

**Abominable Red Snowman ('Chuchunaa')** During 1979 a Soviet expedition set out to search the Pamirs for the 'Big Foot' or 'Yeti'. All reported sightings (such as 'a hairy creature 2m tall with long arms that utters shrill screams') are carefully vetted in monthly seminars at the Darwin Museum in Moscow. This whole subject provides an intriguing mountain mystery for which we keenly await a solution.

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## Book Reviews 1979<sup>1</sup>

Compiled by Geoffrey Templeman

**Life is Meeting** John Hunt, Lord Hunt of Llanfair Waterdine (Hodder and Stoughton, 1978, pp 286, photos, maps and sketches. £6.95). Lord Hunt follows Freshfield in being only the second person to be President of both the Alpine Club and the Royal Geographical Society. His autobiography which takes us, in the words of the Publishers, from the cradle to the cross benches, is therefore an important and eagerly awaited book. We apologize to him and to our readers for having to wait even longer for the review. At the time of publication in November 1978 most of the eligible reviewers were trekking with him across E Nepal celebrating the jubilee of the first successful ascent of Mount Everest. Consequently, the review missed the 1979 Journal.

As listed on the dust cover, John Hunt's career and achievements fall naturally in 3 parts: first as a soldier, then in public service, and throughout as a mountaineer. In the book these activities are interspersed over 17 chapters. The story of Everest and his subsequent expeditions are so well known that for me, and perhaps for most members of the Club, the principal charm and interest of the book lies in its revelation of the other facets of his crowded life, particularly in the early military and mountaineering experiences.

In the introduction we gain an early clue to the source of his energy and idealism. As the eldest son, his widowed mother looked to him to fill her husband's place and live up to his standards: 'These high expectations certainly gave me an anxiety complex lest I should fail and an intensity of purpose to succeed'. Rather shy and at the expense of much youthful fun he passed first both into and out of Sandhurst setting his own standards for his subsequent military career. Something of the same spirit influenced his mountaineering, whether it was panting, face pale with sun cream, high up on the Lhotse Face or pushing himself hard in the lead on a severe rock-climb. However, this is not the biography of a single-minded zealot. He was always ready to resist the pressure to conform and to seek contacts outside military circles. His pleasure in meeting others and making friendships provides the mainspring for this book. Also his natural facility for languages, and love of natural history continually opened up new experiences, whether clad in a *lungi* as a muslim in the Chittagong bazaar or having his first taste of working with young people in the rural schools of Noakhali. With the good fortune of numerous Swiss ski-ing and climbing seasons in his youth, it was natural that while on leave from the Army in India, he should turn to the Himalaya for ambitious and highly successful two-man expeditions in the Pir Panjal, reaching 7470m on Peak 36, and climbing Nepal Peak and the Zemu Gap (after a yeti) in the Kangchenjunga massif.

War experiences followed, in Italy where he strongly advocated greater use of mountain troops, followed by peace making in Greece and post-war planning in the Allied Headquarters at Fontainebleau. While there he received the invitation to lead the 1953 Everest expedition which proved the turning point in his life. A memorandum on adventure training of soldiers sent in 1940 via Geoffrey Young to Kurt Hahn became the first link in a chain to meeting the needs of young people in peace. In 1956, he resigned from the Army to launch the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme which he ran for 10 years. This had the incidental

<sup>1</sup> Unsigned short reviews are the work of *AJ* Editorial Staff.

advantage of allowing more time than he would probably have found in the Services for mountaineering: to the Russian Caucasus and Pamirs and then a succession of expeditions leading Award winners in Greenland, Greece and the Tatra.

After being created a Peer in 1966, we are fully launched into the third phase of his life: a career in Public Service, as Chairman of the Parole Board (meeting a Silver Award Winner serving a five-year sentence!), advising on relief aid to war-torn Nigeria, and acclimatizing with some difficulty to the rarefied atmosphere of the House of Lords.

Finally, to round off an absorbing and well-written book is a chapter of Alpine reminiscences where the breath-taking moments are contrasted with more tranquil mountain memories of the kind we all cherish—to be found in Snowdonia and Glencoe, the Pyrenees, the Tatra and the Himalaya, or even on Offa's Dyke above the cottage at Llanfair Waterdine.

The clear maps are a pleasing feature of the book and the photographs—mostly Hunt's own pictures—are redeemed by 2 full-page illustrations of Elbrus and Ushba. If you only buy 2 or 3 biographies and mountaineering books a year then this should certainly be one of them.

*George Band*

**The Games Climbers Play** Edited by Ken Wilson (Diadem, 1979, pp 688, photos, cartoons £8.50). Every sport and pastime evolves and changes and to some extent reflects the preoccupations and mores of the times. Certain factors remain constant and immutable but each generation or so has its own voice and character. Anyone who wants to know what contemporary climbers, that is the most active and involved exponents are like, will find this well-chosen anthology most interesting and revealing.

Ken Wilson set himself the task of encapsulating the attitudes and achievements of his times. Therefore, the anthology concentrates on writing published in the last 20 years. But very wisely he has included earlier passages and older authors such as David Cox, Kevin Fitzgerald, Frank Smythe, Menlove Edwards and Douglas Busk. These passages provide elements of continuity and contrast that are both necessary and complementary. And his final essay 'Beginnings' by Colin Kirkus is as fresh and relevant today as it was when it was written in 1941.

