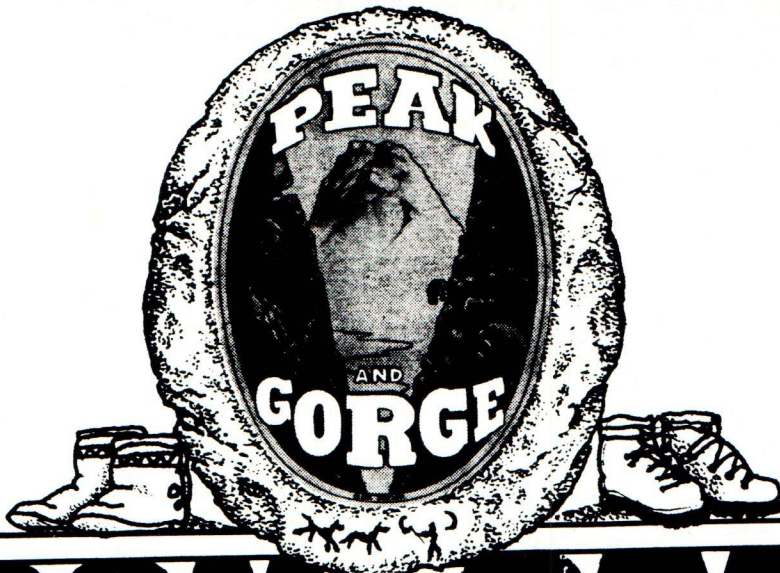


THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter-sierra club

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1987 ISSUE #23

THE CHAIR'S CORNER

This summer has held a number of fun and challenging trips, and I hope you have had opportunities to enjoy several of them. A few trips remain for the early fall yet, so come on out and climb. For those of you planning ski trips or coastal hikes and climbs for the winter schedule, note that I need your writeups by about November 1 to be able to meet the Bonanza schedule editor's deadline the 8th. I would also like to point out that the section's pool of active leaders is declining somewhat due to the usual sorts of attrition and burnout factors, so our future trip schedules may get a bit lean unless each of us makes the effort to qualify to lead trips (if need be), lead at least one trip each year, and contribute to the recruitment and training of new members and leaders.

Ever wonder where you could dig up background information for a trip to the Uintas? Looking for a natural history of the St. Elias region? Other members of the section may well have books that might help - if we only knew about them. At the May meeting, Ed Vandercook volunteered to keep a card index of those books we were willing to loan out in the section, and the fall and winter seasons are probably the best time to build up the index as we do more reading and less hiking. A subject index will be most useful, so be sure to include cross references about the regions and topics discussed (remember, you have read the book, not Ed) and some idea of whether the information is dated. Here's an example:

Title: Hall of the Mountain King
Author: Howard Snyder
Region: Alaska/Canada
Topics: Leadership and safety

Date: 1967
Owner: Douglas Joy, 452-7126
Range, Peak: Denali, McKinley

Expeditions - equipment and food

For that listing, I used the expedition's date, since that's how old the information is. For regions, let's use: U.S.-West, U.S.-East, Alaska/Canada, Mexico/S.America, Asia/Africa and Europe. Range and peak should be obvious, but you will have to describe the topics depending on the book's contents. To suggest a few classes of topics: Leadership and Safety (analysis of accidents, trip success or failure), Training (manuals teaching skills and techniques), Natural History (geology, flora and fauna, archeology), Guidebook (route descriptions), Expeditions (gives information helpful for planning and organizing an extended trip), Expeditions-Early (recounting the exploration of an area), Aesthetics

(humor, poetry, essays). Please use subtopics like "Natural History - geology" or "Guidebook - rock climbs" to clarify the book's categories, and only list those topics that it treats with some depth. While we want to be able to find things, we also want to keep Ed's task manageable. Be sure to include your name and phone number so a borrower can reach you to arrange the loan. If you have comments or suggestions, bring them up at a meeting or call.

