



# **The John Muir Trail 1959:: one family, one month, 200 miles**

*Margaret Olesen*

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This version includes over 60 full color photographs. A B&W interior version is also available for less. In 1959, Hank Olesen led his small family on an adventure, or an “ex...peddience in the moun...tains” as he liked to say, with a put-on accent. After many campouts, and several one- to three-day hikes in the Mammoth Lakes, California area, Hank decided to tackle the BIG ONE, the John Muir Trail, which today is the highest elevation portion of the later completed Pacific Crest Trail. Begun in 1915, by 1959 the John Muir Trail was the only established long-distance trail in the Sierra, starting in the north at Yosemite and ending at Mt. Whitney, elev. 14,505 ft. Hank was a Boy Scout, an Eagle Scout, and in the 1950s he was a Boy Scout leader. His son Jack, 13, was a Boy Scout working on his Silver Moccasin badge and John Muir Trail badge. Margaret was a willing, if somewhat intimidated, participant. However, it was Margaret who recorded the adventure in a small notebook with a stubby pencil and who took beautiful Kodachrome slides of the spectacular scenery, many of which are reproduced in this book. Hikers who have traveled the JMT or the PCT, or are planning to, will enjoy this glimpse of what the hike was like before the modern equipment, regulations and packaged foods of today were available.

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