This book, the engaging title of which is taken from an essay by Lito Tejada-Flores, is divided into 9 sections—each dealing with a particular aspect of mountaineering. The world of the rock climber is the first and the articles underline what a fierce, concentrated and totally committed world this has become. The Yosemite routes gave birth to a new vocabulary and their influence on rock climbing is probably similar to that of the E Alps in the 20's and 30's.

The expedition section has been kept short. Paradoxically a piece by Reinhold Messner on future trends might have been Eric Shipton speaking. Discussions on ethics, style and character, and comments on Alpine routes are all included whilst peripheral mountain pastimes and hazards, such as boulder trundling and after-dinner speaking, are dealt with in the section on part-time games.

Two very topical sections are those dealing with access to the mountains and mountain education. In the latter the various protagonists hurl verbal brickbats at one another—whilst the report on the Cairngorm tragedy does emphasize the inherent dangers of using a potentially lethal environment for educational purposes. (Incidentally, I still do not think that it is fully realized that winter storms in the Cairngorms and even sometimes in the Lake District and Snowdonia can be polar in ferocity.)

Many mountaineers will find the language and style of some contemporary writers alien and even irksome. Few literary reputations have been established through mountain literature. The liberal use of 4-letter words by men under stress is hardly novel. I expect Hannibal swore at his elephants as he crossed the Alps. The modern mania for putting it all in print, including the vagaries of excreta under emotional stress, is perhaps born of a desire for absolute realism.

As a surgeon, so familiar with stress and disorder, I am perhaps less impressed and more disinterested than most readers would be one way or another. What it does do is to anchor the writing in journalism rather than literature; it photographs the incident but does not create a fine painting.

By contrast I was glad to find the whole subject of risk and death dealt with honestly. Al Alvarez says in his foreword 'risk like fear and indeed death is a taboo subject', but I am glad to say this is now much less so than it has been this century. To accept and explore this reality is more healthy than hiding or ignoring it.

The photographs which include portraits of many of the authors are a good choice and the notes about selected articles are very apposite and informative. The cartoons by Sheridan Anderson are topical and amusing.

This anthology is entirely successful in capturing the enthusiasm, the drama, the pathos and the humour of the modern climber. This is what the Editor set out to do and in so doing has made an important historical contribution to mountaineering.

*Michael Ward*

**The Irvine Diaries** Herbert Carr (Gastons-West Col, 1979, pp 143, illustrations, £8.50) The author has performed a very worthwhile task in editing Irvine's diaries from Spitzbergen and Everest. The diaries together with the account of Irvine's early life, his school-days and his time at Oxford, give us a clear picture of the man whose name has been inextricably linked with that of Mallory ever since they disappeared on Everest in 1924.

Much has been said and written about Mallory, who was probably the leading climber of his day, but nothing had been written about Irvine and little about him was known. Sandy Irvine was only 22 when he died on Everest. During his brief manhood he had won a Blue for rowing at Oxford, had become a competent skier and in 1923 he took part in the Merton College Spitzbergen Expedition which was led by Noel Odell. It was Irvine's performance on this expedition which led to his being picked for the Everest team the following year. The book contains some hitherto unpublished photographs; there is a chapter on the Irvine Travel Trust at Oxford and a note by Frank Solari on the oxygen equipment of the 1922 and 1924 expeditions. Irvine, who was a born mechanic, was extremely critical of the equipment and had to spend a great deal of time repairing and modifying it.

The book provides interesting reading and it is good to know that Sandy Irvine's diary has taken its rightful place in the literature of the 1924 Everest expedition.

*V. S. Riseo*

**Mountaineering and its Literature** W. R. Neate (Cicerone Press, 1978, pp166, maps and photos, £6.60) With the sub-heading 'A descriptive bibliography of selected works published in the English language 1744-1976', here is a volume which has obviously been the subject of years of research by the author. The term 'selected' invites the reader to search for those items in his possession which are omitted from the Author Index—this will be a hard job. Whilst one can find (a few) minor errors in the compilation of the Index, the omissions are so few as to be unimportant. There is always the 'grey area' of books on mountain countryside, or books with only isolated chapters on mountaineering, which the author covers in his Introduction, and inevitably a favourite will be missing. The same occurs in the Appendices, which cover such items as a selection of club journals, a selection of novels not included in the main bibliography, a short title catalogue of world guide-books, etc, and again favourites will be missed. The only serious printer's error appears to be the inclusion of the details of Carr and Lister's 'Snowdonia' under the author Curtis W. Casewit! However, these are minor grumbles, and this book forms the first real bibliography of mountaineering, which will be referred to again and again.

Also included, and forming the first half of the book, are a subject index under many diverse headings, and a mountain index listing the major peaks of the countries of the world, their heights, details of first ascent and references in books. There are obviously many gaps here and, whilst interesting, I am sure that it is the author index which will prove of the most lasting value.

*Geof Templeman*

**In the Throne Room of the Mountain Gods** Galen Rowell (George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pp x, 326, maps, many photos some in colour, £10.00) This is one of the more imposing mountaineering books published during the last few years, in both size and format as well as content. Galen Rowell being the author, it was only to be expected that the photographs would be good and many of them are superb, ranking with those in other volumes in the large-format Sierra Club series. This applies mainly to the colour shots, however, as the majority of the black-and-white are little bigger than thumb-nail size in the wide margins of the text. This has been criticized as a fault, but I think gives added interest to the book as it allows many more pictures to be included and means that there is seldom a double page of text without an appropriate illustration.