Here's looking forward to seeing you all soon, on trips or at a meeting... D.Joy

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Sep 12-13 Middle Fork of Feather gorge scramble. Class V, challenging. John Schwind, 678-2942 (Dixon) for details.
- Sep 15 Summer slides. Bring goodies - both photos and food - to share. 7:30 pm at Doug Joy's, 570 39th, between McKinley and H at the lamp post.
- Sep 19 Last Chance Bridge gorge scramble in North and Middle Forks. Details: see Bonanza and call leader, Fred Fischietto, 985-7587 (Folsom).
- Sep 20 Granite Chief, Needle (cl.3), Lyon. Via Squaw Valley tram, \$7. John Sarna 429-8024 or Ellen VanFleet 927-9288. (Day Hikes trip)
- Sep 20 Pyramid Peak class 2, 3D hike via Rocky Canyon. Meet Arboretum 7:00am. Leader: Roger Barr 451-1928 (6-6:30pm)
- Sep 26 Duane Bliss, Genoa Pks; cl.2 (Tahoe). Al Gutowsky, 457-3338. Needs assistant.
- Sep 26 Markleeville Pk. Leader: Ed Vandercook, 482-0113; Terry Wenner assists, 444-7464. Contact leaders early as date may be moved to avoid conflict with Al's trip! Car camp planned to accomodate Hawkins attempt.
- Sep 27 Hawkins. Leader: Terry Wenner, Ed Vandercook assists. See notes regarding Sep. 26 Markleeville trip and be sure to call them early as date may change!
- Oct 3 Snow Mountain and Marlette. Leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.
- Oct 4 Phipps Peak & nearby scrambles. Doug Joy 452-7126 before Oct 1. Need assistant.
- Oct 10-12 Chapter issues conference at Clair Tappan. See Bonanza for agenda and reservations information.
- Oct 10-12 Duffer Pk, Calico Pk (NV); cl.2-3. Bill Hauser (408)243-4566 or Howard Steidtmann 483-4597.
- Oct 17 Snow Valley Pk cl. 1, 3D hike. Arboretum 7:30am. John Sarna 429-8024 (day hike).
- Oct 20 Open meeting: let's chat, tell tales, and kick around some ideas. Bring drinks and snacks to add conviviality. At John and Kathy Sarna's: 15 South, exit onto Florin west. At first signal turn right on Greenhaven. 7 or 8 blocks to Park Vista Circle on left, turn in and look for 12 Park Vista and John's red Honda Civic. 429-8024.
- Oct 22 Annapurna slide show with Ariene Blum, fundraiser. See Bonanza.
- Nov 1 Winter trips writeups due to me. Doug Joy, 570 39th, Sacramento 95186. Call if I can help you make this deadline.
- Nov 17 Section meeting: Boris' Ojos del Salado slides. Don't miss this one! At Boris and Camille's: US 50 East, exit left onto Cameron Park. At stop sign before Arco station turn left onto Country Club. After 1/2 mile turn right on Royal, then 2 blocks to Amethyst Lane, 3276 Amethyst. Phone 1-677-4600. Bring snacks to share.
- Nov 21 Intermediate ski trip. See Bonanza or call Fred Fischietto 985-7587 (Folsom).
- Dec 15 Holiday potluck dinner, 6:00 pm. Bring a dish to share and utensils. At Doug Joy's, 570 39th between McKinley and H. 452-7126.

Private Trips - Looking for Participants

We are interested in several of the following trips for the next few months:

- (1) Sweetwaters, South Sister and Desert Creek Peak with weekend car camp.
- (2) Sonora Pass to Walker Pk: 4-5 NAS peaks via weekend backpack.
- (3) Elwell, Wade, Old Man Mt via day hikes.
- (4) Crown Point via weekend backpack.
- (5) Dardanelles, Dardanelles Cone with weekend car camp.

Please call if you would like to join. Boris and Camille Nahlovsky 1-677-4600 or Rex Smith 443-1312.

September 26 Markleeville Peak (9417):

A peak climb especially for those new to peak climbing and for those old hands who'd enjoy a more leisurely outing with many comforts available. Options include a car camp the night before, a soak at Grover Hot Springs and a superb dinner at Sorenson's Retreat. (Yes, there are entrees for herbivores.) Another option is to stay over Saturday night for the hike on Sunday (see below). Leader: Ed Vandercook, 482-0113. Assistant: Terry Wenner, 444-7464.

