

Book Reviews 1986

Compiled by Geoffrey Templeman

Menlove. *The Life of John Menlove Edwards*

Jim Perrin

Victor Gollancz, 1985, pp 348, photos, £14.95.

I like this excellent book, in spite of the author's sometimes weird interludes. Perhaps the moment of maximum aberration is reserved for the final *coup de bizarrerie*, when Perrin informs his readers, four pages from the end, that they have wasted their time in reading so far, unless, that is, they happen to agree with his thesis. He does seem a touch ungrateful.

The book is about the life and, to a lesser extent, the climbs, of John Menlove Edwards. He was born in 1910 to a family that was clerical, poor, and Lancastrian. He had an overcast childhood, a fierce crippled father, an overworked mother, and probably discovered climbing as an alternative to the tennis, golf, and other social pursuits which he and his siblings could not afford. Menlove reached maturity as a young psychiatrist with a busy Liverpool practice, and recognition as one of the finest rock-climbers of the thirties. He opposed the war as a pacifist, flirting briefly with the Communist Party. During and after the war his mind became increasingly unstable, until he was forced to give up his work. He climbed only occasionally during this period, but still produced one or two new routes, including the little gem 'Edwards' Effort' at Harrison's Rocks. In 1958 he committed suicide with a lethal dose of potassium cyanide.

Perrin's style is always lucid, but rather didactic. It has a function: it is intended to divorce the reader from the action. This is well illustrated in the opening remarks of the second chapter;

'We have seen that Menlove came from a close family group of high idealism and sound Christian virtue. We have seen that the father, leaning on family tradition, became increasingly stern and hopeful of high achievement for his children as his own potency failed.' (p38)

Setting aside the question of what we have actually seen or simply been told, it is clear that the style is intended to suggest an 'objective' stance from which we, the author and the readers, can view Menlove's life, and so make detached judgements. As the succeeding chapters fill out the detail of that life, so the author constructs a theory which determines, or at least explains, its course.

In the following episode Perrin describes the horribly embarrassing scene on the last day of 1936.

'Noyce's birthday was on New Year's Eve, and after dinner . . . presents were given to him. Professor Pigou, as host, gave his first. It was a Leica camera, the best of the range, complete in a box with various filters, a set of lenses of differing focal lengths, cleaning materials, a case, a film. When it

came to Menlove's turn to offer his gift, rather hesitatingly, a little bit hurt perhaps, he handed over a smaller package. Noyce opened it. It was a Leica camera—the basic model—just that.' (p182)

It was because he was Northern, middle-class, and poor that Menlove was the outsider. Although his sexuality was not at odds with Pigou's group, homosexual relations were nevertheless illegal, and in this, too, Menlove found himself apart from established society. Both the country as a whole, and his immediate circle of friends, supported the war in some form, but Menlove's pacifist commitment prevented him from joining them, and although many of his friends understood, this also served to separate him from society.

Perrin's argument, then, is that the causes of Menlove's destruction can be traced back to these external influences. Menlove fought a courageous but losing campaign against bigotry and prejudice in class, sexuality, and war. Having lost the campaign, he lost his mind.

We will return to this thesis, but there is also an inner drama, a remarkable subtextual story. One of the many attractive features of the book is the way in which Perrin frequently prefers Menlove to speak for himself, and this inner drama is revealed in Menlove's own words:

' . . . the vicious set-up of the last thirteen-plus years has made . . . [my] . . . main work virtually impossible . . . ' (p302)

This refers to his theoretical work, a treatise to which Menlove attached enormous importance. There are several similar passages, and it is apparent that Menlove considered his climbing achievements (and the recognition he received in that field) as peripheral to this 'main work'. When the work proved unusable, he blamed society for destroying his 'main work' and therefore himself.

It seems probable that Menlove contributed in some way to what he believed was the 'rejection' of his work. We all know what it is like to have hard work scrutinised and dismantled. When found wanting, we have all felt the temptation to stigmatize the critics as philistines. Criticism is frightening. But also we know that we must test our work in that crucible. Yet Menlove seems to have avoided the risk of criticism by not showing his work to anyone.

