



WASATCH MOUNTAIN CLUB

The Rambler

Volume 56, No. 1, Jan., 1979

Wasatch Mountain Club

Persons wishing to become members of the WASATCH MOUNTAIN CLUB should request, either by telephone or in writing, an application form from the Club's Membership Director. Upon such notification, prospective members will receive 2 free, consecutive issues of the Rambler, the club's official publication, and a full application form with instructions for joining.

Dues are as follows: \$10.00 Regular (single), \$15.00 Spouse (double) and a \$5.00 initiation fee.

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STAFF:

Alexis Kelner, Managing Editor

Deadline for the Rambler is the 15th. of each month.

Type (double space) your articles schedules, indicate your name and telephone number on your articles, prints, etc. Mail to (or drop by):

WASATCH MOUNTAIN CLUB
3155 Highland Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

or ALEXIS KELNER
1201 First Avenue
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103

On mailed matter indicate ATTENTION--RAMBLER EDITOR.

THANKS:

Club Activities

January 1979

Ski Touring, General Comments

- Call 524-5042 for avalanche information.
 - Club equipment--probes, may be borrowed from John Riley, 3639 Palisades Dr., 485-2567. Also, a portable toboggan is available.
 - Tour leaders may request you bring shovels, avalanche chords, and pieps as they deem necessary.
 - All tours limited to 12 participants. Reservations not accepted more than 5 days in advance and close at 9:00 p.m. on the day preceding the tour.
 - See article on general ratings in the January issue of the RAMBLER. Ratings can vary according to the route. Discuss with leader.
 - Most Difficult (MsD) tours limited to qualification list in the December, 1978 issue. See article in the January, 1979 RAMBLER on how to qualify for the MsD list.
-

January 13 AVALANCHE COURSE. The annual avalanche course will begin on Saturday
Saturday at 8:00 a.m. in the auditorium of the Zion Lutheran Church (1070 Foot-
hill Blvd., rear entrance). The morning session will consist of slides,
movies and lectures. We will adjourn for lunch and meet in the after-
noon at some snowy location fo practice rescue techniques. (Skis and
snowshoes will not be required). A \$2.00 donation from the participants,
(\$3.00 for non-members) for the ski touring fund would be appreciated.
Copies of some of the Forest Service avalanche publications will be
on sale. The course is open to the public.

Jan 13, Sat. MoD SKI TOUR. Mt. Wolverine, Leader: Pete Hovingh, 359-4791.

Jan 13, Sat. NTD SKI TOUR. Snake Creek Pass, Jim Dalglish, leader. 295-8749.

FRONT COVER: "Solitude Sunrise-1977" by David Blaine.

Jan 14, Sun. MsD SKI TOUR. Alexander Basin. Leader: Dwight Nicholson, 583-6054.

Jan 14, Sun. MoD SKI TOUR. Bench Creek, Woodland. Leader: Tom Stevens, 486-2994.

Jan 14, Sun. NTD SKI TOUR. Silver Fork. Leader: John Riley, 485-2567.

January 14
Sunday WINTER SOCIAL. Bill Viavant is opening this social season just as he did the last one. Come and join the crowd which will be large, to judge from past experience. The Address is 218 Iowa Street (950 East, 2nd So.)

January 20
Saturday ANNUAL NOMINATIONS DINNER. Join us for this annual dress-up event to solemnize the choice of these intrepid enough to run for the Board of Directors.

PLACE: ANDY'S SMORGASBORD, 3350 Highland Drive
TIME: Social Hour 6:30-7:30
PRICE: \$8.00, includes set-ups.

Your check for the appropriate amount will constitute your registration, however, since the restaurant needs to know the exact number of people to attend, please contact Karin Caldwell (942-6065 home) or (581-7168 work) and tell her of your intentions to attend.

REGISTRATION BY JANUARY 13 IS MANDATORY!

