



# ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

*House Organ for Heaven*

VOL. XXVI, No. 8      AUG., 1950

RAYMOND CARLSON, Editor  
GEORGE M. AVEY, Art Editor

## LEGEND

"SHADOWS IN THE SAND" . . . FRONT COVER  
 JACK BREED PORTRAYS A SCENE IN  
 A DISTANT PART OF NAVAJOLAND.

THE FIRST ASCENT OF AGATHILAN . . . 4  
 RAY GARNER AND FRIENDS CLIMB A  
 HISTORIC PEAK NORTH OF KAYENTA.

SACRED SHEEP OF THE NAVAJOS . . . 10  
 THE FOUR-HORNED RAM IS HELD IN  
 DEEP AFFECTION BY THE NAVAJOS.

NOMADS OF THE DESERT . . . 16  
 CLINGING TO THEIR POOR LAND,  
 NAVAJOS ARE ECONOMIC PROBLEM.

NAVAJO RUG WEAVERS . . . 26  
 WE DEAL WITH THE DEVELOPMENT  
 OF RUGS AND ARTISTRY OF WEAVERS.

MOVIES FOR THE RED MEN . . . 30  
 INDIAN DEPARTMENT MOVIES ARE  
 VALUABLE IN VISUAL EDUCATION.

THE WISHING PILE . . . 34  
 COZY McSPARRON, NOTED TRADER,  
 TELLS A REVEALING NAVAJO STORY.

YOURS SINCERELY . . . 40  
 OUR FRIEND, THE MAILMAN, KEEPS  
 US IN CONTACT WITH OUR READERS.

"NAVAJO GIRL AND HER SHEEP"

## BACK COVER

SHE TENDS HER SHEEP, AND KEEPS  
 THEM SAFE. JOSEF MUENCHI PHOTO.

DAN E. GARVEY  
 Governor of Arizona

## ARIZONA HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Brice Covington, Chairman.....	Kingman
H. Earl Roscoe, Vice Chairman.....	Clifton
Louis Escalada, Member.....	Nogales
Clarence A. Calloun, Member.....	Mesa
John M. Scott, Member.....	Show Low
J. Melvin Goodson, Exec. Secretary.....	Phoenix
W. C. LeFebvre, State H'way Engineer.....	Phoenix
R. G. Langnade, Special Counsel.....	Phoenix

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS is published monthly by the  
 Arizona Highway Department. Address: ARIZONA  
 HIGHWAYS, Phoenix, Arizona. \$3.00 per  
 year in U. S. and possessions; \$3.50 elsewhere,  
 35 cents each. Entered as second-class matter  
 Nov. 5, 1941, at Post Office in Phoenix, under  
 Act of March 3, 1879. Copyrighted, 1950, by  
 Arizona Highway Department, Phoenix, Ariz.

Allow five weeks for change of address. Be  
 sure to send in old as well as new address.

JAHRAH TYLER

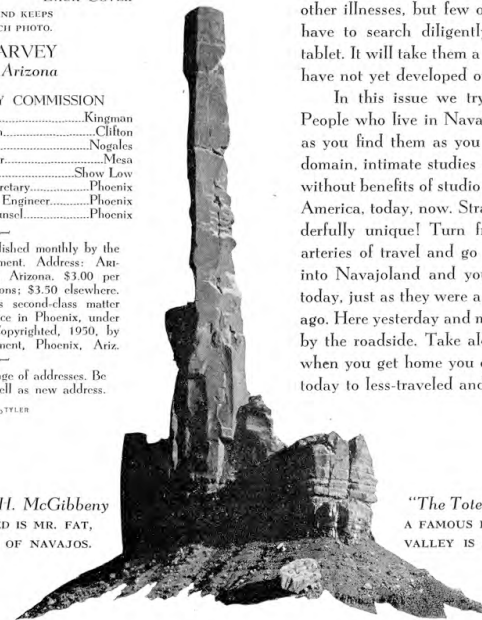
"Hosteen Tso" by J. H. McGibbeny  
 HIS NAME TRANSLATED IS MR. FAT,  
 A RESPECTED LEADER OF NAVAJOS.

