

"When both intuition and logic agree, you are always right."

- Salada Tea Bag

ADIRONDACK ALPINE JOURNAL 1

December, 1983 - January, 1984

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

DANCING ON THE VERTICAL WALL

by Thomas Conroy
UPI

The way Jim Cunningham sees it, a rock climber is part scientist, part athlete, and all artist.

"It's an exercise of the mind and body, it's a dance on the rock," he says of the pursuit that lifts him up stony crags and slabs in the Adirondacks.

Cunningham is the director of the Adirondack Mountain Climbing School, making his livelihood in an area with both a rich climbing history and hundreds of heights to be scaled.

A guidebook on climbing in the Adirondacks lists about 250 vertical routes, many of them 400 to 500 feet. Cunningham has made the first-ever ascents up 20 routes in the past couple of years.

"It's a Christopher Columbus-type feeling," he says of exploratory climbing. "sometimes you just come into a dead end. You have no information except what's in front of you."

Cunningham and his partners are free climbers - their ascents are made with hands and feet only. The gear they bring along is a safety net, not a climbing aid.

"Only when you fall does your equipment come into play," he notes.

Abrasion-resistant ropes, harnesses, and metal chocks with loops are used to reduce risk on the cliffs as climbers make their meticulous moves.

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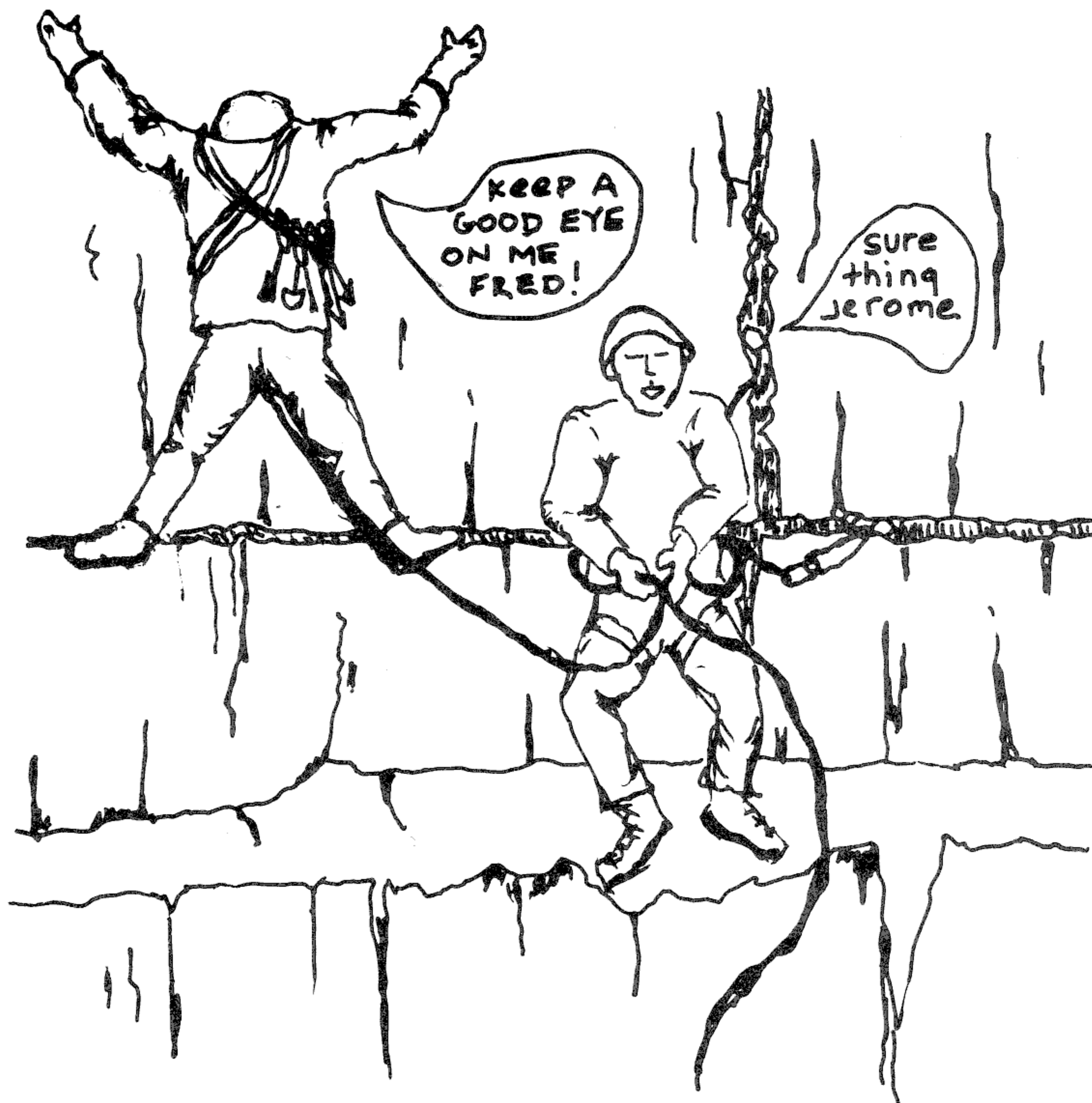
It is very frustrating, at times, when you observe the large gap in current outdoor periodicals. In one case, a magazine such as Climbing, Mountain, or Backpacker may interest you immensely, but it is written with a national and international coverage. One wishes for more of a regional information source. Adirondack Life is a wonderful magazine because it is concerned with New York's North Country. But its information is very general in content. As a climber and mountain lover, I must wait for two or three issues until I can read about cross country skiing.