The book itself is also unusual in the method of its story-telling. The prime aim is to recount the adventures of the unsuccessful 1975 American expedition to K2, but the book also

gives a very good general picture of the Karakoram region and its inhabitants, as well as fairly detailed descriptions of the previous attempts on and ascents of the mountain itself. The contents are split into 9 major sections, most of which are again split into 4 sub-sections, and of these 4 at least one will be about the progress of the current expedition, one about an historical attempt, and others about local colour or some topic such as extreme climbing. This certainly gets away from the standard 'customs shed-base camp-summit attempt-and back' format and generally works well, as the switch of individual subjects within the overall Karakoram framework maintains interest. The sections on the '75 expedition, complete with obligatory diary excerpts, are in the modern tradition of showing warts and all and a far cry from the more genteel prose of 'Five Miles High'. The curious epilogue, in which the team were accused of being involved with the CIA in placing listening devices on the Chinese border, brings one back to the present with a bump.

Galen Rowell has written an interesting, beautifully illustrated book on the Karakoram and one that is not dear for the standard of production.

*Geof Templeman*

**Collins Guide to Mountains and Mountaineering** John Cleare (Collins, 1979, pp 208, 285 × 225mm, 17 colour and 130 black and white illustrations, 65 maps, £7.95) This is a magnificent volume, copiously illustrated and destined to be an inspiration to both the armchair and the expedition mountaineer. The only comparable work, *The World Atlas of Mountaineering*, (Nelson, 1969) is long out of print and in these fast-developing times now substantially out of date also. The coverage here is world wide and, while one might argue over the balance, there really is a wealth of information about all the worthwhile ranges. Definitely a 'best buy'.

While discussing a book of this breadth, I may perhaps be permitted to digress into the topic of criticism in detail. This book will undoubtedly be the subject of microscopic scrutiny by 'experts' in search of errors and it is possible that they will find some. What has to be questioned is the expertise of the 'experts'. Spellings for example are often a matter of transliteration and thus of convention adopted; there is no absolute fact. Heights, too, are often based on meagre observations of unknown technical quality and are either rounded off to a degree which recognizes this limitation or else are assigned a value based on one particular survey not necessarily any better than the rest. Measured heights depend on snow cover and on refraction conditions during the observations, so once again there are no absolute facts.

It is of course true that errors are eliminated by such scrutiny, but there is confusion in many minds between verifiable fact, agreed convention and mere opinion. The would-be critic has to be extremely careful of the exact status of his facts before parading them against another's.

*Edward Pyatt*

**Himalaja e Karakorum** Mario Fantin (Club Alpino Italiano, Milan, 1979, 250 pp, 120 black and white illustrations, 32 line-drawings and maps) One wonders if Himalayists will find a more useful work of reference than this. It contains a geographical description of the two major Asiatic ranges, with a main part devoted to surveying mountaineering history. Almost 650 named peaks are indexed and no less than 1580 expeditions chronologically reviewed, each one with its principal achievements and several sources of reference. There is also a section on cartography. Illustrations are large and impressive. Particularly appealing are those of the Karakorum. Readers will find, no doubt, errors here and there, but this was inevitable, considering the vast amount of information this work offers. Thus, for the first time we find now gathered into a single volume the information that hitherto existed scattered in many books and journals and in many countries.

*Evelio Echevarría*

**The ABC of Avalanche Safety** E. R. LaChapelle (The Mountaineers, Seattle, Wa, 2nd edition 1978, pp 56, diagrams, paperback, npq) A succinct account of the bare essentials of the subject.

**Everest—Impossible Victory** Peter Habeler (Arlington Books, 1979, pp 223, 155 × 240mm, illustrations black and white and colour, £6.50) This was the winner of the race to produce the first book in this country on the oxygen-less ascent of Mount Everest. It is interesting and reads well, though if the translation could have been checked by a mountaineer the result

might have been somewhat less bizarre in places. The black and white pictures are undistinguished.

The book is an ecological disaster. A larger-than-average page size has a print block which only occupies 40% of the area (the figure for the *AJ* is 67%), due to excessively large margins. The print is big enough for very poor eyesight. In fact it adds up to only 50,000 words while looking a great deal larger.

*Edward Pyatt*

**Canoeing down Everest** Mike Jones (Hodder & Stoughton, 1979, pp 192, illustrations black and white and colour, £6.50) An account of a canoe descent of the Dudh Kosi river in 1976, an aquatic feat of magnitude comparable with the ascent of a nearby Himalayan giant. It is sad to learn that the author was drowned 2 years later in attempting a similar trip on the Braldu.

**Sangay Survived** Richard Snailham (Hutchinson, 1978, pp 192, illustrations and sketch maps, £5.50) The account of the accident to a British scientific expedition to the Ecuadorian volcano, Sangay, when the party was overwhelmed by an eruption of ejected rocks and ash. Two members were killed, while 3 others suffered injuries which involved a long and painful retreat before they came finally to hospital.

Volcanic activity on this mountain is so unpredictable at present that any climbing attempt must run the gauntlet. This time they lost. A period of observation from a distance might indeed have detected some sort of periodicity, but the expedition was under pressure from a rival French outfit which they were anxious to out-distance. Afterwards the French played a big part in the rescue.