When he retired from the bustle of Liverpool and his patients, he did so partly to continue with his treatise in the solitary quiet of Hafod Owen. There he wrote:

'I'm getting on quietly with my research stuff. And incidentally feeling about thrice as fit as I did before. Seems a poor thing to do in wartime; but I think it may be my best contribution in the end. A psychologist at Liverpool University advised me in that direction; he knows something of my work, though not really enough to judge on . . . ' (p245)

It was to prove impossible for Menlove to produce works of genius in splendid isolation. Instead, both the man and his work gradually became lost. There had been no guiding criticism. The final outcome was inevitable. The tragedy is that Menlove saw this himself:

'Unfortunately I've had no adequate outside opinion on whether my theory efforts are worth going on with . . . must use my own judgement. Have been at it since '35 and would be a fool to give it up with failure unproved.' (p262)

These pitiful words echo long after the pages have been turned, and the book replaced on the shelf.

To return to Perrin; although Menlove has been allowed, in his own words, to suggest that he was the victim of his own internal conflict, the Perrin thesis is that Menlove's campaign was an 'external' one, against society. He lost, and, as members of that society, we are all to blame for the result. Perrin is not one for underplaying his hand, and I cannot help admiring the swashbuckling flourish with which he delivers his final coup:

'Anyone who can read this letter closely and with understanding, and not at the same time feel a little shamed, perhaps even in a sense inculcated, and yet at the same time thankful for the way in which Menlove had stood out for that in which he believed, and at terrible personal cost, has wasted his or her time in reading this far.' (p304!)

Well . . . Perrin is wrong, isn't he? It is possible to disagree with the Perrin thesis and still find the book an engrossing read. Perrin has, in spite of himself, allowed the reader to draw an alternative picture of Menlove's tragedy; with its origins in character rather than situation. Highly recommended, especially to Perrinophobes.

A V Saunders

Painted Mountains

Stephen Venables

Hodder and Stoughton, 1986, pp 240, maps, drawings and photos, £12.95.

This book, the first by Steve Venables and the winner of the 1986 Boardman-Tasker prize, is an account of two very different expeditions to very different parts of Kashmir. The first was a two-man trip with Dick Renshaw to the forests and meadows of Kashmir, culminating in the successful ascent of the N face of Shivling. The climb and subsequent descent took seven days, involving hard technical climbing on both rock and ice, and was complicated by bad weather on the summit day. It became more of an ordeal than it might have been after the losing of first the cooking pot and then the lighter on the bivouac below the summit. The second expedition, to the mountain deserts of the E Karakoram, was sponsored by the Alpine Club. Five Britons and five Indians finally reached this remote area, unvisited by Westerners for forty years, only to find themselves in the front-line of a war between Pakistan and India. Having escaped up the N Terong glacier, it takes them ten days of ferrying loads to establish Base Camp beneath the unclimbed Rimo peaks. The four British climbers attempt Rimo I, but two turn back after a day. So once again, the author finds himself engaged in alpine-style, technical climbing in a very committing situation, with only one partner (Victor Saunders) for company. Another four days of sustained climbing brings them within sight of easier ground, but again fatigue causes a momentary but disastrous loss of concentra-

tion. This time it is Steve's rucksack which goes flying down the mountain, and with no bivouac gear, the two have no choice but to retreat. Poor Steve! How one feels for him in that situation.

Meanwhile the Indian contingent have been busy and between them climb five smaller peaks, while Jim Fotheringham contributes a chapter (in style remarkably similar to Stephen's writing—if not told, I would not have guessed it to be by a different author) on his bold ascent of Rimo III with Dave Wilkinson. Despite the size and heterogeneous nature of this expedition, it seems to have been a very happy one, and the book ends with Stephen enjoying the hospitality of his Indian friends in Bombay.

It is a delightful book, observant, humorous without being malicious, and with a skilful use of dialogue, not common in mountaineering accounts. It is unashamedly a book about climbing rather than travelling. The journeys to and from the mountains are described entertainingly but briskly. Nor are there many moments of reflection or insight. It is the climbs themselves that constitute the bulk of the writing, and, to an unusual extent, the technical climbing is not just a difficulty to be overcome despite altitude and a heavy rucksack, but an exercising of skill and determination to be consciously relished. Steve is engagingly honest, too, about his strengths and weaknesses as a climber. The end result is a thoroughly good read, enhanced by good photos, clear maps and sketches, and useful historical summaries in the appendices.

Rob Collister

The Munros—The Scottish Mountaineering Club Hillwalkers' Guide

Ed Donald Bennet

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1985, pp 236, colour photos and maps, £10.95.