## WE VISIT THE PEOPLE

Navajoland would be noteworthy if for no other reason than scenery. Here is a paradise for the traveler seeking beauty in distant places, willing to venture over untried roads, capable of enjoying the solitude and loneliness of a country both primitive and isolated. Here is a land that challenges the gypsy in a person, defies the glib, packaged details of the travelogue and timetable. The roads may be rough and ram-bunctious, weather uncertain and sometimes surly, accommodations and comforts few and far, but in this land of the Navajo are scenic treasures the like of which one will not find elsewhere. To name a few: Rainbow Bridge, a regal poem in stone; Monument Valley, an awesome masterpiece created by time and weather; Navajo National Monument, with Beta-takin and other ruins eloquent reminders of civilizations long vanished; Canyon de Chelly, exciting chapter in earth's story carved in canyon wall. In fact, there isn't a mile of Navajo-land that does not have much to offer the admirer of beauty and grandeur, but nothing in all that vast, lonely expanse is as interesting or as picturesque as The People themselves.

They live in a world and a century unlike our own. True, there are many Navajos as modern as any of us, but the tribe as a whole has yet to be touched appreciably by what we consider the modes and manners of our superior civilization. They die of tuberculosis and pneumonia and suffer from other illnesses, but few of them have ulcers and one would have to search diligently to find among them a sleeping tablet. It will take them a long time to catch up with us. They have not yet developed our capacity for hurry and worry.

In this issue we try to tell you something about the People who live in Navajoland. In picture, we portray them as you find them as you travel the roads and trails of their domain, intimate studies of them as they are, young and old, without benefits of studio lights or makeup. They are a part of America, today, now. Strange, perhaps! Different, yes! Wonderfully unique! Turn from the great, wide, slick, speedy arteries of travel and go forth ten, twenty, a hundred miles into Navajoland and you will find the People as they are today, just as they were a decade, two decades, a half century ago. Here yesterday and many yesterdays are camped serenely by the roadside. Take along your camera, if you wish, and when you get home you can show portraits of yesterday and today to less-traveled and less fortunate neighbors. . . . R.C.



"The Totem Pole" by Ray Manley  
 A FAMOUS LANDMARK IN MONUMENT  
 VALLEY IS A GUIDE FOR TRAVELERS.





## The first ascent OF AGATHLAN

BY VIRGINIA GARNER

It was late afternoon on the desert and high above me rose the sheer walls of an ancient volcano. Three climbers clung to the side of the peak, so high that they looked like flies on a wall. They moved gradually upward and their voices could be heard calling to each other in the strange lingo of the mountaineer.

"Up rope!" "Slack!" "Belay on!" "Tension!" "Rock, rock!" And with this last the boom of falling rock, as one crashed down the mountainside, leaving the strange smell of powdered stone in its wake.

Waiting below was a nerve racking experience, particularly when my husband was far above, and at any moment might come tumbling down with the falling rock. It was a long wait as it wasn't until the next morning that the climbers got off that beautiful, but terrible, peak. During the twenty-four long hours they were on the peak I had time to think of

many things better left unthought! But I am married to a mountain climber and there is no power that can hold Ray Garner to the lowlands.

In 1937, the year before we were married, Ray spent three and a half months as staff cinematographer for the Rainbow Bridge-Monument Valley Expedition. Assigned to cover field science activities over an extensive area, he had the opportunity to scout out climbing possibilities. The Monument Valley area proved to be a climber's, as well as a photographer's, paradise. Here it seems as if the very skeleton of the earth protrudes through its outer crust. Most of the monuments are towering sandstone survivors; carved by wind and water from an ancient plateau. But here and there a reminder of volcanic activity rears into the sky. The highest of these volcanic necks, and the most spectacular in profile, is Agathlan, 6,825 feet in altitude.

Agathlan presented an immediate challenge to Ray and it was at this time, thirteen years ago, that he decided he must climb it. However, there were no other mountaineers on the expedition and all he could do was reconnoiter.

It wasn't until seven years later, after we had realized another ambition and come to live in Arizona, that Ray again had an opportunity to visit Monument Valley. Together we studied the peak at close range and Ray selected the vertical black strip on the Northwest face as the only feasible route. This dike was composed of crystallized blocks of basalt, unfortunately set on an angle. All visible ledges apparently sloped out and down, not offering very promising stopping places. The black rock presented a sheer face, jutting outward near the top, which made it look impossible to climb. But this appeared to be the only way worth attempting as the rest of the peak is composed of light colored sandstone, which is not only sheer and overhanging, but without crevices or ledges.