September 27 Hawkins Peak (10, 023)

This peak is just about five miles north of Markleeville Peak, so it gives a different view of the Hope Valley-Carson Pass area and the surrounding peaks. It has an interesting knob on top. Leader: Terry Wenner, 444-7464. Assistant: Ed Vandercook.

IT'S A LONG WAY UP PYRAMID PEAK, EVEN IN LATE JULY

I've been wanting to bag Pyramid Peak (9983') for quite a while, having seen this prominent landmark from many different vantage points around Lake Tahoe. The allure of this objective instantly doubled when I found out it was the highest point in the Desolation Wilderness. Others must have been similarly enchanted (eg. Marilyn J. mentioned her long-standing desire for a first ascent), because a horde of 24 (presumably) dedicated peak-baggers converged on the Lyons Creek Trailhead (6700' high) on Wrights Lake Road to test our mettle against the rock. We ranged in age from Roger M of 75 years, with 4 prior successes beginning in 1962, to Lori D of Davis born 3 years after his first ascent. She had chosen this potentially strenuous climb of Pyramid as her first Sierra Club hike, and indeed proved to be as capable a hiker as her friend Rifka O., who was doing her last climb in the Sierras before returning home to Israel.

Ellen VF led us the first 4 miles along a trail abutting Lyons Creek all the way to Lake Sylvia (8100'), a picturesque spot whether looking up (to the Pyramid-Price Ridge) or down on the lively, small trout feeding in the lake. While most enjoyed these views, there soon ensued an lively discussion of how to handle our first major impediment, getting to a saddle lying about 400' up and to the south. The slope was congested with scree, as if a giant troll had pushed a great mass of boulders through the saddle from the other side, most passing through a tight chute near the top. As soon as I let it be known that a few scouts could be of substantial help in picking out a route, thirteen volunteers dashed away; naturally, each tried a different route up, looking like ants swarming up to the top of a sand heap. Fortunately, assistant leader (Ellen) took the route generally described in Schaffer's Tahoe Sierra book, following the lake-shore around to the bottom of the boulder field before gaining altitude. Halfway up, she shouted, 'EEEEAAHHA' (translation: it has a trail), and the ten of us left waiting by the lake managed to find and (often) follow this vague "trail".

The last ones up had a short reprieve before all started up a long, long steep ridge toward the summit. The obvious disparities in ability first divided us into two medium groups, then four small groups, then many individuals that stretched like a snake with a growing head of people on top. The tail, consisting of the slower climbers, eventually did catch up to the head, where a number of boy scouts were laid out amid the scattered remains of our party. Remarkable, I thought, as I counted all 24 on the peak!

What an wondrous day to be atop Pyramid: Lake Aloha directly below, Price Peak a short distance away (it needed a register as of 7-12-87), Agassiz, Dicks, Tallac, Ralston, Freel, Round Top, all in splendid array. The scenery was but one pleasure all indulged in, and others were found by others as the time easily passed.

In due time, with our primary mission complete, we retraced our steps down the ridge. As I accompanied an oft-seen hiker named Theresa D., who slowed appreciably on the steep downhill, the others ran down somewhat faster, regrouping on the saddle overlooking Lake Sylvia. Ellen then held everyone in check until she heard us coming, at which time they all escaped downward, a few taking to the waters of Sylvia for a swim. This looked wonderfully refreshing as the last of us alternately slid and hopped our way down the talus (approx. a 45 degrees slope).

When we finally got within shouting distance of those now impatiently waiting at the lake, they again began snaking their way down the trail, leaving Ellen and the worn and weary (including myself) to ramble slowly down the trail.

Dusk soon came upon the stragglers as we neared the cars. I was surprised to hear a woman (not of our party), who sat atop a boulder enjoying the dimly lit Lyons Creek, comment that hundreds of hikers had recently walked by. Somehow though, that didn't disturb the doe that soon casually trotted across the path just ahead of me as I finally closed in on the two vehicles that still waited to carry the tail-end back to civilization.

My thanks to Bill W., Marilyn J., Phil S and Roger E. for helping assure that the less experienced stayed on route and to Ellen VF for being almost everywhere else while I pulled up the rear.

