 June at 1:30 a.m., Charles Cary (20) began climbing Bascom Hall, the administration building of the University of Wisconsin. His companion, Delbert Marshall (19) remained on the ground. Both were experienced building climbers, they had already made two ascents that evening. Cary was unroped, as there was no place to put in protection for the leader. He had climbed the building from this side previously, but was attempting a harder variation. The rock on this building consists of a weathered limestone offset in a concrete base. The limestone blocks are raised an inch from the matrix, but crumbling has reduced this relief considerably.

Cary was about 30 feet up, traversing over a doorway when he came off, probably due to a crumbling handhold. Marshall was not in a position to see the fall, but he found that Cary had fallen over backwards and had struck a concrete abutment near the doorway. He felt a faint heartbeat and went for help, but Cary was pronounced dead of a broken neck and severe concussions at 2:15 a.m.

*Source:* Alan Rubin.

*Analysis:* (Rubin) Building climbing is a branch of the sport quite common on many campuses. With the many risks inherent in it, it is surprising that so few major accidents have occurred. Cary was a good rock climber and had made many ascents on University buildings, including Bascom Hall. He realized the treacherous nature of the rock and the difficulty of his variation, but felt that he was capable of making the climb. He had made two other climbs that night, but did not appear unusually tired and rejected Marshall's suggestion that they not attempt the climb.

A top rope (sent up via a fire escape) would have made the accident trivial, but Cary believed that all ascents should be made as leads even if no protection was possible. He had already made several severe building and rock climbs with inadequate protection and had ignored warnings as to the outcome if he continued the practice.

It is possible that a spot could have broken his fall sufficiently to save his life, though at a risk to the spotter. However, Cary had not requested a spot and Marshall was in no position to give him one when the fall occurred. Had he fallen two feet farther left, Cary would have landed in shrubbery and probably lived, but falling climbers are unable to choose their landing spots.

Other than not climbing buildings it is hard to prevent such accidents, unless the climbers are willing to take certain precautions, even if such precautions may reduce the "purity" of the climb. Only when certain climbers have the sense to take basic precautions will such accidents be eliminated.

*Colorado, South Maroon Peak.* On 27 August, Peter Isto (51) and George Slahorek were descending South Maroon Peak. According to Dr. Slahorek, Isto slipped on wet rock and fell about 100 feet suffering a possible brain concussion. Leaving the victim on a rocky outcrop, Slahorek descended down the snowfield to Crater Lake reporting the accident to some campers who called the Sheriff, Lorraine Herwick, in Aspen. The call was received about 5:30 p.m. When Slahorek left Isto he was alive and rational. When rescue party reached Isto the following morning he had fallen approximately another 50 feet into a crevasse below the outcrop to his death. The crevasse was formed by the receding snow from the rock. The drop-off was vertical.

*Source:* Alfred Braun.

*Analysis:* Due to the slippery conditions of rock and snow, climbers should have been under belay. Neither one of them had an ice ax or crampons. They did have a rope.

*Colorado, South Maroon Peak.* On 15 August, Frank Pretzel (44), Herbert Ungnade (54), Robert Day (42), and William Martin (22), set out from camp to climb South Maroon Peak (14,158) near Aspen, Colorado, by the west ridge. A fifth man, Donald McEachern (29), accompanied the party from camp to the base of the ridge, but did not climb because he was recovering from a dislocated shoulder. The previous day the five had backpacked approximately 13 miles from Snowmass Falls Ranch to their campsite; all were from Los Alamos, New Mexico. Plans were to climb the peak, pack out, and drive at least part way back to Los Alamos that day. Ungnade had climbed since his youth in Germany and was quite experienced; Pretzel had climbed for at least 10 years and was an excellent rock climber; Day took up mountaineering seriously about four years previously, but had years of outdoor experience prior to that; Martin was a relative newcomer to mountaineering. The party carried three ice axes, one stout stick (for Martin) and two ropes.

The party left camp at 6:00 a.m. and climbed to the base of the ridge