The High Mountains of Britain and Ireland. A Guide for Mountain Walkers

Irvine Butterfield

Diadem Books, 1986, pp 320, colour photos and maps, £16.95.

These two books invite comparison, for they are both intended for the same customers, but whereas *The Munros* could at a pinch be put in a rucksack, *The High Mountains* needs must be left behind on the coffee-table for which it is designed. By far the greater number of 'Munros' lie north of the Border, so four-fifths of *The High Mountains* covers the same ground as *The Munros*.

Guide-books must be the least exciting literature to read, yet *The Munros* still manages to be interesting as well as informative. At most two pages are devoted to any one mountain, though mostly each is dealt with on one. Each is given one photograph and a map is provided every second page or so. A translation of each name is given in the title for each Munro, and each description is prefaced by an often elegant descriptive paragraph. Throughout, the style is consistent and appealingly simple.

The High Mountains is altogether much lusher and somehow fussier in its layout. There are many half-page illustrations, often crossing over on to the facing page, a few full-page ones and lots of little ones too. This is a book about walks over mountains whereas *The Munros* is about mountains and walks up them. Despite its more flamboyant style and large areas of colour photos, this is a somewhat duller book to read than *The Munros*. Translations of names are

provided, but only in the Index. Appendices give information on stalking and mountain shelters. Information on maps, public transport, accommodation and of distances and times for each walk are provided in each section, so *The High Mountains* is certainly informative. Moreover, *The High Mountains* includes the mountains of England, Wales and Ireland which the more parochial *The Munros* does not.

For many, the greater range of information and the more striking illustrations, made possible by its 'coffee-table' format, will make *The High Mountains* the preferred book of the two. For many others, and I am one of them, *The Munros*, with its simpler, concise style, is a much better balanced book which provides just that sense of anticipation so essential in planning mountain exploits.

John Fairley

Welsh Rock

Trevor Jones and Geoff Milburn

Pic Publications, 1986, pp 318, photos, £16.95.

Subtitled *100 Years of Climbing in North Wales*, this anecdotal account of the development of rock-climbing in the Snowdonia area may not appear, at first glance, to be everyone's idea of a history book. For this is no stuffy tome for scholars; no more is it a definitive version of events whose sole virtue lies in some tedious authenticity. The introduction explains:

This book does not endeavour to give a balanced and analytical viewpoint of 100 years of climbing in North Wales, rather it attempts to allow the climbers of each generation to bring to life the events which took place amidst the gaunt and sombre cliffs of Snowdonia . . . instead of attempting a definitive history the writers have made a selection from their own experiences to give a personal viewpoint concerning some of the events which have shaped Welsh rock-climbing.

But just look at the front cover—if you can bear it! No middle-of-the-road Romantic, 'must be Cloggy' nonsense here: *Raped by Affection* is the name of this profanity; slate-grey and svelte, an image from the 21st century. Shocking, but superb. But, of course, there's always the back cover . . . Oh, I see, more of the same: chalk, tights, bolts—*A Statement of Youth*. But weren't they all young once? Eckenstein, OGJ, Winthrop Young, Kirkus, Edwards, Brown—even Trevor himself! And they're all here, between the contemporary covers, coming to life like characters in some great Norse saga; sailing into the unknown and carrying off the spoils of their adventures; battling against the odds:

The final pitch took eight hours and it was pitch dark when they got to the top. It was too risky to descend the ice-bound lower cliffs of the Kitchen, so they descended to Llanberis which they reached at 10pm with their clothes in tatters. One of Thomson's hands was badly frost-bitten and he was unable to use it for several weeks

—against the rules:

Pigott and Wood in combination are as unscrupulous as they are invincible. Nothing stops them, and they stop at nothing, not excluding pitons and fixed ropes. If the threatened onslaught takes place on the West Buttress, I shall not be surprised to see either of them turning up with the latest Sassolungo rock-drill and a whole belt full of pitons

—and sometimes against each other:

The important thing was that Crew had well and truly beaten Drummond by his psychological tactics . . .