Again Ray was unable to climb the peak. I am a climber but could not alone give the support necessary for a technically difficult climb such as this.

Last year Ray finally got together with a group of excellent climbers and we gathered at the base of Agathlan late in May. Jan and Herb Conn, Arizona visitors, who have done a great deal of rock climbing throughout the country, joined us. Also Lee and Ben Pedrick, members of the Kachinas, Senior Scout Outfit No. 1 of Phoenix. This incidentally, is the only Senior Scout Outfit in the country whose members are trained and qualified as mountaineers. Ray organized the outfit five years ago and the group now contains some of the finest climbers in the Southwest. Lee and Ben are two of the original members and their mountain climbing experience includes fifteen first ascents of desert pinnacles, the ascent of Popocatepetl, the 17,876 foot Mexican volcano, and all of the major peaks of the Grand Teton range in Wyoming. Ray and I completed the party of six.

Soon after leaving Kayenta, on the road into Monument Valley, one comes upon Agathlan. It stands like a sentinel at the gateway to the unexcelled country beyond. It is flanked by a smaller volcanic peak but Agathlan reigns supreme. Dominating the entire area, it has long been an outstanding landmark. It was first mentioned in history by the Spaniards who passed through here on one of their early expeditions. Later Kit Carson wrote of it in his diary under the Spanish name of "El Capitan." Today it is better known by its Navajo name — Agathlan.

In the language of the Navajo, Agathlan (sometimes incorrectly written as Agathla) means "piles of wool." The heaps of volcanic ash which surround the peak give it its

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

name. Because of the dominance of the mountain it naturally has an important part in Navajo legends. While we were camped at the base no Navajo would pass that way. They knew by their grapevine news broadcast, which travels mysteriously over the vast spaces of the reservation, that we were attempting to climb the mountain. They felt that there was danger of death so they skirted far around the peak and we saw no one during the three days we were there. Later, on leaving Harry Goulding's Trading Post, we picked up a Navajo who told us of the legends of Agathlan. He said he could tell us much more if he knew many of the words of our language. This is his story:

"Long, long ago a race of giants inhabited this area and they were great enough to climb Agathlan by the giant steps which lead to the summit on the south side. High on the mountain among the summit pinnacles, the giants had a hidden spring and there they made their home. These ancient ones scraped their antelope hides at the base of the peak, allowing the hair to be blown about by the wind. It clung to the desert plants and caused the death of grazing animals. Thereafter, the giants carefully gathered the hair and covered it with piles of rock."

These legendary piles of wool and rock are purported to be the mounds of volcanic residue which surround the peak. And so the Navajos call it Agathlan.

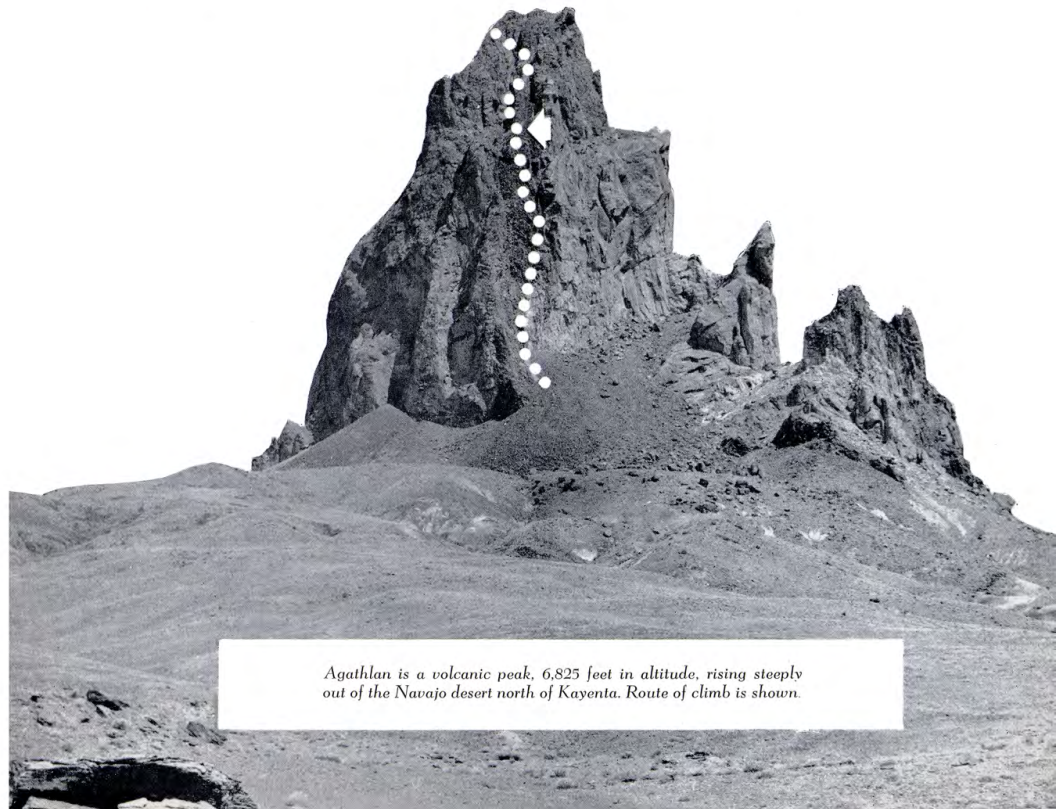
Harry Goulding tells us that today the modern Navajo