Send checks to 3645 Golden Hills Avenue
Salt Lake City, Utah 84121

January 20, Sat. MoD Ski tour, Wolverine Peak. Leader: Paul Rubinfeld 534-0194.

January 20, Sat. NTD NORDIC SKI TOUR. Mill Creek. Snowshoes welcome. Leader: Kermit Earle 268-2199

January 20, Sat. ICE CLIMBING SEMINAR. Our annual ice climbing course will again be conducted by the venerable John Gottman. This course will include indoor and outdoor instruction to acquaint interested climbers with the fundamentals of ice craft. If interested, call John at 359-4693 (home) or 539-5000 Ext.359 (work).

January 21
Sunday MsD. ALPINE ONLY SKI TOUR. Pfeifferhorn-Dry Creek--Alpine. Leader: Dennis Caldwell. 942-6065.

January 21
Sunday NTD SNOWSHOE TOUR. Lookout Mountain. Meet at Hogle Zoo Parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Leader: Shelly Hyde.

January 21 Sun. MoD SKI TOUR. Mineral Fork. Leader John Gottman 359-4693.

January 27 Sat. MsD. ALPINE ONLY SKI TOUR. Lake Blanche, Leader: Gale Dick 359-5764.

January 27 Sat. Nordic Ski Tour. Lake Desolation. Leader: Oscar Robison 943-8500. MoD.

January 28, Sun. MsD SKI TOUR. Box Elder Peak. Leader: Rolf Doebbling 467-6636.

January 28 Sun. MsD SKI TOUR. Swifts Creek. Leader: Charles Hall 277-1555.

January 28 Sun. NTD SKI TOUR. Lake Solitude. Leader: Bob Everson 487-0029.

- January 28 Sun. WINTER SOCIAL: Come and enjoy the aftermath of one of the season's wintry weekends with the Kelners. The place is the Rambler press headquarters at 1201 First Avenue. 6:00 p.m.
- February 3-4 Sat.-Sun. LODGE OPEN. Host Jim Mason 582-7619.
- Feb. 3, Saturday NTD SNOWSHOE TOUR. Mill Creek-Thayne. Leader: Dale Green 277-6417.
- Feb. 3, Saturday MoD SKI TOUR. Mill "D" North to Mill Creek. Leader: Bill Rosqvist 295-0458
- Feb. 4, Sunday NTD SKI TOUR. Mill "F" to Scotts Pass. Leader Bob Woody 466-5039.
- Feb. 4, Sunday MOD SKI TOUR, Greens Basin. Leader: Andy Schoenberg 943-9857.
- Feb.4, Sunday MsD SKI TOUR. Neffs Canyon. Leader Alexis Kelner, 359-5387.
- Feb.10, Saturday POWDER SKIING SEMINAR. Leaders Dwight Nicholson, Dave Hanscom, and Milt Hollander. Instruction in parallel and Telemark turns by our own pros. No charge but limited to intermediate and advanced skiers.
- Feb.10, Saturday MsD ALPINE ONLY SKI TOUR. Mt. Aire. Leader: Joel Bown 485-8084.
- Feb. 11, Sunday MoD SKI TOUR. Toll Canyon. Leader Dave Smith 1-649-8798.
- Feb.11, Sunday MsD SKI TOUR. Ben Lomond. Leader Harold Hafterson 1-621-2042.
- Feb.11, Sunday NTD SKI TOUR, Upper Dog Lake. Leader Don Coleman 486-7796.



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Guide to Ski Touring in the Wasatch*

The difficulty of a ski tour is not easy to define. It depends to a large extent upon the condition of the snow, which varies from one day to the next, (and even from one hour to the next) due to snowfall, wind velocity, air temperature and the location of the route relative to exposure to wind and sun.

It also depends upon the weather, the physical condition of the tourer, the particular route chosen, and equipment.

For Nordic skiers, correct touring techniques and ability to choose the proper wax makes all the difference in the world. The only parameters that are constant on a ski tour are the vertical rise and the horizontal distance.