**Brighouse Hotel** Susan Pleydell (Collins, 1977, pp 221, £3.95) A climbing novel set in a W Scottish valley, which, though not for mountaineers, does not give too much of a wrong impression to the non-climber. Judging from the care-free roping technique displayed on the dust jacket, it is no surprise to find that 3 mountain rescue episodes are featured in its pages. Literary mountaineering is certainly a grim business.

**Avalanche Handbook** R. I. Perla & M. Martinelli (US Dept of Agriculture Forest Service, 1976, pp 238, illustrations and diagrams, paperback, £4.95 in the UK) A well-illustrated, technical, though non-mathematical, account of all aspects of this important mountain phenomenon.

**On Mountains—Thinking about Terrain** John Jerome (Gollancz, 1979, pp 262, a few diagrams and illustrations, £6.50) Initially the book made a bad impression. On the second page, the American author, striving for trendiness, trails the vulgar mediaeval name for Peak Cavern at Castleton and then tells us it is a hill. Soon afterwards we are told that the first ascent of the Matterhorn marked the start of British attraction to the Alps and that the SW face of Everest is the 'last unclimbed face'.

Thereafter the author makes a very reasonable recovery, when he continues with worthy attempts at a diverse range of mountain topics like plate tectonics, the origins of mountains, the nature of snow and ice, mountain plants and animals and so on. The final result is a wide-ranging, if not particularly profound, dissertation on mountain topics, which should interest many mountain lovers.

Many more illustrations, and particularly diagrams, would have enhanced the value of the text.

*Peter Hillman*

**The Big Walls** Reinhold Messner (translated by Audrey Salkeld) (Kaye & Ward, 1978, pp 144, 10½ × 9 in, illustrations colour and black and white, £7.95) By now Messner has climbed most of them, so is the person best qualified to write. It reveals, for the umpteenth time, what it is like out at the front, for those who still seek to know, surely by now a decreasing number. Every wall has a short history, followed by an account of the author's experiences on it; sometimes a few paragraphs of introspection in italic are dropped in between.

A highly irritating principle has been adopted of making section headings out of part of the first sentence, eg we have 'Wearily we sought the route' in bold, followed on the next line by 'upwards'.

The author is well served by his translator, for the text flows remarkably freely; the pictures too are first class.

**100 Hikes in the Alps** Ira Spring & Harvey Edwards (Cordee, Leicester, 1979, pp 224, illustrations and maps, £3.95 softback) The book describes walkers' routes, some long, some short, spread throughout the Alpine countries from France to Yugoslavia, with a few from the Pyrenees thrown in. It is a planning rather than a field work and as such is crammed with useful ideas. To get maximum benefit from the information on times and distances the reader has somehow to measure his abilities against those of the authors, who point out in guidance that both are in their fifties.

It originates from USA where it is simultaneously published by The Mountaineers of Washington (in fact it carries only their name on the spine). The American origins emerge in some curious statements, such as—'the palatial hotels where Whymper and Mallory planned their fabulous trips. . .'. It is a worthwhile buy for walkers—though who would want to share the Tour de Mont Blanc with 10,000 people a year or the Dolomiti de Brenta with 'thousands of hikers on sunny weekends'? Better, though much less glamorous, the lower hills of Provence or Languedoc.

*Edward Pyatt*

**Mountaineering in Scotland and Undiscovered Scotland** W. H. Murray (originals of 1947 & 1951 photo-reprinted in a common cover, pp 252 and 232 with original illustrations, Diadem, 1979, £8.25) Reviews: see *AJ* 56 198 and 58 150.

**K2—the Savage Mountain** C. Houston & R. Bates (original of 1954 photo-reprinted, pp 396, Diadem, 1979, £4.95 softback) Review: see *AJ* 60 417.

**The Last Blue Mountain** R. Barker (original of 1959 photo-reprinted, pp 210, Diadem, 1979, £3.95 softback) Review: see *AJ* 65 113.

**On the Heights** W. Bonatti (original of 1964 photo-reprinted with new illustrations, pp 248, Diadem, 1979, £3.95 softback) Review: see *AJ* 70 172.

**Climbing in North America** C. Jones (original of 1976 photo-reprinted, pp 392, Diadem, 1979, £5.95 softback) Review: see *AJ* 82 260.

**From the Ocean to the Sky** Edmund Hillary (Hodder & Stoughton, 1979, pp 272, illustrations, some colour, map, sketches and appendices, £6.50). The most ingenious approach route to a mountain yet evolved—around 2400km by jet boat up the River Ganges from the island of Ganga Sagar in the Bay of Bengal to Nandaprayag on the Alaknanda tributary; then on foot to Badrinath (a very humdrum expedition now) and so to the summits of Nar Parbat and Akash Parbat, along with the usual crop of near-disasters.

The snag is that to appreciate the first part you need to be a jet-boater, while the subsequent mountaineering is undistinguished and in no way gripping. No doubt it was all very exciting to be there with them, but none of the excitement transfers.

*Edward Pyatt*

**Die Mineralien der Schweiz** Max Weibel (Birkhauser Verlag, 1973, pp 186, maps and photos, many in colour, npq) A pocket-size guide to the minerals of Switzerland, grouped according to both the minerals themselves and the areas in which they are found.

**Notre Flore Alpine** Elias Landolt (French version by Roger Corbaz) (Club Alpin Suisse, 1969, pp 236 + pp 72 of colour plates, npq) The second edition of the SAC's guide to Alpine flora.