Summary: Pyramid (9983') on July 25, 1987, from where Lyons Creek crosses Wrights Lake Rd (4 mi from Hwy 50), 12 mi round trip, 3400' gain, Cl 2 with some boulder hopping.

Leader: John Sarna



Agassiz, from Lake Sylvia
drawing by Oscar Balaguer

MT. MENDEL (13,691) & MT. DARWIN (13,830) FOURTH OF JULY WEEKEND

From Bishop, 168 takes you to our trailhead above North Lake. Two trails diverge, the one on the right heading west to Piute Pass, and our trail heading southwest past Lower and Upper Lamarck Lakes and then on up to Lamarck Col. At the col we could look down into Darwin Canyon and across to both Mendel and Darwin. The former is an impressive conical mass of granite, the latter a higher peak with a broad base rising to a wall topped with a long ridge. We picked our ways down the talus slope to a lake where we set up camp. The next morning two groups of four left camp at 6:15.

Mt. Darwin

This was truly a mixed climb—talus, snowfields, couloir, rocky ridge and summit block. Doug Joy led Ed Vandercook, Debbie Bulger, and myself up Roper's "Route 2." The steep snow couloir was challenging to all, but exhausting to Doug who hacked out steps with an ice axe up most of the couloir. At the top of the notch he was chilling and feeling nausea, headache and fatigue. Lemon drops, warm clothes, gatorade and rest brought him around, and the group headed up the ridge. One section of the ridge was especially narrow, and thus exposed, and that spot aroused the climbers' anxiety levels as evidenced by expletives in one case, and clenched jaws in others. At the broad summit plateau we gazed at distant horizons, took pictures and looked for the register while Doug sought the class 3 chimney to the top of the pinnacle which stood apart from and a few feet higher than the plateau. He succeeded and I later joined him. The register was on the pinnacle.

After absorbing this peak experience for some time, we headed down in good spirits and with good energy. It was at the notch, at the top of the couloir when packs were resumed, that the ordeal began. The first climber descended some distance and waited. The second climber, feeling weary and unsure, required a belay. As the group descended, the second climber, due to fatigue and loss of confidence, required help, either with a belay or with the passing of a pack. The efforts of the first and third climbers to coach the second climber's descent were futile, but Doug succeeded with his clear, rational directions.

Once down the couloir, the group stepped down the steep, long snowfield and began to negotiate the mixed terrain of snow and talus on the way back to camp. The second climber, now even more weary, moved slowly. The first and third climbers, feeling their efforts rejected moved on ahead, keeping in sight and hearing range. As darkness came on, Doug told the two to make their best time back to camp as he accompanied the tired climber, making a plodding journey of it, arriving two hours after the two who went ahead, assisted by two from the Mendel party and greeted with ready hot water for their dinners.

Terry Wenner

Mt. Mendel

The plan was to climb the third class northeast ridge—1200 feet of "easy" rock climbing on what looked and proved to be clean, solid granite. Careful perusal of the ridge the previous day yielded a couple of possible routes matching the guidebook description. Heading for the most likely of these, we (Preston Andrews, Anne Adams, Roger Rollins, and myself) quickly crossed a couple hundred feet of talus and arrived at the base of the ridge below its N face. Roger briefly checked out the NW face of the ridge, which had previously been obscured from our view, to confirm that the route did not start over there.

Some easy class 3 scrambling quickly brought us to a spot requiring a slightly dynamic and exposed move to get into a 10 foot crack. Preston opted to take a belay from Anne here and to haul the packs. An old sling above the crack testified to someone having used this as a descent route. This little obstacle overcome, we joked about Roper's idea of "Class 3" and continued to follow the line of least resistance, generally up and right on the NW face, then following ledges up and left until we were several hundred feet above the starting point. A few ducks (!!) indicated someone else had been this way. The climbing in this section was never too difficult, but had considerable exposure, and neither Anne nor I were too thrilled about having to down-climb it later.

Route finding now became a time-consuming problem. Some beautiful dihedrals above were guaranteed to be hard fifth class, and there was no obvious line in sight. Preston looked long and hard and finally returned to lead us around the corner to our left onto the SE face, where we stopped to rope up again. I belayed Preston as he led up over some flakes and some face-climbing which approached 5.6 in difficulty. Above this point we enjoyed more third class scrambling for a couple hundred feet which brought us just below the ridge line.