Yes, this is very much a ‘modern’ history book, or perhaps ‘drama’ would be a better description, as it is more a study of the ‘actors’ themselves than their climbs; it takes a contemporary view of the early historical record, and offers a sometimes controversial account of more recent events. The authors, on occasion, seem to go out of their way to stir the pot of controversy, and to highlight inter-personal rivalry, and whilst this is a good technique for creating and sustaining interest, it is perhaps unfair at times on the characters in the play, suggesting, as it does, that competition has been the single most important force behind the development of climbing in Wales. Or perhaps it has?

The Crew era comes in for some pretty rough handling in this respect:

Open competition flourished between climbers on these cliffs. Subterfuge in passing on information, laying false trails, inventing non-existent routes on horrible pieces of rock, were common ploys pressed into service by rival parties.

It may be that Crew upset Trevor Jones by suggesting the demolition of Tremadog, a crag with which Jones has had a long and happy association, but whatever it was, the Alpha Club is unstintingly portrayed as the villain of the piece!

Whilst using characters as a framework for the story certainly brings the book alive, it also has the unfortunate effect of producing a seemingly insoluble dichotomy over continuity. As there is an inevitable overlap between each biographical ‘Act’, we either meet the actors in the wings before they’ve made their entry, or we have Scenes appearing in the wrong Act. Both happen, and it can be a little disconcerting at times; but it is a problem with which every great historian will have wrestled, unsuccessfully, at some time, so our humble ‘playwrights’ will be forgiven, I hope, for not making a significant breakthrough on this front.

The format of the book is one of its strongest features. Each double page comprises one full-page photograph (or collage), and one page of text, and this makes it extremely attractive, both to read and to skim through. And the photographs, of which about a third are in colour (I haven’t counted!), are really excellent. The old black-and-whites (of which the ones of Chris Preston on the first ascent of Suicide Wall, Pete Crew on Erosion Groove Direct, two anonymous gentlemen on Lliwedd’s Red Wall, and Dave Potts setting off up Troach with about four krabs and a few yards of tat, gave me most cause to be grateful for the age into which I was born) really bring alive the anecdotes quoted in the text. It is perhaps ungenerous, and unappreciative of the

historian's role, to suggest that some of the most gripping passages in the book are between quotation marks, but there are some real jewels of climbing literature liberally sprinkled throughout the text.

The colour photographs are superb, many of them recording important historical events, such as Livesey on the first ascent of Purr-Spire (complete with side runner!); or Redhead on Tormented Ejaculation, followed by Moffat on its completion (pre-Indian Face) as Master's Wall; or the same Redhead finishing Demons of Bosch after the poltergeist unclipped his bolt. But for me the best picture in the book is Dave Lyon's shot of brother Chris 'lost' in the middle of the magnificent, convex streaked wall of the Little Orme's Great Zawn; it breaks all the rules of photography by having a tiny subject slap in the middle of the frame, yet for once it really works, and the result is more reminiscent of Cézanne than Canon!

One of the sadder aspects of modern climbing is well illustrated in the book: the apparent demise of climbers who can write about their exploits with style and wit. The early years are full of enchanting little cameos, whereas the modern writings are summed up by the quote

You wanna know something . . . I'm pumped,

or perhaps

These runners are s...t.

Yet at the same time there are some surprising parallels to be drawn 'twixt old and new. The story of Pete Minks seconding Al Rouse across the Positron headwall, with a transistor radio blasting out, is part of folklore; but who would have dreamed that this technique had been employed some 44 years earlier by Ivan Waller, who completed the first ascent of Belle View Bastion to the soothing strains of a portable gramophone on the Terrace. The only difference was probably in the choice of music! It seems sadly ironic that whilst the latter was able to return to Tryfan this year in rude health to repeat the Bastion, Al Rouse should die in tragic circumstances on K2.

And there are salutary reminders of how tough it was in the 'good old days'—if you were staying at Helyg and wanted to climb on Cloggy, then it was simply a matter of crossing the Glyders and Snowdon first! . . . or, if you were Colin Kirkus, you would think nothing of cycling from Liverpool to Helyg and back for the weekend. Given the level of commitment of these early pioneers, it's not difficult to see how they were able to write with such conviction about their mountains.