So Adirondack Alpine Journal has been established to bridge the gap in literature and so repress our frustration. This journal is concerned in the issues that confront folks who like to go "High Up" in the Adirondacks.

Whether in climbing the mountain with a daypack or a rope, one will appreciate the current information produced herewithin. We wish to offer various articles in each issue. Such topics as:

- Equipment
- Trails
- First Ascents and New Climbs
- Clothing Review
- Interviews
- Mountain History
- Book Reviews
- Information on Activities
- Classified Ads
- Advertising
- Fiction (Please turn to
- Maps of the Area. page two)

STAYING WARM WHEN IT'S COLD
AND WET



WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT
(Continued from page one)

These categories are our basic direction of information. I stress that it is most important for others to express their insight and knowledge in this journal, and trust that they will be so moved to send some ideas or writing to us for publication. So send your novels to:

ADIRONDACK ALPINE JOURNAL
PO BOX 739
KEENE VALLEY, NY 12943

I hope the journal will fill your literature void. See you on top!

Dave Flinn,
Bob Hey,
editors

"Give me the man who knows something of himself and is appalled."

- C. P. Snow

As the weather turns from warm and sunny in the summer to wet and cold in the fall and winter, there is a minor decrease of outdoor activity in the Adirondacks. Many people find these mountains enjoyable during any weather condition. Some even prefer fall and winter due to the lack of vicious black flies as well as the escape from the summer heat. The worst part of winter and fall occurs in wet conditions. When it is wet and cold, things get most unpleasant. To enjoy these mountains in any case, the correct clothing is vital.

To the outdoor novice, the usual path in discovering warm clothes is the hard way. Everyone of us has at one time or another been out in the woods wearing flannel shirts and blue jeans during a cold rain. This tactic usually ends up with a cold night shivering in a lean-to or a forced hike to the nearest warm bar. The "experienced" mountaineer has learned the vital characteristics of wool clothing. I have come to believe that many people do not like wintertime because they have never been exposed to good, warm clothes. Let's face it, being cold and wet is miserable, and should be avoided. So why be cold? We must learn how to deal with these conditions and laugh in the weather's face.

Besides rain and wet snow, a major source of moisture occurs from one's body perspiring. In the summer, we wear cotton to absorb our sweat, so to keep it off of our body. Cotton does the same in winter, but the clothes stay wet and quickly cool the body. Once this happens, the individual will not retain vital heat until the wet cotton is removed.