With these facts in mind, an attempt has been made to rate the ski tours in the Wasatch. The rating system is in the form (X,Y), where X describes the difficulty of the climb, and Y indicates the skiing proficiency required to get down. Both are rated from 1 to 6, in order of increasing difficulty. For example, Day's Fork is rated (2,4); it involves a relatively short climb of 1900 feet in 1.5 miles from Alta, but the descent includes an extremely steep bowl where avalanche danger can be quite high. These numbers are necessarily relative, and are meant only to give the tourer a general idea of the required ability level necessary under good skiing conditions.

To put the skiing proficiency part of the rating into perspective, a comparison can be made to slopes at the ski areas. Skiers with ability to handle Main Street, Pay Day, or Majestic with confidence could take tours rated 1 or 2; they should have mastered the kick turn, however, for the sections where it is the only alternative to turning in the powder. Nordic skiers should also be able to manage these tours with good snow conditions, particularly the ones with long run-outs. A rating of (3) requires intermediate skiing skills, as would Collins Face, Bob's Bowl, Millicent, or Thaynes; ability to turn in unpacked snow becomes more important. The higher rated tours are for advanced skiers who can manage any snow conditions; sometimes the survival instinct helps, too.

The table on the opposite page (much of which is taken from the December, 1968, RAMBLER article by Charles Keller) contains data on some of the most popular tours in the Wasatch. They are listed in approximate order of difficulty to assist your go/no go decision.

This year we have decided to add a column to the general ratings which further describes each tour's difficulty. The ratings are "Not Too Difficult"--(NTD), "More Difficult" (MoD) or "Most Difficult" (MsD).

A person could go on a NTD tour if he has been on his touring skis enough to be proficient uphill, though not necessarily downhill. He must be able to do kick turns, and

be able to get up (both physically, and mentally) from numerous falls. To go on a MoD tour, the skier should be able to do an adequate stem turn. The MsD tours are for those who can handle most every slope and snow condition. We have also noted those tours that are not advised for Nordic skis, mainly because the slope is so severe, or the snow conditions are so poor, that it would be a survival situation. (Note that most MsD tours are too hazardous for Nordic skis under any snow and weather conditions.)

It is suggested that you not go on a tour that is much further down the list than the one that you have taken in the past. A skier who goes on a trip that he can't handle not only endangers and discourages himself, but he compromises the enjoyment of the entire party. If in doubt, the tour leader or ski touring director will be happy to advise you.

A map of the ski touring routes in the Alta-Brighton area is available from the Wasatch National Forest office at 3070 East 3300 South.

One final comment should be made regarding ski tours taken by individuals who like to get out on their own. Snow conditions in the Wasatch are extremely variable, and thanks to our large accumulations, avalanche danger can be extremely high. It is advisable before going on a tour to ascertain that the snow is safe in the area, to never go alone, and to let someone know your route and schedule. The Forest Service (phone 486-6333) will provide information on weather and snow conditions, but they cannot be responsible for deciding if you should take the tour. Your own common sense must be your guide.

NOTE: The above article was re-typed from the November, 1975, RAMBLER article, with changes by L. Lewis.¹

Description	ASCENT		DESCENT		NUMERIC RATING	WMC RATING
	Dist.	Vert.	Dist.	Vert.		
Wolverine Cirque from Brighton	1.6	1350	1.6	1330	2.2	MoD
Lake Solitude	1.4	300	1.4	300	1,2	NTD
Snake Creek Pass from Brighton	1.4	1240	1.4	1240	1,2	NTD
Catherine Pass from Alta	2.3	1680	2.3	1680	2,2	NTD
Alta from Brighton via Twin Lakes Pass	2.1	1275	1.1	1430	1,2	MoD
Dog Lake via Mill D - North	2.3	1460	2.3	1460	2,2	NTD
Mill F	2.2	1000	2.2	1000	2,2	NTD
Desolation Lake via Mill D - North	3.3	1960	3.3	1960	2,2	NTD
Catherine Pass from Brighton	1.8	1440	1.8	1440	2,2	MoD
Mill Creek from Park City West	3.0	2150	7.7	3300	2.2	MoD
Park City from Brighton via Scott's Pass	2.0	700	3.8	2500	2,2	MoD
Brighton from Park City via Scott's Pass	3.8	2400	2.0	700	2.1	MoD
Honeycomb from Solitude (to cirque)	3.0	1400	3.0	1400	2,2	MoD
Mineral Fork	2.9	1890	2.9	1890	2,2	MoD