Unfortunately the book does seem to lose its way somewhat in the last couple of chapters, where there is a mass of information, apparently just strung together in rather short, disjointed packets. But I suppose this rather reflects the current accelerated development of modern climbing: the routes fall thick and fast, but there's often not much to say about them, except that they're difficult! Yet these are small criticisms indeed, when lined up against all the good things that *Welsh Rock* has going for it. In fact, the book is probably worth it for the 'pics' alone (no, I don't really mean that, Trevor and Geoff, after all the work!); so, as part of a package containing a wealth of information, both

visual and textual—and some of it truly evocative—*Welsh Rock* should certainly get the thumbs up from the thousands of folk on whom the mountains and crags of Snowdonia exert their irresistible magnetism, and who will undoubtedly feel some affinity with, and affection towards, the images conjured up within its pages.

Malcolm Campbell

Savage Snows. The Story of Mont Blanc

Walt Unsworth

Hodder & Stoughton, 1986, pp 192, maps and photos, £10.95.

In 178 highly readable pages the author traces the exploration of Europe's summit from the earliest attempts to the first ascent in 1786, and on to the hardest present-day routes on Mt Blanc itself and on its surrounding satellites.

Although a shorter and less scholarly work than, say, Graham Brown and de Beer's 400 pages on the first ascent alone, it is both a history and a comprehensive guide to the range for the ordinary reader. A bibliography of 125 consulted works, arranged according to chapters, gives evidence of the research entailed, in addition to a well-compiled index.

The book begins with a short and easily assimilated introduction to the topography of the range, aided by two maps. Then follow chapters on the first ascent; on the first Old Brenva climb nearly 90 years later by an Alpine Club party with the brothers Melchior and Jakob Anderegg; and on some of the last climbs of the 'golden age', including the Aiguille de Bionnassay at the same time as the Matterhorn, and the Aiguille Verte by Whymper in the previous year. The narrative then moves on to the exploits of the 'Young Turks'—a slightly lesser-known group of members of the English establishment headed by Clinton Dent, whose 'only use for sacred cows was to slaughter them' and who spoke with the 'deeply affected drawl of an original Sloane Ranger'. Their achievements included the first ascent of the Zinal Rothorn, of the Aiguille Verte by the Argentière face and—at the 19th attempt—of the Dru.

The next phase is dominated by Fred Mummery, the father of guideless climbing, notwithstanding his fruitful partnership with Alexander Burgener. And how many people know that the 'Mummery Crack', which unlocked the Grépon, was first led, not by Mummery or Burgener but by the latter's farm boy, Benedict Venetz—a better rock-climber than either of the others, though much less dominant a personality? Included amongst the 32 first-class photographs which illustrate the book is Lily Bristow's snapshot of Mummery himself, climbing his crack. The next three chapters give a stimulating summary of the Young/Knobel partnership, culminating with the Mer de Glace face of the Grépon on the eve of the First World War; of post-war resumption of climbing under Armand Charlet who taught his pupils that in their profession of guide they 'must learn how to suffer'; of the entry of German nationalism into the mountain scene, with Welzenbach and Merkl leading the movement—both to be killed on Nanga Parbat in 1934; and lastly of the success of two British climbers of an earlier tradition, Smythe and Graham Brown, in pioneering three new routes on the Brenva face.

The last two chapters take the reader into the heart of modern high-grade

mountaineering, epitomized in the figure of Walter Bonatti and reaching a climax in the disaster which befell his party on the Central Pillar of Frêne in 1961, when only he and Mazeaud survived out of six members. The Pillar was to be climbed later the same year by Bonington, Whillans, Clough and Duglosz. These chapters span the change-over from siege-tactics to the modern concept of light-weight expeditions with difficult pitches not infrequently climbed unroped for extra speed.

Altogether the author has succeeded in condensing a vast amount of interest and information into a work that will appeal not only to climbers but to all who like to read about mountains. The book deserves better than its title, which could be equally well applied to any great range above the snow-line.

Edward Smyth

Helyg

Geoff Milburn

Climbers' Club, 1985, pp 256, photos and drawings, npq

This book forms part of the celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee of the opening of the Climbers' Club Hut at Helyg, first noted in history by George Borrow in 'Wild Wales' as a 'wretched hovel', which it is not now. Its importance in climbing history is that it formed the focus for a remarkable school of rock-climbers. There was a simultaneous regeneration in the Lakes led by A S Pigott, Morley Wood and others, in parallel with Jack Longland, F E Hicks, A B Hargreaves, Colin Kirkus, Menlove Edwards and their primarily Welsh school.