For centuries, the pioneers in the Adirondacks, as well as worldwide, have used wool pants and sweaters to insulate against



nature's nasty weather. The magic of wool is that it does not absorb water as readily as cotton, and even when wet, is able to keep the person warm. Even nicer, once wet, the heat from your body slowly dries out the wool, whereas cotton clothing steals your warmth and never dries out.

Strangely enough, even people who are "wool-wise" sometimes forget their feet. I have found many folks who wear their cotton gym socks next to their skin, with the wool ones on top. With this principal, when wet from one's perspiration, as well as water leaking in the boot, the feet soon get very cold. Each foot will perspire up to half a pint of water a day! Instead of cotton, a silk, wool, or polypropylene sock with a wool outer sock will keep one's feet warmer.

Due to advances in clothing technology, polypropylene fabric has been made available to us. This product is very versatile because it wicks water and perspiration away from your skin and transfers it to your next layer, all the while keeping you very toasty warm. It is most effective as a layer for your feet, underwear, gloves, and hats. Its great advantage is that it is easy to wash, whereas one must be careful with wool shrinking. Don't put polypro in the dryer: it will melt! I have used it for two years now and would not be caught outside without it in any weather.

My recommendation for anyone pursuing the outdoors is a combination of both wool and polypro. Polypro is most applicable in long underwear, where it is superior than any other. It usually comes in two thicknesses: regular and expedition weight. If you are involved in an active sport such as skiing or hiking, the regular weight is a sure bet. When working outdoors, hunting, or ice climbing, the heavier expedition weight is much warmer. With a top and bottom of polypro, one is

almost assured of a warm and thus pleasing adventure outside.

Covered with wool shirts, sweaters, pants, or knickers, your outfit is complete. Pile clothing is another alternative, but these will be covered in later issues. For those with low budgets appalled at the expense of your polypro, can find cheap (in price only!) wool clothes at the many army/navy surplus stores in the region. For fall and spring, one can buy thin wool pants, about the weight of blue jeans, for under five dollars. For winter, Woolrich or the various heavy army pants are excellent. Look for German Paratrooper pants; they are the best.

Once equipped with warm, versatile clothing, any outdoor venturer can be assured in knowing that he/she can enjoy their activity without the fear of the nasty weather our beloved Adirondacks can offer us.

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"If the dominant reason for climbing is to achieve fame or beat a rival, if there is no pleasure without success, the temptation to ignore danger maybe irresistible; but if the mountains and a love of climbing as a means of giving expression to that feeling, reasonable prudence is likely to prevail."

- Eric Shipton

DANCING ON THE VERTICAL WALL

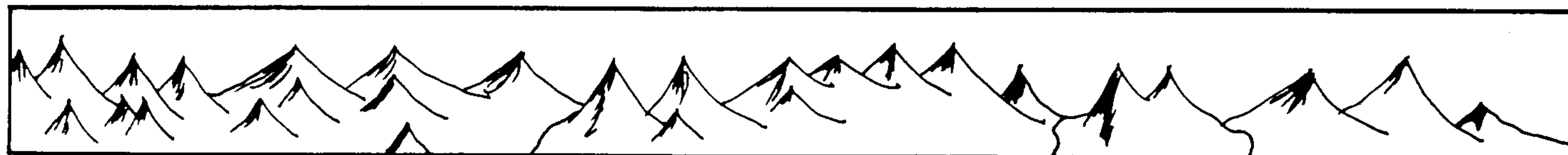
(Continued from page one)

In mountaineering, a class 1 or class 2 climb is general hiking, like that along most wooded trails in the Adirondacks. Class 3 and 4 require somehandholds and footholds, and at times a rope is a good idea.

Cunningham teaches Class 5 climbing, which requires the gear mentioned above, and expert knowledge of it's use.

He starts his students climbing on large boulders. Bouldering can

(Please turn to page four)



present moves every bit as challenging as high cliffs, without the risk of a long fall.

The beginner who finds himself hanging on for dear life halfway up a steep boulder Cunningham ascended as though it were a staircase quickly discovers muscle is no substitute for form.