I scouted one direction while Preston tried another until he directed me over to where he was. I found him standing in a notch on the ridge. All I could see was a curving crack that looked way beyond my ability to climb. "How did you get up there?" "I prusiked." "Very funny, now how did you get up there?" "No kidding, I prusiked." Turns out he'd played cowboy and lassoed a horn just like Clarence King once did.

Once we'd all joined Preston in the notch, ledges led to another notch where our ridge joined the main summit mass. The top appeared to be about 3-400 feet above, with no apparent difficulties. Roger started ahead to scout the route, while we discussed our options. The summit was still a good hour away, and it was already 2:00. Anne & Preston had fresh memories of a cold, unplanned bivouac from their ascent of Darwin last year, and no desire for a repeat experience. Not wanting to return the way we'd come, it seemed like we could easily spend 6 hours finding a way down, and so decided to forgo the summit.

Preston found a way down into a deep, prominent gully that cuts into the SE face. One rappel near the bottom of this put us on the glacier two hours after we turned around. Oh well, had time for the summit after all. No way of knowing it then. This descent may have been a variation of the east face route, and could certainly be used for an ascent, although there is some loose rock. Even though we didn't make the summit, all agreed that it had been a fantastic day of rock climbing.

While Roger headed back to camp, the three of us waited to watch the Darwin party make its way down the couloir. Once they'd safely made the bottom, we headed back for camp and dinner.

Being well acclimated the next day, we quickly gained Lamarck Col and eventually the trailhead. A great Mexican dinner in Bishop filled empty stomachs for the long drive home.

Charlie Smith

JULY 25-26, 1987

Leaving Sacramento on Friday night, Rex Smith and I made the newly posted, 65 mph I-5 drive to Redding, then headed west on Hwy. 209 to Douglas City where there is a good BLM campground. After a good breakfast in Weaverville, we drove north on Hwy. 3 to Swift Creek trailhead where there was ample parking and a good, signed trail. After crossing a gently arched bridge, we began the climb to Granite Lake. While resting and idly chatting along the trail, we were surprised and astonished to witness a 20' high, 2' wide rotting tree trunk crackle and topple over right in front of us! The rest of the pack in was accomplished in due order, and we set out for Seven-Up Peak.

Passing through the most impressive stands of cow parsnip that I have ever seen, the trail led to a pass, and the signs, Marked "Seven-Up Peak Trail," almost led us to believe that a trail went to the top of this peak. We quickly found out otherwise, and then headed cross-country up through open timber and snags to the summit. At one point, I was able to take a picture with Rex on the summit crags with a dramatically snowed-in Mt. Shasta in the background. We signed in the register and I had Rex take my picture with a diet cherry 7-Up (of course) soda in hand. Back to camp without event, we retired fairly early despite Rex's campfire and a modest stack of wood.

The next morning we headed directly for the crag of Gibson Peak, the high point of the Sierra Club's "red Trinities." This peak is visible from parts of the trail coming up to Granite Lake, and the sight of it fostered some doubt even as to whether it could be climbed (class 3 style, as we were without a rope)! Luckily, we sought to give it a try, and we quickly ascended a class 3 gully just to the left of the high point, replete with a chockstone as big as a small car! A Mazamas register placed in 1973 was found. We placed a book as the one there already was full or nearly full. The views from both peaks were SPECTACULAR and the presence of Mt. Shasta was a bonus addition to these magnificent vistas. Back to camp and back to the car by about 2:30 p.m. made for an early return home for my favorite weekend yet this season!