follows this practice of piling rocks on the wool from the hides that are scraped for use in ceremonials. As long as the wool remains under the rocks the skin is "good medicine" and the Navajo sheep, which graze the area, are safe.

Modern climbing techniques do not enable us to use the giant steps of Agathlan. The walls of the great steps are sheer sandstone, without hand or footholds. The black dike had to provide our ladder to the home of the giants; and it was no beanstalk!

There was an unspoken agreement among us that the peak was to be climbed, if at all, without direct aid. This meant that each climber would ascend entirely on his own, finding hand and footholds in the rock; not on a piton, bolt, or any other manmade aid. A ladder can be built up any face but a real mountaineer climbs using his modern equipment only as an aid to safety. If a climber falls his pitons, bolts, and rope, when used correctly, will prevent serious injury under almost any circumstances. We had about seventy pounds of climbing equipment with us, all of which was to be used only as life insurance!

On the morning of May 29th all six of us started up the slopes carrying 50 pitons, 40 tampon bolts, 15 carabiner, four 120-foot nylon ropes, 100 feet of hemp slings rope, two sets of drills, tampon tools and hammers, a 16mm movie camera, a reflex camera, lunch, and twelve quarts of water. All of this, with the exception of the lunch and water, was carried up the



Agathlan is a volcanic peak, 6,825 feet in altitude, rising steeply out of the Navajo desert north of Kayenta. Route of climb is shown.





mountain in a climbing pack. The three who started up the face let down a rope at one point and hauled up two quarts of water. That's all they had during the twenty-four hours on the mountain, and no food at all!

At the base of the selected route it was obvious that we were facing an extremely difficult climb. Any more than three people on the wall at one time would constitute a very real danger from falling rock. Consequently we decided to make the first attempt with only three climbers. Actually, we all thought they wouldn't get very high on the first try. They intended to push as far as they could and leave the ropes in place for another try on the following day, when we hoped we might all reach the summit.

However, it didn't work out that way. Ray, Herb, and Lee, who made the first attempt, were the only ones to get above the "piles of wool." The climbing proved extremely difficult after the first pitch and loose rock kept falling down the face, scaring us all out of our wits. The three of us who were left below studied the route and during the entire day believed the climb impossible. The more we looked at it the more overhanging blocks we saw and all appeared insurmountable. Every moment we expected the three climbers to call it quits and start down.

Herb Conn tied a bowline in the rope around his waist and took the first lead. Ray handled the rope from below, keeping it running free so that it wouldn't snag and pull Herb off balance. Herb went up a wide crack, or chimney, to a stance on a small ledge. Here he stood in a secure position, holding the rope around his hips. Thus as Ray climbed up to join him, Herb kept taking in the slack. This is called belaying; which simply means protecting a climber by proper use of the rope.

Ray then took the lead, with Herb belaying from below to prevent a long fall in case of a slip. About thirty feet up Ray stood on a big basalt block and pounded a piton into a convenient crack, using a small hammer. A piton is a malleable iron spike with an eye in one end. Once the piton is secure the use of a carabiner, or snap link, makes it unnecessary to take the rope off the body and thread it through the eye of the piton. We simply snap the carabiner into the piton, snap the rope into the carabiner, and have a secure anchor.