"You can be the stongestguy in the world and fail on a climb if you don't use technique," Cunningham notes. The key is to rely on bone structure rather than muscle to bear your weight.

In "friction" climbing, the rock is not so steep as to requires constant handholds. Fingertips serve as outriggers, resting on the stone, rather than grabbing it.

The friction between the nonskid sole of a climbing shoe and the grainy, anorthosite rock of the Adirondacks can hold the climber fast at surprisingly sharp angles.

"Friction is a very delicate form of climbing," Cunningham says. If the climber leans too far forward, he comes to rest more on his toes and less of his soles touch the rock, reducing friction and sending him sliding downward. Leaning too far backward poses obvious problems.

Slabs set at 70 degrees or steeper, including overhangs, require "face" climbing, in which some combination of three of your hands and feet have a hold at one time.

The free hand or foot seels purchase higher up and, once tested for stability, becomes part of the new tripod, allowing another hand or foot to explore.

Minor retreats are sometimes necessary, as prospective moves are discarded as unstable. Methodical control is the standard. Lunging moves are not only unsafe, but frowned on as bad form.

In "crack" climbing, hands and feet are jammed sideways into fissures and rotated to fill the opening. A crack can also be negotaiated by "opposition," pulling on one side with hands and

pushing on the other with feet.

Rock climbing is generally a two person game, with novices serving apprenticeships under lead climbers, who assume the greater responsibility and risk.

The lead climber, tied by a 150 foot rope to his partner, reads the rock face, selects the general route, tests the moves, and decides where and how to place "protection."

Protection varies, but it is generally a metal nut or chock attached to a loop. These nuts have largely replaced the hammer and piton because they are less troublesome and don't scar the rock as much.

As he climbs, the leader jams a nut in a crack, attaches a "carabiner," or aluminum ring, to the loop and puts the rope - which his partner has been feeding out - through the carabiner gate.

Should the leader slip, his partner would make the rope fast and the leader would find himself suspended near the protection point.

The lead climber eventually picks a ledge or "pitch" where he can anchor himself securely, perhaps with several pieces of protection. The partner can then begin climbing up to where the leader is anchored, removing protection as he goes.

As for the challenge on the rock itself, climbs are rated in difficulty from an easy 5.0 to a near impossible 5.13. The orignal range was 5.0 to 5.9, but climbers became more proficient - some climbs once classified as requiring artifical aids are now negotiated by free climbers.

Cunningham emphasizes that climbs - which can take several hours or a day or two - present mental, as well as physical, challenges.

"It's a head game", he says, "It's problem solving - it's dealing with a calculated risk".

The names given to various routes - Neurosis, Hesitation,



FACTS ON GIARDIA

Paralysis, Fear of Flying, Mental Blocks - show other climbers feel as Cunningham does.