Description	ASCENT		DESCENT		NUMERIC RATING	WMC RATING
	Dist.	Vert.	Dist.	Vert.		
White Pine Lake, Red Pine Lake	2.7	2400	2.7	2400	3,2	MoD
Honeycomb from Brighton	1.6	1200	3.5	2140	1,3	MoD
Mt. Wolverine from Alta	2.2	2,205	1.8	2035	2,3	MoD
Silver Fork from Brighton via Twin Lakes Pass	1.6	1470	2.8	2460	2,3	MoD
Mill Creek from Mill D No. via Dog Lake (to Log Haven)	2,3	1460	6.4	2900	2,3	MoD
Cardiff Fork from Alta	1.0	1360	5.9	2750	2,3	MoD
Silver Fork from Alta	1.8	1610	2.8	2510	2,3	MoD
American Fork from Alta (to S. Fork Ranger Station)	2.3	2160	12.6	4450	2,3	MoD
Mary Ellen Gulch from Alta (to S. Fork Ranger Station)	2.3	2160	10.6	4450	2,3	MsD*
Neff Canyon	3.2	3960	3.2	3960	4,3	MsD
Days Fork from Alta	1.5	1890	3.5	3140	4,4	MsD
Major Evans Gulch from Alta (to S. Fork Ranger Station)	4.9	2480	7.4	4770	3,4	MsD*
White Pine from Alta	5.4	2330	3.0	3140	3,4	MsD*
Mt. Raymond via Butler Fork	3.5	3140	3.5	3140	3,4	MsD
American Fork from White Pine via Silver Lake (to S. Fork Ranger Station)	3.4	3030	7.6	580	4,4	MsD*
Maybird from White Pine	3.4	2440	2.0	3175	3,5	MsD
Alpine from White Pine via Dry Creek	3.7	3000	6.5	5560	4,4	MsD*
Hogum from White Pine	3.6	2700	3.1	3660	3,5	MsD*
Alexander Basin from Butler Fork (to Log Haven)	3.6	3145	5.4	4140	3,5	MsD
White Pine from Alta via Twin Peaks	4.4	3075	4.0	3875	4,5	MsD*
Major Evans Gulch from Alta via Twin Peaks (to S. Fork Ranger Sta.)	4.4	3075	8.1	5360	4,5	MsD*
Mineral Fork from Alta	2.3	2180	3.1	4160	3,5	MsD*
Lake Blanche from Alta	1.9	2060	4.3	4500	3,5	MsD*

* = NOT ADVISED FOR NORDIC SKIS.

Qualifications

for Most Difficult (MsD) Ski Tours

The ski touring committee decided at its November meeting to establish a qualification procedure for participants in MsD tours. This decision resulted from an increasing number of unpleasant experiences on these tours involving individuals who were not suitably qualified, due either to lack of skiing ability or physical condition. On easier outings, this kind of problem might result only in inconvenience for the leader, but on MsD tours, it often causes an extremely dangerous situation for the entire group.

A list of people that one or more committee members was willing to recommend for qualification was included in last month's RAMBLER. If you are not in the 1977 Membership roster and feel that you should be included in this list, call the ski touring director and the committee will discuss it at the next meeting.