**Kathmandu Valley** Robert & Linda Fleming (Kodansha, 1978, pp 139, many colour plates, maps, £2.50) This is volume 61 in the 'This Beautiful World' series of small-format Japanese publications which feature numerous excellently produced colour photographs. The authors, who are resident in the valley, have produced a book which, whilst the obvious attraction is in the pictures, forms a good guide to the city itself, as well as to the people and places of the surrounding area.

**My Favourite Mountaineering Stories** John Hunt (Lutterworth, 1978, pp 128, drawings, £3.50) A volume in the 'Favourite Stories' series, which has been graced in previous books by such editors as Yehudi Menuhin and Gerald Durrell. The extracts range from 'Scrambles' to

Everest '53 and '75, by way of Winthrop Young, Smythe and Buhl, amongst others, with 2 welcome interjections of poetry by Willfrid Noyce. Everybody has their own favourites from among the wealth of mountaineering literature, and most will recall with pleasure reading the stories printed here.

**100 Scalate Estreme** Walter Pause & Jürgen Winkler (Görlich Editore, Milan, 1975, pp 208, 100 full page photos, diagrams, L.12,000) The Italian edition of 'Im Extremen Fels'.

**Walking Guide to the Tour of Mont Blanc** Andrew Harper (Cicerone Press, 1977, pp 100, photos, maps, diagrams) A useful paperback guide to the official Tour du Mont Blanc, with variations of the author's own choosing.

**A la Conquête de l'Impossible** Yannick Seigneur (Flammarion, 1977, pp 206, photos, npq, French paperback) The story of Seigneur's ascents in the Alps and Himalayas.

**The International Directory of Mountaineering Clubs & Organizations** Pokorny, Peavler & Griffin (Mountain Press, Montana, 1979, pp xii, 162, paperback large format, \$5.00) This publication, sponsored by the Chicago Mountaineering Club, lists all the mountaineering clubs and rescue organizations that the authors have been able to trace. The greater majority have the secretary or president's name and address, together with titles of club publications where applicable. North America is very fully covered in the first 76 pages, the British Isles take up 29 pages in what appears to be fairly full coverage, but, as the authors say, it has been more difficult to be as detailed for the rest of the world. Obviously, any such publication is only as good and up to date as the information received and a plea is made for corrections and additions.

**Faces of Everest** Major H. P. S. Ahluwalia (Vikas/George Allen & Unwin, 1978, pp xxvi, 238, photographs, many in colour, maps, diagrams, £12.50) Major Ahluwalia's large format book gives an account of the 42 expeditions which attempted Everest, from the first in 1921 to the South Korean expedition in 1977. It is the author's fifth mountaineering book and provides a concise history of the mountain. Although profusely illustrated, it is a pity that, in such a comparatively expensive book, the standard of reproduction of many of the colour plates is below that of other recent mountaineering books.

**Sights & Scenes of Switzerland** (Swiss National Tourist Office, 1979, pp 108, illustrations, npq) A picture book which contrasts Swiss life and scenery as seen by the camera and by the artist. As usual with SNTO publications, the standard of production is excellent.

**Life Among the Pathans (Khattaks)** Buster Goodwin (Privately published, 1969, pp 155, maps, photos, paperback, £1.00) The author's experiences of serving for 23 years, in both civil and military appointments, among the Khattak tribes of the North West Frontier Province.

**8000 Jahre Walliser Gletschergeschichte** Walter Schreebeli/Friedrich Röthlisberger (Verlag Schweizer Alpen-Club, 1976, pp 152, many diagrams, maps and photos, npq) Two immensely detailed studies of glacier form and movement, the first in the Val de Bagnes, the second in the regions of Zermatt, Ferpècle and Arolla.

**Himalayas** Yoshikazu Shirakawa (Abrams, New York, 1977, pp 128, many colour and black and white illustrations, maps, npq.) The cheaper edition of the large format book of photos, mostly aerial, of the Himalayas, noted in *AJ* 82. Beautifully produced, the feeling remains that the more successful pictures—and they are superb—are those which are in muted, 'natural' colours, and that the brilliant pinks and golds of certain weather conditions give an effect that is somehow unreal.

**Das Matterhorn im Bild** Anton Gattlen, Laura & Giorgio Aliprandi (Rotten-Verlag, Brig, 1979, pp 200, many illustrations, npq) A picture-book giving illustrations from virtually every publication that featured the Matterhorn from the very earliest up to Rey's book of 1904. Whymper is, of course, well represented, and there are a number of hotel and railway advertising pictures. The book is well produced, with minimal text in German, and several of the illustrations are in colour.

**Nos Cartes Nationales** (Club Alpin Suisse, 1979, pp 76 of text, plus many pages of maps and photographs, some in colour, npq) This slim book, produced in collaboration with the Swiss Federal Topographical Service, gives the history of official map-making in Switzerland from the mid-19th century to the present day. It includes many examples of the maps produced, together with photographs of the surveyors at work and methods of reproduction and will be a delight to anyone with an interest in maps.