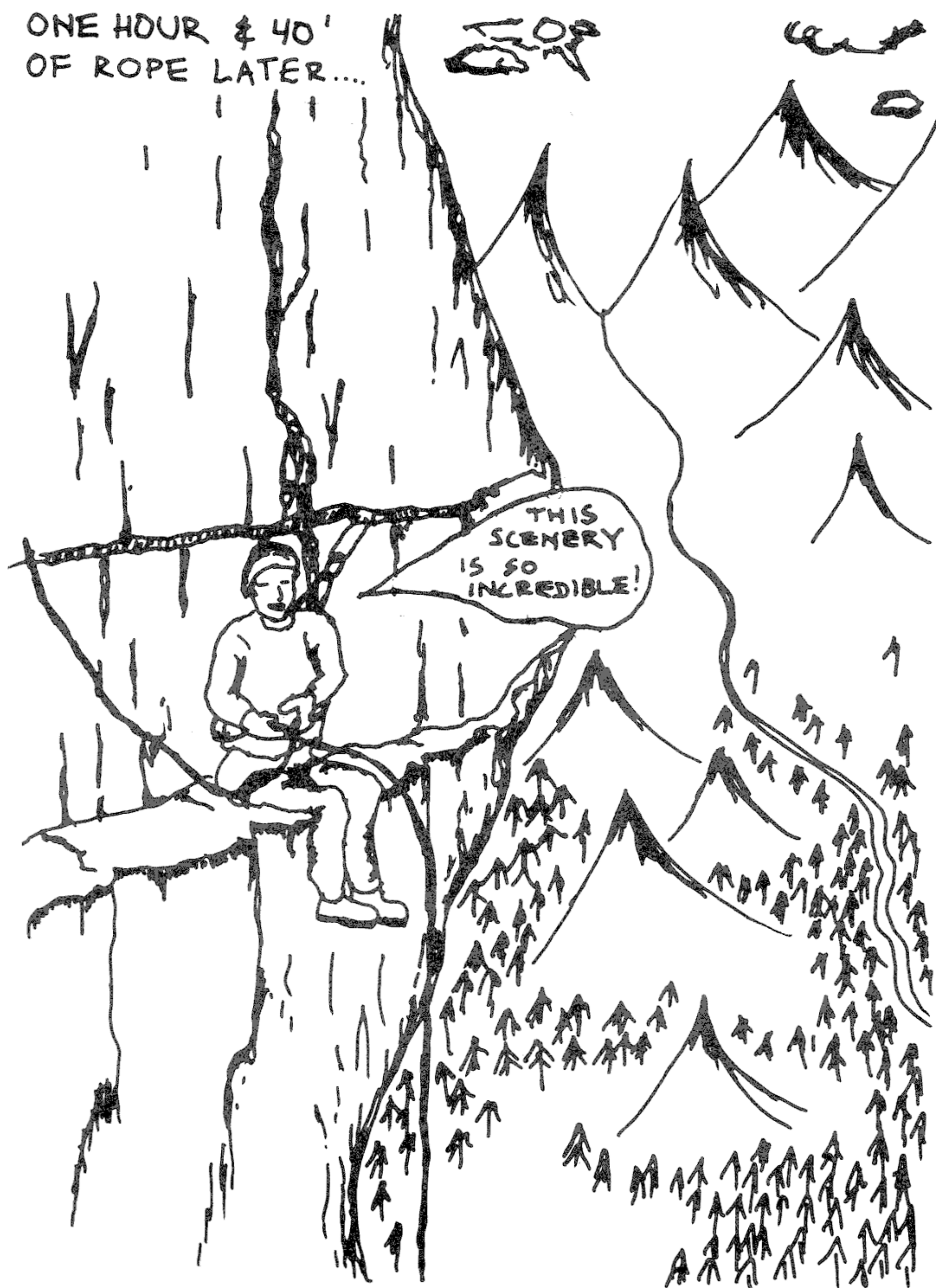
But gear, technique, and jargon aside, Cunningham emphasizes that rock climbing, like a hike along a moderately graded forest path, is just another way to get to know the mountains.

"Enjoy", he says, "That's what it's all about".

Jim Cunningham is currently offering Ice Climbing courses. Feel free to contact him at: Adirondack Mountain Climbing School, P.O. Box 552g, Keene Valley, NY 12943 or 518-576-4485.



ONE HOUR & 40'
OF ROPE LATER...



This recent threat in the Adirondacks comes to us via the rivers and waterways. Giardia is ten microns in size - very small: 16,000 cysts sit on a pinhead. This tiny protozoan, when ingested, lodges in our small intestine and causes a diarrhea virus requiring antibiotics for a complete cure. It is best related to Mexico's "Montezuma's Revenge", but in our case, a "Marcy's Doom". It is to be avoided.

The parasite is spread when an infected individual defecates very close to a stream or water system. As it rains, the cysts are easily drained into the waterways and travel downstream to the next unsuspecting camper. Giardia hosts in any warm-blooded creature: deer, dog, beaver, bear, and man.

The worst part of the Giardia cyst is that the infection develops two weeks after ingestion. So the individual, without realizing it, will pass on other cysts in his feces.