Others who wish to participate in MsD tours must do the following things:

1. Participate in at least one MoD tour and ask the leader to recommend you for qualification as a MsD tourer. One of the examiners will call that leader before the on-snow test.
2. Attend the Wasatch Mountain Club avalanche safety course (or an equivalent.)
3. Pass an on-snow test, which will include three major requirements:
 - a. Knowledge of all aspects of avalanche safety, including snow and weather factors, route finding, and rescue operations and procedures.
 - b. Endurance and strength to handle long and difficult tours.
 - c. Ability to ski in the fall line on steep terrain and in various snow conditions.

On-snow tests will be held once a month or whenever several people are interested in having one. Call an examiner to sign up. They are: Dave Hanscom, (1-649-7264; Milt Hollander, (277-1416), and Dwight Nicholson, (583-6054).

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Topics for the Dissertations in the MsD program must be approved in advance by the MsD Committee. Dissertations must be typewritten on standard 8 1/2 x 11 inch bond paper with no less than 24 lb rag content. They must be double-spaced and have a 1 1/2 inch margin on the left (for permanent binding by the Wasatch Mountain Club archivist) and a 1 inch margin on the right. Pages must be numbered in sequence at the upper right hand corner of each page. Illustrations must be prepared in India Ink and be twice the size that they are to appear on the final page. Please use carbon ribbon for all typing. Three (3) copies are required. If there are any questions regarding the MsD program please contact the Publications Director.

TRIP Talk talk talk talk talk tal

Mass in Upper Dog Lake

November 18, 1978 Ski Touring Kick-Off

Low Mass was held for, possibly, the Wasatch Mountain Club's last Mass Ski Tour.

At least 25 persons participated in the Ski Touring Kick-Off which originated at the Club lodge. The routing wound among the trees south of the lodge, then to the meadow above the Majestic Lift, and roughly followed the old road to Upper Dog Lake, and then back to the lodge. Most tourers remained and enjoyed an excellent dinner which was hosted by Vilma and Lyman Lewis. Nancy Kassow and Charlie Butler, representing Wasatch Mountain Touring Co, gave an interesting demonstration of some of the typical and latest ski touring equipment.

Known participants on assorted equipment were:

Jim Piani, John Herbert, Ann McDonald, Kermit Earle, Maily Earle, Mike Treshow, Karen Jorgensen, Theresa Overfeld, Chris Dougalls, Russel Wilhelmsen, Pat Klinger, D. Schoenberg, John Riley, Bob Myers, Brooke Hopkins, George Wiens, Milt Hokanson, Holly Hokanson, Brad Hokanson, Laurie Webb, Ilka Allers, Dave Morris, W.H. Yates, Steve Gersten, and Milt Hollander.

Days

By Harold "Hafty" Hafterson

A half Days Fork slipped by before the hungers drove us into a hotel-like cluster of trees providing invigorating scenery through its open windows. Gerry's snow pit revealed a fairly uniform 4 ft. snow pack overlying on an 8 inch zone of poorly developed TG crystals--a happy indicator of a carefree toting season. WHAT? You say Stone Crusher slid to the GROUND LAST WEEK?

Lunch put an end to the tyranny of the black waxers who cheerfully broke trail at a grade equal to incipient disaster for the blue and purple waxers. OFF came the wax (purple is biodegradable?) and up went expectations for a mind blowing--all right--but the wind had blown it first, tricky. (Bob didn't seem to mind). After sleeping late Clay arrived just in time for the fun part--downhill.

Diane modestly filled the breach in her breeches with snow on the downhill trip. Pieps and probe carriers were Clay Benton, Hafty Hafterson, Joe Hall, Gerry Horton, Greg Janiec, Bob Myers, Jeff Owden, Diane Schoenberg, and John Sloan. Trudy Healy provided the weather and leadership for a very nice tour.