**Fitness on Foot** Peter Gillman (*World's Work/Sunday Times*, 1978, pp 128, photos, paperback, £1.00). The latest in a series of 'fitness' books sponsored by the *Sunday Times* covering jogging, orienteering and similar activities, with the emphasis on the general fitness achieved by such exercise. The author is well known as a writer on mountaineering topics and this slim paperback concentrates on hill walking and, to a lesser extent, climbing; without entering into too much detail, a wealth of information is given, chiefly related to personal experiences of the author and his family. In style, this reviewer was reminded of Kirkus's 'Let's Go Climbing'—no bad recommendation?

**Kanchenjunga—First Ascent from the North-East Spur** Col. Narinder Kumar (East-West Publications/Vision Books, 1978, pp 156, photos, many in colour, maps, npq) The story of the 1977 Indian Army Expedition which climbed Kanchenjunga by the N-E spur, the route attempted by Paul Bauer's 2 German expeditions in the 30's. The book can be called a 'normal' expedition account, without any of the soul-searching and personal animosities which have been a feature of a number of recent books. Whilst the narrative lacks the dramatic touches which would accentuate the difficulties of the climb, there is no doubt that it was a magnificent achievement. The coloured illustrations show that the spur has lost none of its incredible ice- and snow-formations since Bauer's day and it is only a pity that, although the blurb speaks of the book as being 'lavishly splashed with rare, beautiful colour', the reproduction of these is not up to the standard expected in modern publishing.

**Himalayan Handbook** Joydeep Sircar (Sircar, Calcutta, 1979, pp 176, Rs.30.00) Vol. I, A-K of this work was noted in the 1976 *AJ*, but now we have the complete listing of every mountain over 20,000ft (6096m) in the Himalaya/Karakoram, with brief details of every attempt and ascent. Information given includes the name of the leader, height reached, names of climbers reaching the summit and references for further reading, as well as brief information on any special aspect of the mountain or climb. Jimmy Roberts in his Introduction calls the book a 'veritable treasure-house of information', and the author has obviously carried out a vast amount of research. A very worth-while compilation.

**When Men & Mountains Meet** John Keay (John Murray, 1977, pp x, 278, maps, photos and drawings, £6.50)

**The Gilgit Game** John Keay (John Murray, 1979, pp xiv, 278, maps, photos and drawings, £7.95) Two fascinating books which tell the story of the early explorers of the Western Himalayas, the first starting in 1820 and taking the story on to 1875, the second extending it to 1895, in which latter period the great game of military brinkmanship was played out around Gilgit between Russia and Britain. All the familiar names are here: Younghusband, Godwin-Austen, Moorcroft, but also we meet many lesser-known characters, some of incredible endurance and eccentricity, whilst weaving through the whole tale are the local rulers, playing their own constantly changing game for their own ends.

**Trango. The Nameless Tower** Jim Curran (Dark Peak, 1978, pp 176, photos, some in colour, £6.95). The story of the second, and successful, assault on Trango Tower is told here by Jim Curran, not one of the 'ace' members of the climbing party, but one of the 2 climbing cameramen who accompanied them. It is therefore told by a support member, who is able to take a detached view of the proceedings, and also, as one relatively inexperienced in high-altitude climbing, convey to the average reader the miseries of movement and camp life at altitude. The book briefly tells the story of the '75 attempt, with Martin Boysen's famous knee-jamming incident and then proceeds through a normal approach march-climb-march out format. As a first production from Dark Peak, the book is well set out, with some excellent

photographs, and suffers only from a number of spelling and proof-reading errors which, unfortunately, are becoming the norm these days in publications of every type.

**Everest. Expedition to the Ultimate** Reinhold Messner (Kaye and Ward, 1979, pp 254, maps, diagrams and photos, many in colour, £6.75) The second book to appear this year on the Messner/Habeler oxygen-less climb of Everest (see the Habeler review above) this is an infinitely better production from the point of view of quality of lay-out and illustration but a strangely unsatisfying one from the point of view of content. No complaints about the quality of the translation here, it is just that Messner's convoluted thoughts and conversations about 'no oxygen' go on and on. Obviously, this is the whole point of the book, and no one wishes to take away the magnificence of the achievement, but the use of the term 'Death Zone' for the upper reaches of the mountain and section headings such as 'Soul in Transit' give some indications of the type of thing that doesn't appeal to this reviewer. The main section of the book is, of course, the 1978 Austrian Alpine Club Everest Expedition, but it starts with a lengthy section on the 1924 expedition and ends with a 25-year history of the mountain since 1953. I hesitate to say it, but I found these the most interesting parts.

**William Pars. Journey Through the Alps** Andrew Wilton (De Clivo Press, 1979, pp 72, illustrations, many in colour, npq, text in English, German and French, 36 x 29cm). In 1770, Lord Palmerston made a tour of Switzerland, accompanied for much of the journey by Horace-Bénédict de Saussure, and invited along a professional topographer called William Pars. Many of the watercolours that Pars painted are illustrated in this magnificent book, published by Walter Amstutz and the De Clivo Press with the support of the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research, which makes a fitting companion volume to 'Turner in Switzerland' (see *AJ* 83 260). Whilst Pars was certainly no Turner, his paintings have the freshness, directness of approach and attention to detail that one would expect from a topographer. A bibliography, biography and catalogue of the Swiss drawings complete the book.