The following guidelines will help us all minimize this unseen threat. So be careful out there!!

To Prevent Receiving Giardia:

- Boil your water at a rolling boil for four minutes.

- Use a water purification device with a 6 micron filter, ie: H2OK or First Need.

- Water Purification Tablets. Let the tablets dissolve and sit for 30 minutes before drinking.

To Prevent Others From Receiving Giardia:

- Please go to the Outdoor Bathroom as far from a stream as possible, a minimum of 200 feet.

- Use well-drained (high ground) land if possible. The earth acts as an excellent giardia filter.

- Waste should be buried at least five inches deep and the soil and vegetation replaced, ie: dig a hole.

the
ALPINE
BOOKSHELF

6

NORTHERN ADIRONDACK SKI TOURS

by Tony Goodwin
published by the Adirondack
Mountain Club.

HIGH MOUNTAINS & COLD SEAS
A Biography of H.W. Tilman
by J. R. L. Anderson 1980
The Mountaineers
719 Pike Street, Seattle, WA
98101

There is immediate difference walking from scrub pine onto the rock and snow of a summit, or standing on a ship becalmed at open sea yet dwarfed before an approaching curtain of cloud and hard rain. But try to understand the life of a man who has made great land and sea journeys by running your finger along a raised-relief map and following his routes. Why did he go? My curiosity became a hunger.

I read books about adventurers because in my car-commuting, bag-lunch, day-hike existence, I crave to know what qualities and happenstance enabled people like H. W. Tillman to explore. What caused him to crunch his way up snow on the equator; to cross Africa on an English push-bike; to climb Nanda Devi (25,645 feet) in 1936, becoming the first human, along with N. E. Odell, to reach that altitude; all with only "stout boots, thick woolen stockings, ice axe and rope" as equipment?

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Tony has spent many years cross country skiing in the North Country, and he is currently manager of the ski trails at the Mount Van Hoevenberg Recreation Area near Lake Placid. Over the years, he has compiled a wealth of information on ski tours.

In his book, he describes thirty different trips in the North Adirondacks; 28 of which are day trips and 2 are over-nighters. Geographically, the book encompasses tours from Plattsburg to Cranberry Lake in the north, to Long Lake and North Hudson in the south. Essentially, most of the tours are found in the High Peaks region.

At the beginning of each tour description, Tony includes quick reference information such as the length of each tour, location, difficulty, and topographic map coverage. He follows with important discussions concerning the scenery, level of difficulty, the killer hills, access, and popularity.


While one can find similar literature written on ski tours, Tony has put together an excellent source of concise, easy to understand descriptions of some beautiful areas to visit in the Adirondacks.

- Dave Flinn

AND WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT IT.....



NOTABLE HAPPENINGS



7

So far this winter, the conditions have been better for the ice climber rather than the skier. By Thanksgiving, it was still fairly warm and rainy. Many hikers would slish and slog through the November muck up the John's Brook trail, but soon run into snow and ice above 3200'. By late November, the cold settled in and snow has since covered the ground. The week of December 12 - 16, it warmed up and rained, ruining all snow and ice conditons. Usually, the higher elevation and proximity to the storm track enables the Lake Placid area to accummulate @ 8" more snow than in Keene Valley.

Two days of warm temperatures and rain with a sudden freeze has developed some rare ice climbing. The Eagle slide on Giant was climbed on Nov. 29 and the entire slope was covered with two inches of ice. The Emperor slabs at Chapel Pond iced up for the first time in eight years, enabling ascents from Dec. 7 to the 11. This was a real treat. None of the lakes have frozen, so climbs like Chouinard's Gully and Cascade Waterfall will have to wait till Christmas-time.

Much ice has been found on the North Face of Pitchoff Mountain.

By late November, the skiing has been improving rapidly, untill the rains of Dec. 12 - 16. The combination of snow, ice, and rain will form a solid base when the cold returns, and even three inches of snow will produce great skiing. The most popular local areas have been from ADK Loj to Marcy Dam and Avalanche Pass. Mt. Van Hoevenberg has been open since Dec. first. The Ausable Lakes will have to wait until January. It promises to be a snowier winter, so at least this year we can all get in some skiing.