Pete Yamagata

ATTEMPT ON VOLCANIC RIDGE (11,501') AND GABBRO PEAK (10,960+') AUGUST 1-2, 1987

Leaving Friday night, Rex Smith and I enjoyed a nice dinner at Juanita's at Holbrook Jct. on U.S. 395, then drove south to camp at Mono Lake. After breakfast at the Stove, where I had a "Sierra Sunrise" breakfast (up to about 5.95), we drove to the USFS visitor center to find that the private vehicle ban began at 7:30 a.m. (I thought that it was at 8:00 a.m.!) with the last bus leaving Devils Postpiles at 6:15 p.m. This upset my plans and we really scrambled to catch the first bus leaving Mammoth Inn at 7:45 a.m.! Walking quickly up the trail, we looked for "the road" that the ranger girl had said that "we couldn't miss" leading to the Minaret Mine. After discovering that there was no distinct road, we continued to Minaret Lake which we reached in three hours (signs say 8 miles). I chose to forgo the peak, and Rex went on to climb one high point. He was back in two hours, giving us lots of time to catch the bus out. A few miles up the trail from the Muir Trail junction lay dozens of trees leveled by some cataclysm. I was unable to determine just where the possible slide had come from, as the patterns of trees fallen and standing and nearby possible avalanche slopes just made no sense to me.

We had dinner at the Swiss Cafe where I had knockwurst (6.95) with sauerkraut and vegetables and Rex had the fish dish. Both were good. We drove to watch the sunset from Lookout Mtn. (about 5 miles of dirt road from 395), and then drove to the Mono Lake visitor center and camped nearby for an early start Sunday.

Driving to Green Lake trailhead in the morning, we headed up the trail past Green Lake and East Lake to discover the trail to a mine near Gabbro Peak. On the way we had met Dave and Christina Vandershaf, Peggy Grow, and Al Schonnemann who had all just spent a few days backpacked in the area. The cl. 2 ridge to Gabbro went nicely, and a register placed by SPS'er Barbara Lilley and company in 1979 was found. We declined to climb Page Peak(s) as the guidebook was a bad lie and we already had 3,000'

gain behind us and wanted to get home at a decent hour. We were back in town by 8:30 p.m. after a sad, sad look at the recent and still smouldering Woodfords fire which burnt both sides of Hwy. 88 and extended quite a ways up the canyon wall. As Smokey the Bear says, "WHAT DOES IT TAKE???"

Pete Yamagata

FREEL PEAK (10,881') FROM FOUNTAINPLACE

AUGUST 8, 1987

Eager to find a new way to climb Freel, Rose Certini and I scouted out the road to Fountainplace and found that Oneida Street turned into a good, paved, one lane road climbing to approximately 8,000 feet elevation. A locked gate with many signs blocked further travel but a foot path led around the gate, and despite the signs, we were told later by the Forest Service that this was meant to block out the cars. We countoured around the signs and gate and hit the road where, hopefully, it was USFS land. We continued along this road for a short ways where it hit a meadow and the route went on as a trail on the other side. The footpath disappeared in a clump of brush, and we decided to head directly up the steep, sandy SW slopes of peak (or bump) 10,562'.

After an eternity of work, we reached the ridge and proceeded over the first peak to confront a large gendarme-like crag sitting directly on the ridge. A sandy, class 2 route was followed around the right side and this brought us to a view of the antennaed summit. We found a register placed by SPS last year and enjoyed the hazy views.

Returning from the ridge, we gambled on a scree slope that led down to another road visible from above leading back to Fountainplace. It was steep and sandy-slippery. After a long ways down we worked through a jumble of downed, avalanched trees and finally back to the car. I thought that I would prefer the dirt road that climbs out of High Meadows despite the additional gain, although this may be psychological due to the worry about the signs.

Pete Yamagata

PHIPPS PEAK (9234')

AUGUST 16, 1987

Rex Smith and I left town by 7:15 a.m. and headed up U.S. 50 and Hwy, 89 to Meeks Bay trailhead where parking is rather haphazard and scarce (private roads and cabins everywhere). We started by 9:50 a.m. and proceeded with a quick pace up the blocked road and then into the wilderness to pass Lakes Genevieve, Crag, Shadow, Stony Ridge, and Rubicon. We reached Phipps Pass and headed directly along a ridge to gain the summit at 1:20 p.m. The view was nice, with Tahoe partially visible and views of many OGUL peaks. We placed a register and started down at 2:00 p.m.

My knees began to ache probably due to the fast pace and the approximately 8 miles and 3,000' gain to the peak. Coming back seemed to affect me more than many other equally long hikes. It actually took us longer to return than to climb the peak! But we made it back, and drove home on I-80. Rex had a large tostada (3.95) at Frederico's near Auburn reminding me of the huge one at Las Montañas in Mammoth!