**The Mountain Spirit** Ed. by Michael Tobias and Harold Drasdo (Gollancz 1980, pp 264, illustrations, £7.95). The dust jacket states that the authors 'hope to reveal a unanimous passion stemming from the mountain: a passion which . . . continues to exert an unusual influence upon art, introspection and culture'. To this end, they have assembled writings from mountain authors as diverse as T. S. Blakeney and Galen Rowell, Evelio Echevarría and John Gill. A considerable part of the book consists of articles on Eastern thought and mysticism, however, and even Samuel Beckett is included. This makes it very much a book for the soul searchers seeking the eternal 'Why do we do it', although whether the answer will be found here is doubtful. The illustrations, which could have been splendid, are unfortunately poorly reproduced.

**The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Ice Skating** Ed. Mark Heller (Paddington Press, 1979, pp 223, 240 x 180mm, illustrations and sketches, £6.50) Why we have this for review is unclear' but, if you want to read all about ice-skating, here it is.

**Rock Climbing** Stan Wroe (Oxford Illustrated Press, 1979, pp 92, 245 x 185mm, illustrations, £4.50) An up-to-date and reasonably comprehensive account of rock-climbing techniques. The list of Clubs seems short on the older ones, maybe they are deemed fuddy-duddy for the up-and-coming. The illustration of the shoulder belay (obsolete and only put in for historical completeness and to be knocked) is not what we were taught. The rope to the moving climber was taken in or fed out under the arm, not over the shoulder as shown; it was even known to work on numerous occasions. The illustrations form a striking collection, but the reproduction is often poor.

**In the Deserts of this Earth** Uwe George (Hamish Hamilton, 1978, pp 307 illustrations some colour, sketches and diagrams, £7.50) A translation of a German work of 1976. The deserts of the world are increasing in size since mountain ranges prevent the access of moisture-laden winds which might fertilize them. Many fascinating examples are given of the adaptation of life to desert conditions.

**Everest Unmasked—The First Ascent without Oxygen** A film made by Leo Dickinson for HTV and shown during April 1979 on Independent Television. It was an outstanding success, certainly one of the finest mountaineering films yet made.



98 Hang Gliding in the Oberland (Photo: HTV)

**Sailing above the Alps** A film made by Leo Dickinson for HTV, featuring Eric Jones learning the skills of hang gliding, was shown on Independent Television in early January 1980. There are magnificent backgrounds of the giants of the Bernese Oberland. This is perhaps of special interest to mountaineers now that news comes of a descent by hang glider of a French climber from 7600m on K2. Descent to Base Camp took 13 minutes and was rated 'better than fixed ropes'.

**Scottish Mountain Climbs** Donald Bennet (Batsford, 1979, pp 192, 255 x 190mm, copiously illustrated, £10) This is a general mountaineers' guidebook to selected Scottish mountains with rock-climbing, snow- and ice-mountaineering, walking and ski-mountaineering all featured. The choice is the author's own and it is wide ranging. The book is outstandingly illustrated by 187 black and white photographs, the large format offering plenty of scope for diversity in size and aspect ratio. There are sketch maps also. One would happily follow the author's lead into these various activities. In these over-guidebooked days a general approach of this sort may well be all that is needed, the detail in the field being left to the initiative of the reader.

**The illustrated 'Origin of Species'** Charles Darwin (Abridged and introduced by R. E. Leakey) (Faber & Faber, 1979, pp 240, 250 x 210mm, illustrated in colour and black and white, sketches and maps, £8.95) An abridged version of the 6th edition of Darwin's great work, incorporating his answers to the arguments put up against his theories, and annotated with details of developments up to the present day in his wide range of subjects. In addition to the astounding advances he made in evolutionary biology, Darwin was one of the first to grasp the principles of the evolution of landforms and particularly of mountains. This is a beautiful book that every one will wish to possess.

**Look behind the Ranges** Hamish MacInnes (Hodder & Stoughton, 1979, pp 271, illustrations, some colour and sketch maps, £7.50) This makes very enjoyable reading. It would seem to be as revealing about the post-War climbing scene in the great ranges as was Borthwick's *Always a Little Further* about the Scottish climbing scene of the 1930s. It tells of the

author's adventures in many parts of the world—New Zealand, the Himalaya, the Alps, Scotland and so on—in various expeditions with assorted objectives and in the making of television spectaculars and films. He is certainly a man who gets things done. The stories may have gained somewhat in the telling, but who cares? They are good stories and they are interestingly told.

The format is oversize, the type and the margins both large, but this is a modern publishing trend, making purchasers feel they are getting their money's worth. The price seems high, but prices always rise faster than our mental acceptance of increasing rates. Even so, it is enjoyable reading and should not be missed.

**Il s'ont conquis l'Himalaya** Bernard Pierre (Plon, 1979, pp 250 in French, illustrations, many colour and sketch plans, paperback, npq) Our member and friend Bernard Pierre has produced a succinct and highly readable account of Himalayan exploration, which, though it contains little or nothing that is new (little new remains to be said on this subject, anyway!) should be widely read by his countrymen and many others here and elsewhere who can cope with what seems fairly straightforward French.

There is an interesting and wide-ranging selection of historical pictures, but the reproduction of some of them leaves something to be desired.