Dewey Bridge to Moab Canoe Trip

By Joni Jackson

Since there were only six of us on this particular trip we decided to leave around four in the morning. There was absolutely no disorganization that whole weekend (except whilst on the river) so we made it to Moab fine and even got started down the river by 10:30 that same morning. The weather was perfect; a little on the hot side, and the Colorado had dropped quite a lot since spring. It was a good weekend for canoeing.

Our party consisted of two canoes and a kayak. The scenery was spectacular and we even forgot sometimes that we were floating right next to the road. As we drifted through the red rock canyon we were entertained by the sound of a harmonica floating upwards from our very own kayaker. We were also entertained by the wildlife along the way. Many quail, an eagle, a Little Blue Heron, muskrats, sheep, carp, and zillions of gnats were all spotted by one or more of us. Roger claims he saw sandworm tracks but I believe it's too wet for them here.

We hit the first big rapid late in the afternoon. We didn't know what it was called but it was the one with the big rock just left of center with a red canoe wrapped around it. This was not an encouraging sight, but we watched several people run it successfully. Then we watched our kayaker run it unsuccessfully. Then we watched our trip leader's canoe capsize. Then the last canoe decided to portage it. Roger really wanted to try it though so he and Anthony hauled the canoe back up and did it right. We were pretty close to the campsite by then, fortunately, since the leader's canoe capsized again right at the take-out point.

We did a lot of eating that night but not much drinking. We had an astronomy lecture instead which seemed like the obvious thing to do since there were so many stars up there.

The next day left us with about seven miles to go (by car) but it took longer because there were more rapids. The lead canoe managed to make its quota of two capsizes again. Actually it didn't matter much if we capsized, or not since after every major and minor rapid we'd all take in so much water we had to stop and empty out the canoes anyway. This, however, was poor consolation to those that got dumped. Both canoes had much less stuff in them the second day: as if we were expecting the worst. I don't really know how one canoe managed to stay upright all the time because there were many large, treacherous rocks and not a lot of room to maneuver in. We all made it through the worst one, White Ranch Rapid, successfully, and there were some horses down there watching us for witnesses. We were also bussed by a small plane flying just above the bushes; the wingtips almost scraping the canyon walls.

As we approached the take-out point the river slowed down and Roger and I decided that we felt left out so we capsized the canoe. Well, it was pretty hot that day. Dad didn't seem to mind, there wasn't much he could do about it anyway.

Everyone was of good cheer afterwards and while we loaded the cars up we decided that it had been a great trip. Canoeing is always exciting even on slow rivers because there is always the possibility of capsizing.

TRIP LEADERS: Jim Wood. CANOERS: John Jackson, Anthony Wood, Roger Jackson, and Joni Jackson. KAYAKER: Sam Kingston.

Ode to Grand Gulch—Thanksgiving

In anticipation of tortuous adventure ahead, Kermit and Marilyn "roughed it" in Monticello Wednesday night, Navajo Motel style.

Reenacting ancient ceremonies (?) we had communion with carrot sticks, guacamole, smashed ginger cookies, and tea in a kiva with roof beams No. 23-17 and 23-13.

However, we cancelled the Thanksgiving celebration in due to lack of indian support. Dorothy led us onward, discouraging on the use of rails and cement in anasazi structures. Earl examined all ruins to see if they met established safety criterion. At last one anasazi builder will be issued a citation. Spider Sloan discovered ancient anasazi steps are not the only way to scale the walls of Moki lands.

Kermit and Marilyn were canned wonders...asparagus, chili con carne, peaches, peas... even fruit juice. Earl kept trying to lite fires with a single match and wet wood, shile wood stocks were the librarians delight (classified as 500, technology). John conducted grave site rites over the sand pit that was the final resting place of his beloved Svea.

After 3 days, noting our unusual odor, Kermit found that rubbing sage brush in appropriate places covers one smell with yet another. The rain Thursday nite found Kermit and Marilyn's naked tent irresistable and they discovered the "joys" of putting on the fly in a deluge. The rain on Friday found us all prepared, flies up and ponchos on.