Pete Yamagata

ROUND TOP—EAST RIDGE ROUTE

An interesting alternate to the standard route on Round Top is via the east ridge. You can approach from either the Elephant's Back ridge or gain the east ridge from a lower more direct route just southeast of Winnemucca Lake. Once on the ridge, try to stay more or less on the top of it as much as you can. Although you may have to back-track from a high point a couple of times to avoid vertical sections, you'll avoid the looser rocks on the side slopes. Sometimes you'll have to walk a little below the top edge when it narrows too much, and there is one unavoidable but short "knife-edge" to negotiate. The exposure here is significant, but the rock itself is solid. Overall, this east ridge approach, done with normal caution, is quite enjoyable. Class 3.

Barney Jones

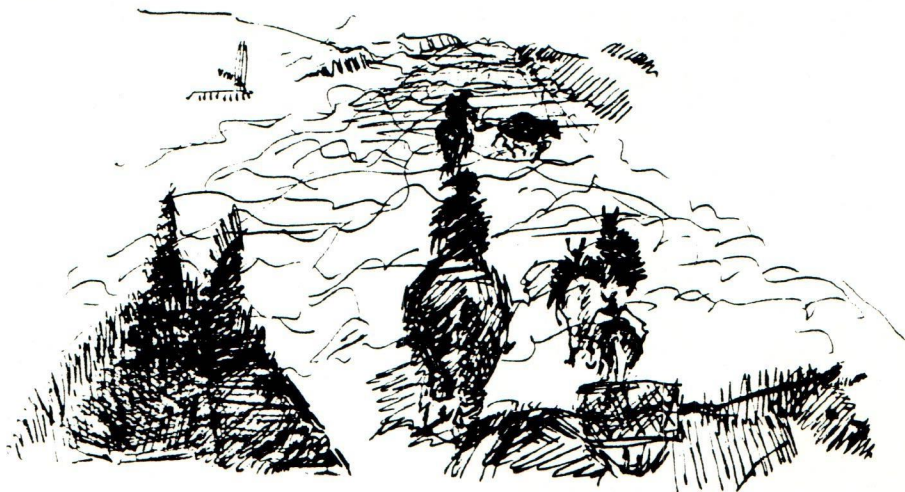
I am interested in printing "alternate" route descriptions to our local peaks. This could include winter ski ascents which may deviate from the summer "norm." One possibility would be the north couloir on Round Top. Surely someone's done something different on Tallac or Price. Give me a call or send something if you have an idea.

Charlie

Eldorado

Eldorado has been luring me ever since I lived in the Pacific Northwest. While there, a fellow I worked with said the only thing he remembered about the climb was watching his feet as he walked a knife-edged snow ridge. Fred Beckey's guide refers to Eldorado as the Queen of the Cascade River. Eldorado is not high by Sierra standards at 8868 feet, but is nevertheless heavily mantled by glaciers. In a recent last-ditch attempt to climb at least one mountain this year, I recently drove to Washington on a 4 day weekend to climb Eldorado. The "trailhead" is about 19½ miles east of Marblemont, WA. There is a trail, of sorts, beaten by the boots of countless mountaineers, to a base camp at about 5500 ft. It ascends a talus slope almost half of the distance to base camp. The only route finding difficulty is locating the log on which to cross the stream, just out of the parking lot. A small orange ribbon tied to a tree along the road was the only clue. The trail to base camp is very steep and relentless, being the most physically demanding of the whole climb. From base camp the route to the summit is glaciated, but I only found a couple of cracks to jump, and had to do very little probing with the ice ax. I managed to bypass the more serious crevasse hazards by sticking to the rocks on the east ridge, but this was possible only because of the heavier than usual meltback. And yes, the summit ridge is narrow enough so that I didn't look at the view very much, but it was only about 10 ft higher than where my rock route (2 class 3 moves) ended. Foul weather on this mountain would definitely require wands.