For those not familiar with local ski tours, you may be interested in Tony Goodwin's book. Also, starting in the next issue, we will describe various enjoyable ski trails.

Hopefully we will soon get more snow for all avid snowshoers. There is not yet enough snow to really tromp around. By January, conditions will have improved for some dynamite trekking.

HIGH MOUNTAINS & COLD SEAS

(continued from page six)

Tilman was not one for large expeditions. His life is all the more interesting because he believed in small, fast moving groups in alpine style travel.

My finger traces the routes of his later sea years, during which he navigated his own sailing ships -- all older than himself -- to South America and beyond both polar circles. My fingernail breaks on the Patagonia Ice Cap.

In reading this biography, the secret is discovered. What enabled H. W. Tilman to spend most of his life traveling to the ends of the earth? Was it money? Abandon?

I came upon a passage in which a young Army cadet bursts out during one of Tilman's guest lectures at Sandhurst. He asks all my stupid, vital questions in one:

"Please sir, how do I get on an expedition?"

"Put on your boots and go."

Blow off the maps, read this book, find out your boot size and go.

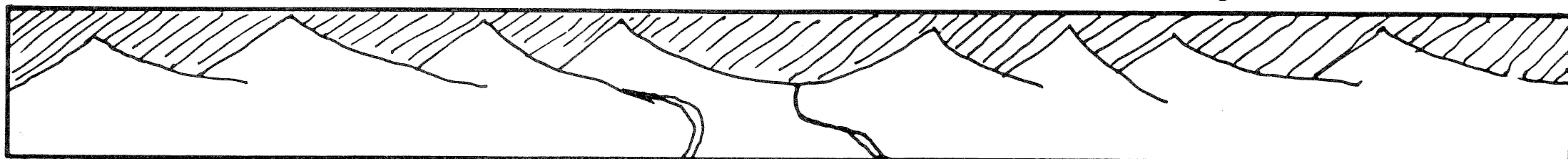
- Bob Hey

CAR CAMPING

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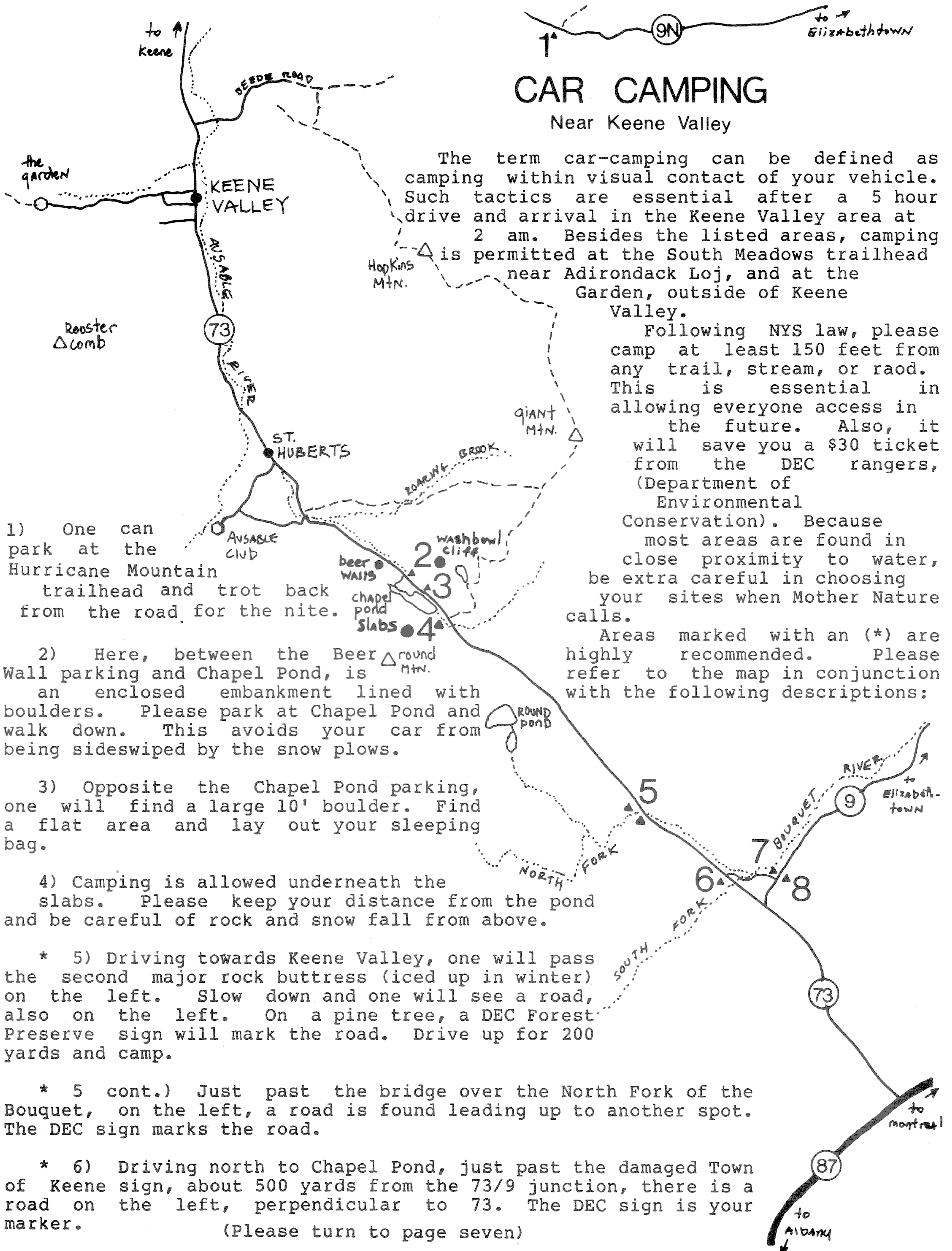
* 7) As you drive up route 9, turn left immediately after the mileage sign to Elizabethtown and Platsburg.

8) Coming from the Northway, turning on route 9, you will find a road to the right, in the middle of the turn, just after the 9 North sign.



CAR CAMPING

Near Keene Valley