Snow as well as temperature fell on Saturday evening but gave way to at least 1/2 an hour of sunshine on Sunday morning. We'd do it again!

Kermit and Marilyn Earl, Dorothy Holland, Earl Cook, John Sloan, Kate Flanigan

Nominations 1979

The Nominating Committee has come up with the following persons (bless them!) who are willing to run for the Wasatch Mountain Club Board of Directors. It should be noted that this is the Nominating Committee's choices for directors. Club members at large can also nominate others to run for the various positions. The procedure is simple: Just get the person's (who you wish to run for office) permission to nominate him and then do so at or before the Nomination's Dinner.

PRESIDENT:	Dennis Caldwell
SECRETARY:	Barbara Berntson Shirley Henderson
TREASURER:	Stewart Ogden
RAFTING:	Wayne Slagle <u>and</u> Chuck Ranney.

Wayne and Chuck are not opposing each other--they are running as a package deal!

CONSERVATION:	Walter Haas
ENTERTAINMENT:	Carmen Boutet
MEMBERSHIP:	Ilka Ailers Ann Cheves
HIKING:	Dorothy Holland Trudy Healy
LODGE:	Mike Hendricksen
MOUNTAINEERING:	Bob McCaig Greg Janiec
SKI TOURING:	Lori Webb Lyman Lewis
KAYAKING:	Jim Mason
PUBLICATIONS:	John Mason

Wasatch Mountain Club

Historical Highlights

Over the years there have been many articles written in many publications describing the activities of the Wasatch Mountain Club.

In "HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS" we hope to reproduce some of the better articles and news clips which describe the activities of the Club since its founding nearly sixty years ago.

If there are any members--particularly "old timers"--who have some clippings, or other materials, please won't you share them with your fellow members?

Call Alexis Kelner (359-5387) or Dale Green (277-6417) if you have something to offer. Your materials will be returned after their use.

"The Ascent of Angels Landing" was published by the Union Pacific Magazine, December, 1924 and was contributed by Claude Stoney, one of the founders of the Club.

In regard to the hikers involved in the trip Claude states that "it was mostly a Wasatch Mountain Club effort-- some of the U.P. people could not climb a staircase and had to be hauled up by ropes."

Claude is the fellow at the lower-left in the group picture.



The Ascent of Angels Landing

Party Scales Famous Monolith in Zion National Park

By R. B. GRAY

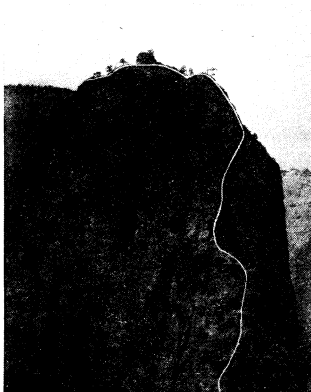
Advertising Agent, Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha

MANY, perhaps most, of the immense buttes of red and white sandstone cut from the stupendous Jurassic walls of Zion Canyon not only never have been climbed but are conservatively regarded as unscalable. It is not their height that makes them so formidable to the mountaineer, for the highest does not exceed 4,000 feet above the Mukuntuweap River, but their sheer verticality from base to crest affords few avenues of attack and adds markedly to their isolated grandeur.

The towering red monolith called Angels Landing rises about 2,000 feet above the river, opposite the Great White Throne, and from its northeastern foot throws off a fluted pile, vermillion and oxblood, known as the Great Organ. Round this the stream curves in a serpentine semicircle. Seen from the south the form of Angels Landing is that of a sharp pyramidal wedge, truncated just below the apex. To its rear it is united to the west wall by a lofty, narrow buttress.

Led by David Dennett, a guide, and Park Ranger Harold Russell who, a week before, had been the first humans to stand upon the summit, our party of nineteen set forth early on September 16 from Zion Camp; beside the guides, it consisted of Randall Jones of Cedar City, Utah, C. J. Collins, manager Department of Tours, C. & N. W. Union Pacific; A. V. Peterson, advertising agent, O. S. L., Salt Lake City and fifteen members (seven of them girls) of the Wasatch Mountain Club of Salt Lake City led by Einar Lignell.