Roger Rollins



chill snow slope
sunset sip tea
watch Shasta's shadow
stretch across Nevada

CS

Drawing by Ellen Van Fleet

While this trip was placed in the BONANZA as a June day hike, four of us spent two days of the Memorial Day holiday climbing the peak. The trailhead for the peak is Roderiuz Flaks (Carson Iceberg Wilderness via Walker) and in order to make a loop trip out of the hike we (Debbie, Ed, Jim and Yours truly) walked down to the pack station and started down the Aspen shadowed Snodgrass Canyon/Creek trail to Silver King Creek. After fording the cold and fast running creek we stopped for a brief lunch before proceeding up the Silver King trail. The trail climbs upward till it reaches the top of a ridge at 8000 feet. Upon reaching this high spot we cached our packs and took the relatively short hike up the north facing slope of the ridge till we reached the first and lowest of the peak's two summits. From there it was a short hike to the highest summit. The summit offers a spectacular view of all the high country east of the crest between Ebbelets and Sonora Pass. While it was windy on the summit and raining or snowing to the southeast and northwest of us, we enjoyed sunny weather.

After a short stay on summit we hiked downward along the ridge keeping Antelope Peak directly in front of us. In a short time we cut the Silver King trail and proceeded to our cache. In a few minutes we started down the trail toward Poison Flat where we took the trail and short hike back to Silver King Creek. We set up our camp along the grass covered flat bordering the west side of the quietly flowing creek. The next morning we hiked up the Valley Trail and returned to our car before noon.

PEELER LAKE EXPLORATION (Part One) -- CROWN POINT (11,346)

Fourth of July Weekend 1987

After breakfast at the Mono Village Cafe (Twin Lakes) the eight of us were able to leave our cars at the parking lot by eight o'clock for the four plus hour hike to Peeler Lake. The first five to six miles of the trip are relatively flat with a modest elevation gain of 1000 feet. The trail parallels Robinson Creek reaching Barney Lake at milepost four. The trail passed through open areas covered with mule's ear and shadowed areas with flowers of all kinds, e.g., indian paint brush, mariposa lily, scarlet gilia, penstemon, wild onion, heather, wild roses, to name (thanks to Susan) just a few. We had our first lengthy rest stop at the lake which offered a spectacular view of our ultimate destination, Crown Point.

The trail goes around the west side of the lake, passes a lengthy area where the lake is being transformed into a meadow before entering a tree covered area. It is at this point that the trail switchbacks itself upward to Peeler Lake. We camped on the southeast side lake which offered us our own swimming area and easy access to the peak.

Not too early on Saturday morning we left our camp for the peak. Five of us hiked up a gully bordering the ridge west of Peeler Lake before taking an easy third class route to the top. Once on top it was an easy hike to the summit. Three hikers decided not to hike up the gully and took a more direct third class route to the top of the ridge. All eight of us were on the summit an hour and half after leaving basecamp. The view from the top was a sierra high: Tower Peak to the north, all of the northern Yosemite Peaks to the west, the Sawtooth Ridge to the southeast and Banner, Conness, North Peak, Lyell, Ritter and numerous other peaks to the South. The rest of the day was spent leisurely hiking down the ridge and hiking in Kerrick Meadow before returning by mid-afternoon to our camp for a restful nap, swim, or what have you.

We broke camp early on Sunday and three hours plus later where back to our cars looking forward to the Fourth of July Holiday homeward bound traffic.



Round Top
Drawing by Oscar Balaguer

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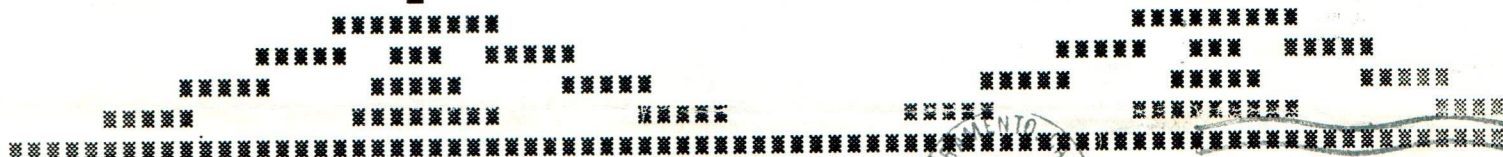
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C/O Charlie Smith
3962 "E" St.
Sacramento, CA 95819



NORTH WEST
EDGE OF THE
SWEET WATER'S

Drawing by Ellen Van Fleet

John Sarna
12 Park Vista Circle
Sacramento CA 95831