The term car-camping can be defined as camping within visual contact of your vehicle. Such tactics are essential after a 5 hour drive and arrival in the Keene Valley area at 2 am. Besides the listed areas, camping is permitted at the South Meadows trailhead near Adirondack Loj, and at the Garden, outside of Keene Valley.

Following NYS law, please camp at least 150 feet from any trail, stream, or road. This is essential in allowing everyone access in the future. Also, it will save you a \$30 ticket from the DEC rangers, (Department of Environmental Conservation). Because most areas are found in close proximity to water, be extra careful in choosing your sites when Mother Nature calls.

Areas marked with an (*) are highly recommended. Please refer to the map in conjunction with the following descriptions:

1) One can park at the Hurricane Mountain trailhead and trot back from the road for the nite.

2) Here, between the Beer Wall parking and Chapel Pond, is an enclosed embankment lined with boulders. Please park at Chapel Pond and walk down. This avoids your car from being sideswiped by the snow plows.

3) Opposite the Chapel Pond parking, one will find a large 10' boulder. Find a flat area and lay out your sleeping bag.

4) Camping is allowed underneath the slabs. Please keep your distance from the pond and be careful of rock and snow fall from above.

* 5) Driving towards Keene Valley, one will pass the second major rock buttress (iced up in winter) on the left. Slow down and one will see a road, also on the left. On a pine tree, a DEC Forest Preserve sign will mark the road. Drive up for 200 yards and camp.

* 5 cont.) Just past the bridge over the North Fork of the Bouquet, on the left, a road is found leading up to another spot. The DEC sign marks the road.

* 6) Driving north to Chapel Pond, just past the damaged Town of Keene sign, about 500 yards from the 73/9 junction, there is a road on the left, perpendicular to 73. The DEC sign is your marker.

(Please turn to page seven)