Now Ray was anchored to his piton and could safely belay Herb as he climbed up the last horizontal ledge they were to stand on in many hours. It was also one of the few which was large enough for two climbers with any degree of comfort.

Lee Pedrick happened to be the next man in position at the base (the rest of us scouting around and taking pictures), so he now tied into the rope and joined the others on the ledge. So these three continued with the reconnaissance climb.

Throughout a long, hot day they moved slowly up the face of Agathlan. Periodically the silence of the desert was broken by the thundering of falling rock, or the hammering of pitons. At one point Herb found no crack for a piton and he needed an anchor before attempting to climb a difficult overhang. So with a spiral stone-cutter's drill he started to make a hole for a tamp-in bolt. He pounded for over half an hour and was rewarded with only a half inch depression. Ray took over and spent another half hour drilling the necessary inch deep hole. Then with a tamp tool, he set a lead sheathed tamp-in. He screwed an eye bolt into the threaded core and this provided the anchor they needed.

The Kachinas developed the use of these tamp-in bolts,

*Ray Garner demonstrates invaluable technique of rappelling, a simple method of descent, allowing maximum of friction.*

testing them by trying to pull them out with a car! Pitons are not practical for use in sandstone, and other comparatively soft formations of the Southwest; or where there are no cracks, as in this case.

Ray and Herb were both exhausted after taking an hour to place one bolt in the hard basalt. This was the first and last bolt they used. They used thirty pitons, however, before they got off the mountain.

Now Lee, who had been having a prolonged rest on the horizontal ledge below, climbed up to take the lead. This proved to be the most difficult section of the entire climb.

Rounding an overhanging piece of rock causes the climber to lean out over empty space; in this case about two hundred feet or the height of a twenty story building. Stand on a window ledge twenty stories above the street and you will get some of the effect. Of course, you will not have loose rock beneath your feet and the necessity of moving either up or down.

Lee's lead was a breath catching thing to watch. He tested all handholds carefully to see if they were secure. Then with his feet dangling in space he pulled himself over the bulge of the overhang; grunting and gasping as he went. The rope from Lee's waist ran back through the tamp-in bolt to Ray, who was ready to hold the rope in case of a fall. If Lee had fallen he would have dropped fifteen feet to the bolt and another fifteen feet below. There he would have dangled until the others could come to his aid. But he didn't fall and continued up over two bulging blocks, placing pitons for protection as he went. Then he had to surmount another overhang to reach a small sloping ledge where he could anchor himself in order to belay Ray.

Lee's older brother Ben, who watched from below, was very proud of this lead. As with all brothers, there is some rivalry between them and little outward show of affection. Now Ben merely shouted up, "Hello brother!" and Lee's answer came back, "Hello brother." This little interchange was ripe with all the pride and affection of the Pedrick clan!

Ray took the lead and made a 100 foot face climb. Some of the basalt blocks were loose and he took up his belay position on a block which "rocked a bit." They changed the lead again and Herb demonstrated his ability to move over loose rock without dislodging anything; a great asset from the point of view of those below.

From below their progress seemed agonizingly slow. When one climber tired another took the lead; the second man always belaying the leader through a piton-carabiner combination. For nine long difficult hours they fought their way up the face of the cliff. Sometimes the great basalt blocks moved under them and a few broke loose and went plunging down the precipice. The climb became a test of courage, strength, endurance, and skill. It became a personal battle with the mountain and was too difficult to be fun, at the time. So sheer was the cliff that at any point the climbers might have dropped a stone and it would have fallen free to the base of the mountain. An exposure such as this is very wearing, even on those used to the heights.

To those of us below the climbers seemed to be moving farther and farther outward until they were clinging up-side-down to the overhanging cliff. Our necks grew stiff with stretching and our nerves were stretched as well.

Finally at 5 p.m. they reached the top of this 550-foot wall and looked back over the ledge into a terrifying void. The cliff face cut in under them and they wondered how they

*The three climbers are small specks as they climb the steep wall of Agathlan. Falling rocks on slope are great hazard.*





Climbers check their equipment before starting the climb of Agathlan Peak.



Mountain climbing is no hobby for the inexperienced. Tested climbers have limited but valuable equipment to assure safety in their climbs.

got up, and how they would get down.

Now only half way up the mountain they were faced with the problem of whether to continue or retreat. Because of the late hour they knew they should start down. But it had been a hard fight to achieve their position and none of them relished the thought of climbing that terrific wall again the next day. So it was, that while we waited below expecting them to descend, they went on up the mountain.