**Fifty Classic Climbs of North America** S. Roper & A. Steck (Diadem, 1979, pp 324, 275 × 205mm, many illustrations, maps, £12) Similar in approach to the Wilson books of Britain or the Rebuffat books for the Alps, this one covers half a continent. The range of climbs is wide from the snows of Alaska to the sun-baked sandstone of the SW deserts. It will undoubtedly serve to point visitors from far off in the right direction. What it will do for American mountaineers is less certain; for them it would appear to cover too much ground too scantily. Each route is adequately treated with history, details of line and so forth. The pictures are good, but there is an awful lot of blank paper which might have been utilized to make them bigger; there are occasions when designers of books seem to lose sight of what books are really for—the conveying of information. As a casual buy it is expensive, even though worth it in terms of pictures and words per unit cost.

**Yosemite Climber** compiled by George Meyers (Diadem Books & Robbins Mountain Letters, 1979, pp 96, 275 × 215mm, illustrations—64 colour, 16 black and white, npq, believed to be £7.95) The colour pictures are excellent and make this a very beautiful coffee-table book, if your guests can stand the shock of the more than vertical and almost unsupported action. It would not be much help in finding routes, though it might indicate some which you would be too frightened ever to approach. The text comprises 4 isolated essays by different authors, which help to give an overall picture of this, the world's leading rock-climbing centre.

**Calculated Risk** Dougal Haston (Diadem, 1979, pp 190, £4.95) His friends tell us that this contains much that is autobiographical. The hero has no time for most of the human race—for him women only serve one purpose, while all but a handful of men are dismissed as non- or inadequate climbers.

The descriptions of climbing will never be bettered, but nevertheless are too technical for the lay reader, who will need much more than a glossary to understand what is going on. The pattern is coming to be standard—a hard rock-climb, a serious ice-climb and the inevitable dramatic rescue. It was left open to many sequels—what a pity it is that there will never be any!

The irony has been pointed out of the similarity between an incident in the book where a skier escapes death on the Riondaz above Leysin and the tragedy which cost the life of the author on this same little mountain in January 1977. Is ski-ing these particular slopes a sort of Russian Roulette?

For once a book with reasonable size of print block and reasonable margins. Buy it to learn what the leading climbers think of the rest of us.

*Michael Craig*

The following expedition or other short reports have been received:

**Scottish Peruvian Andes Expedition 1976** (pp 22, +6 of maps and photos) The Huayanay Group of the Cordillera Vilcabamba.

**Norman Croucher Peruvian Andes Expedition '78** (pp 16, maps and photos, £1) Cordillera Blanca.

**Spedizione Monte Api** (pp 2 + maps, diagram and photo) South face of Api, 1978.

**Cambridge Garhwal Himalaya Expedition 1977** (pp 51, maps, numerous photos) Rishi Kot and ornithology.

**Nordland Expedition 1978** Royal Navy and Royal Marines Mountaineering Club (pp 32 + 2 of photographs, maps) Tysfjord and Austvagoya, Arctic Norway.

**Kishtwar Himalaya Expedition 1978** The City University/Brunel University (pp 54 + 12 of photographs, map, etc) Ascent of Brammah I (6416m) by party of 4, 2 of whom died on descent.

**The South of England East Kulu Expedition 1978** (pp 16 + maps, etc) Ascents of Devachen, White Sail and others.

**North of England Kishtwar Expedition 1978** (pp 44, maps) Barnay and Chiring valleys.

**Oxford Expedition to the Hindu Kush 1977** (pp 32, maps) Quazi Deh region.

**Sanctuary Seventy Eight** (pp 16, map, diagram) 1978 British Garhwal Himalayan Expedition to Nanda Devi. An attempt on the SW face, resulting in the death of Ben Beattie.

**A Patagonian Handbook** (pp 26, maps, diagrams) 1978 British Caledonian Airways Cerro Torre Expedition. Attempt by 2-man team on the E face. A new era in sponsorship?

**The Scottish Himalayan Expedition 1978** (pp 6, map, photo) An attempt on Choricho, Karakoram.

**The British Kangchenjunga Expedition 1979** (pp 6) Brief report of the successful 4-man attempt.

**Thui II. The North London Hindu Kush Expedition 1978** (pp 32, maps, photos) The successful ascent.

**Expedition to the Ahaggar Mountains, Southern Algeria, 1979** (pp 89, maps, photos, diagrams) Report of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers expedition to cross the Ahaggar from S to N on foot.

**University of Southampton Himalayan Expedition 1977** (pp 248 + drawings, with maps, photographs, diagrams) As with the previous year's expedition, this is a very comprehensive report of an expedition to the Frontier District of Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir state. One half of the team concentrated on ornithology and their report takes up a good portion of the book, whilst the other carried out exploratory mountaineering in the Zangskar range and studied villages in the Markha valley.

**The Tempest Anderson Collection of Photographs at Yorkshire Museum** (pp 14 + pp 11 of photos) An offprint from the Geological Curators Group Newsletter. Tempest Anderson was, amongst other things, a distinguished amateur geologist, photographer, surgeon, member of the AC and of other bodies too numerous to mention. His collection of some 5000 photographs is housed at the Yorkshire Museum and this brief selection shows some of the more interesting ones connected with volcanic activity. Surely, however, in view of Anderson's Alpine climbs, plate 7B titled 'Two Icelanders, 1890 or 1893' should be re-titled 'Alpine Guides in the 1890's'?

**Portrait of a Pioneer. Sir Arnold Lunn, 1883-1974** (De Clivo Press, Zurich, pp 20, portraits) This is the text of the Arnold Lunn Memorial Lecture given by Walter Amstutz on 10 May 1979, held under the auspices of the Ski Club of Great Britain and the Alpine Ski Club.