CHEERS TO THE AMC CUP

BY MARC CHALUFOUR

Early 19th century hikers didn’t have much specialized gear. They wore cotton and wool and leather. But hiding in plain sight in many AMC photographs from the era is a trailblazing item: a tin cup, often seen dangling from backpacks or hanging by their wire handles from belts.

An ad in the back of a 1930 edition of The Bulletin, AMC’s newsletter at the time, offered these items, embossed with AMC’s initials and “not readily attainable in the stores,” for 20 cents. A year later, The Bulletin reported sales of 401 cups.

The simple, lightweight vessel has endured, even if its origin hasn’t. Although commonly called “sierra cups” today, thanks to their popularization by the Sierra Club, the cups’ design can be traced back to AMC. In Voices for the Earth, a 1979 anthology of Sierra Club stories, Ann Gil-}

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