The weather had looked threatening all day, providing a somber background for the climb. Now the western sky was banked with clouds and promised an early dusk. We lost sight of the climbers as they entered a couloir, and went soberly back to camp torn between the desire for them to achieve the summit and for them to get safely down before the darkness overtook them. Now that we could no longer see the climbers we grew increasingly concerned about them. Each of us had a member of our immediate family on that mountain and as the sun set we knew that they were in danger. Here is an account of what followed on the mountain, as related by Ray.

"The climb ahead looked simple by comparison with the dike we had just come up. We stood on a ridge which was flanked by a deep couloir, or gully. The ridge leading to the summit was to the east and we had to descend into the couloir in order to cross over to it. Here we suffered our only injury. I dislodged a sizable boulder which hit my right thigh as it fell. The pain was so intense that I could not go on. After a few minutes it slackened and fortunately the result was only a bad bruise. If I was not a well padded individual it might have been more serious.

"A second gully led us into a grassy basin which resembled a huge cavity in the tooth of Agathlan. Here we found grass good enough for grazing in a country where good grass is rare. This was the place of the hidden spring of Navajo legend. But no water was to be found and we badly needed it at this time. We did find a chimney which brought us directly onto the summit ridge.

"The ridge was knifelike, dropping a few hundred feet on the right and nearly a thousand on the left. This was not a place to be caught off balance! Here the climbing was much easier and we ascended rapidly and confidently. At 6:30 p.m. all three of us stood on the summit. Old 'Piles of Wool' was ours!

"We shouted and waved to the three climbers who had remained below and were now mere spots as they moved about our camp in the foothills. It was impossible to tell if they saw us or not but we were pleased to learn later that they did.

"We spent a full hour on the summit. The sun peeked through the clouds long enough for us to get pictures, both movies and stills, and for fullest appreciation of the magnificent panorama. Agathlan stands considerably higher than anything else in the area. We could see the weird land of the Navajo spread out to the north, east, and west; we could see the mesas to the south—all bathed in the blood red of the sinking sun. This wild desert country has a mysterious grandeur which is most evident under the spell of the sunset.

"We built a cairn about three feet high and placed an upright pointed rock atop it. This should be visible to the sharp eyes of the Navajos. In it we left a film box containing our signatures and a record of the climb.

"In the gathering dusk we began the delicate journey down the knifelike ridge. Fatigue was now catching up with us, which was evident from the condition of our nerves. We climbed where we should have walked; we crawled where we should have climbed. By the time we reached the top of the dike the sun had set. With only the afterglow to light our way we decided to attempt the descent. This was a poorly considered decision—further evidence of our fatigue.

"I placed a piton on the top of the dike ridge, tied a short sling into it, and rappelled down a doubled rope made of two 120-foot nylons. Rappelling is a simple method of descent with the rope placed about the body in such a way that a maximum of friction is created—thus the climber slides down in safety.

At a time like this climbers thankfully sing the praises of the unknown who evolved the technique. It would have been impossible to climb down this precipice because of the high angle and many overhangs.

"As I slid down the double rope I cleared all loose rock so that the others wouldn't bring it down on my head as they descended. This consumed so much time that it was thoroughly dark when I located a stopping place on a small sloping ledge. I pounded in a piton and clung to it while I tried to call to Lee to follow. I opened my mouth—and gagged completely! My throat was as dry as parchment and coated with dust. My attempt to yell just closed it off. For the entire climb we had only two quarts of water between the three of us. Most of it was now gone, and what little remained was with Lee and Herb atop the dike. I shook the rope and made some gasping sounds to indicate that I was off the rope and ready for Lee to come down. To complicate the situation the wind had risen, so that I couldn't make out what Lee was trying to call down to me. Finally the rope began to move and I knew he was on his way.

"It soon became evident that my rock clearing effort had not been very thorough. The deadly hum of falling rock rose above the moan of the wind. I flattened myself against the face of the cliff as tightly as I could, wishing I was about sixty pounds smaller.