The route led across the river and up a part of the spectacular West Rim trail which has been cut in zigzags from the perpendicular vermillion cliff. About five hundred feet up it entered the narrow hanging gorge of Refrigerator Canyon, where the ardent sun was excluded, the temperature was 15 degrees cooler and the white sand along the dry water channel was amazingly like snow. At times, the stars may be seen in broad daylight from the depths of this secluded gash. Spruces and pines found footing there, and a few desert shrubs. The easy trail led onward and upward until we came out upon the knife-like buttress that joins Angels Landing to the plateau. There, the pioneering began, for the trail had another destination, and our route had only once before known the touch of shoe leather. See the route marked on the illustration.



Angels Landing from the west, showing route to the summit.

The crest of the ridge, as it lay before us, first descended to a rugged gap, then

swept up in a great craggy parabolic curve to the haunt of the angels; the summit, in fact, appeared so lofty and inaccessible that the legend of the angels seemed wholly credible and some of us timidly deliberated the possibilities of joining their ranks.

It was relatively easy going down to the gap; beyond that point the ridge varied from ten feet to ten inches wide, became dizzily steep, and occasionally presented little cliffs of thirty or forty feet that required slow and careful progression by means of toes, fingers, and prayerful exclamations, assisted by the abdominal muscles. All of the arts of crawling insects were imitated.

But there were places too steep for all but experts in rock work. A groping hand would clutch an inch-wide ledge, put a bit of weight on it and find the friable sandstone as soft as pie crust; a flat slab grasped tentatively had an exasperating habit of falling down on one's head.



Wasatch Mountain Club and Union Pacific party on summit of Angels Landing. The crest is extremely acute, but the effect is obscured by the west wall of Zion, several miles distant in the background.



There were five hazardous stretches which the guides and several experienced climbers of the mountain club scaled unassisted; but the remainder of the party required the aid of ropes let down by these pioneers and anchored to their bodies. At these interesting spots the climbers dangled over some 1,600 feet of clear, pure mountain air and all of them seemed not displeased when their feet rested again on level rock.

The apex of the monolith broadened out to a sloping platform of some twenty feet at its widest and one hundred feet long, capped by a pagoda-like cone. There a cairn of stones was erected, a scroll of names placed therein, and to its top was fastened the skull of a steer brought from the Tinted Desert north of the Kaibab Forest.

Angels Landing projects far into Zion Canyon and the panoramas from its peak are of the highest grandeur. Immediately below us was the Great Organ; opposite in the east, the stupendous mass of The Great White Throne, soaring 1,200 feet higher. Northward we looked into the dizzy-walled red amphitheatre called the Temple of Sinawava and beyond to the Narrows where the ethereal white cone of the Mountain of Mystery rises above the gory precipices. Behind us loomed the majestic, reposeful white cliffs of the upper rim. Southward, the vision included the entire sweep of the east wall—Red Arch Mountain, the Mountain-of-the-Sun and the Twin Brothers, glowing in the sun.

Such vistas are part of the enduring enchantment of Zion; its magnificent,

sculptured masses, displaying all the tones of red from peach blossom pink to the deepest carmine known to lipsticks, and onward through Indian lake and maroon to reds that the shadows turn black; its atmospheric moods of bulk and color; its infinite variety; its unlimited opportunities for pioneer exploration with the reward of matchless vistas of scenes never beheld before by civilized man. Those of the artistic temperament who seek scenic effects not to be had elsewhere on earth will find Zion satisfactory.

It is said that a safe trail may be made at small cost to the spot where the angels land and this will probably be done by next season. The splendid vermillion butte will then become a favored observation point for Zion's increasing throng of visitors.

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