"Suddenly the foolishness of our descent struck me. It was pitch dark. We had a long, long way to go. Each stopping place had to be large enough to support three men while the ropes were pulled down and placed in position for the next rappel. To find these stances, set pitons, and slide down amid falling rock, was a foolhardy thing to attempt in the dark. By the time I had reasoned this out Lee was only about ten feet above me. Again my throat closed as I attempted to call to him. He got close enough to understand as I gasped an explanation. He was to tie into one of his rappel ropes, and call to Herb to fix the other in position. Then Lee could go up hand over hand on the fixed rope while Herb helped by pulling as hard as he could on the other, around Lee's waist. It took a long time for Lee to yell these instructions to Herb. Finally he started to move upward. I could hear him pulling and snorting as he pulled himself up on the sheer strength of his arms. Herb was pulling hard, too, but most of his effort was consumed in the friction of the rope on the rock.

"I waited in the darkness, still clinging to my piton, and a half hour later felt a tug on the fixed rope; the end of which I had retained throughout. I tied in and then heard them calling for me to start up. Again my throat blurred the answer, but the rope drew taut and I was on my way. With both of them pulling it was a rapid and easy ascent. My only difficulty was in dodging falling rock, which the rope was dislodging. I breathed a sigh of relief when I reached the others on the summit of the ridge, and we looked around for a place to bivouac.

"Far below we could see the glow of three lanterns moving from our camp toward the base of the peak. We thought the others might have heard our shouting and gasping and interpreted them as distress signals. As they drew nearer there was an exhausting exchange of shouting, much of which was carried off by the wind. Finally they understood that we were safe and intended to lay up for the night and they headed back to camp.

"We decided to get off the ridge and go back into the first gully, where we might have some protection from the wind.

The nearest thing to a platform was a shelf of grass on a thirty degree angle. Driving two pitons, we tied ourselves and our equipment fast and settled down to await the dawn. It was a long wait. We were sheltered from the main blast of the wind, but the eddying swirls found us and we were soon chilled to the bone. Light shirts, levis, and sneakers are not the last word in bivouac wear.

"Lee had a box of matches with which he tried to create the delusion of heat. It didn't work. The sky clouded over and lightning flashed in the distance. We braced ourselves for the crowning discomfort of rain, but it never came. We dozed a few times but sleep was impossible on that steep slope. At 4:30 a.m. the east was glowing and we moved around as much as possible in our confined quarters to get rid of some of our numbness.

"In the first light of day we made our way back to the top of the wall. The ropes we had used the night before were still in position so we again began the descent. Being the heaviest I went first; Lee and Herb thinking this an excellent test of the strength of the rappel rope and its mooring!

"This time I found a better stance a hundred feet below. I placed a sound piton and rigged the next rappel sling in it before calling to the others to follow. When we were all three crowded on the ledge, we pulled on one end of the doubled rope to receive it. Instead of sliding through the sling above us it jammed!

"Herb climbed sixty feet up a chimney to a small ledge. I joined him there and gave him a belay so he could work out on the face and free the rope from a crack where it had wedged. Then for the third time, we rappelled down the face. The rope slid easily this time and we placed the center of it through the sling I had prepared, throwing the ends off the cliff. Rappelling down another hundred feet I was unable to find a ledge of any kind. I swung over to a slight depression in the vertical face and hanging from the rappel ropes I hammered in two pitons and fixed a sling. Clinging to the sling I let go the rope and called for Lee and Herb to come down. The exposure at this point was terrific and it was slightly crowded when all three of us hung from the sling with one hand while we pulled down and reset the rappel ropes with the other.

"The third rappel took me down a hundred and fifteen feet where I couldn't even find a semblance of a ledge for a rappel station. I worked left and found a section where the basalt blocks were quite loose. Hanging onto the rappel rope I tore several of the blocks loose until I had manufactured a ledge large enough for the three of us. Here we rigged our fourth rappel which happily took us down to the only comfortable ledge we had on the entire climb. The fifth rappel put us on the talus slopes at the base of the dike and we cheered lustily with joy and relief. It was 8:30 a.m. It had taken us four hours to engineer the descent of the 550 foot wall. We had been on the peak exactly twenty-four hours.

"We hadn't had any food since breakfast the day before and were tired to the bone. A pack had been left at the base of the mountain containing eight quarts of water, with which we at last quenched our thirst, and one slim lunch, which didn't even dent our appetites. Revived a bit we headed back to our camp and a big meal.

"As we marched triumphantly down over the 'piles of wool' we looked over our shoulders with mixed emotions toward the towering Agathlan. It had stood there since time began and we were proud to think that only our feet, and those of the legendary giants, had ever trod its summit."