This book is not a continuous narrative, but almost wholly a compendium of extracts from the CC Journal and bulletins. (Raymond Greene was an early editor.) I was glad to be reminded that the Firs at Beddgelert, presided over by David Hewitt, used to be the CC headquarters in N Wales: this was an excellent place to stay, very hospitable and with excellent food. It was my Welsh HQ, too, before I became a member and switched to Helyg. Grace Hewitt was a sister-in-law of G A Lister, joint author with Herbert Carr of 'The Mountains of Snowdonia'.

There were several fathers of Helyg, S A Marples, Raymond Greene, Maurice Guinness, and above all Herbert Carr, who only became a member of the Club after being co-opted to lead the activities. It was very fortunate that Herbert lived to join the jubilee festivities which were lately attended by many senior and not so senior members; Noel Odell almost as young as ever; Ivan Waller who went up Bellevue Bastion 58 years after he had made the first ascent and, of course, Alan Hargreaves.

40 years on, though afar and asunder (reference to Harrow in honour of Ernest Grosvenor), my Helyg days and my Helyg friends remain one of the happiest and most solid foundations of my life, and it was a delight in this book to meet them again in text and pictures. Many, alas, have gone to the Valhalla they deserve, but some, including Alan Hargreaves, ABH, the Little Man, survive and ABH is, in fact, the mainstay of this book. His articles give it authenticity and authority. He was in it all, or nearly all. There were, probably are, two things unmentioned that I recall; his fastidious choice of footwear for a

climb, and that one always knew when ABH was coming from the loud and distinctive noise of his motor-car. I am particularly grateful to him, too, for his tribute to FA Stewardson who took a patient part in early ascents of Clogwyn du'r Arddu and is seldom remembered in climbing circles now. He was Professor of Physics at Leicester, had an adventurous overland journey from Nanking in 1939, was one of the wartime pioneers of radar but, at his home in Presteigne, a centre of wit, wisdom and music, always preferred to talk about his great days with ABH on Cloggy. No doubt *CCJ* gave him an elegant obituary ten years ago. [Alas, it didn't.—*Ed.*]

Geoff Milburn's real editorial triumph—I write as an ex-editor of *CCJ*—is in his selected obituaries. Who would dare choose twelve among so many? I cannot fault his selections, but what courage, and so right! (I think I would have found room for Alf Bridge.)

There is, to my regret, not much about the wartime and immediate post-war years, though there is an evocative piece by Tony Husbands. It wasn't easy to get to Helyg then: a dirty crowded night in a train which used to stop at any air-raid alarm, a bicycle ride from Betws—but, having got there, one found that rationing didn't apply in Wilder Wales, and the butcher used even to call, soliciting custom from the half-starved Londoners and Liverpoolians. During these years the Club was largely run under the admirable Geoffrey Bartrum and the Committee was mainly John Barford, Alan Pullinger and Nully Kretschmer; I was Secretary for part of the time before transferring myself to Editor in succession to Pullinger and David Cox. There was also a sort of Helyg-in-Kensington where Barford, Pullinger and Kretschmer shared a flat and, partly due to Nully's cooking, this was a standard meeting-place for those stranded in the backwaters of war.

From the first the Club wisely invited kindred Clubs to hold their meets in Helyg; this was excellent for recruiting. 40 years ago the Club rested very largely on a tripod of OUMC, CUMC and the Liverpool community. With the greatly increased membership, the tributaries must now be much more widely spread. May Helyg be as great a blessing to them all as it was to us.

Francis Keenlyside

Summit Fever

Andrew Greig

Century Hutchinson, 1985, pp 281, illustrated, £11.95.

Kingdoms of Experience—Everest, The Unclimbed Ridge

Andrew Greig

Century Hutchinson, 1986, pp 249, illustrated, £12.95.

In *Summit Fever* and *Kingdoms of Experience* Andrew Greig, 'armchair climber' and poet, tells the story of Mal Duff's expeditions to the Karakoram in 1984 and Everest NE ridge in 1985. The first expedition was successful in making the first ascent for 28 years, by the original British route, of the Muztagh Tower. The second failed and, as the author so truthfully observes at the end of the book, if you don't get to the top you have to restate your values—getting to the top isn't everything; it is the quality of the journey, the experience, that counts.

I found *Summit Fever* very interesting. It was refreshing to see the oft-told journey from Rawalpindi to Skardu and on up the Baltoro through the eyes of a non-climbing outsider. The observation, for instance, of the 'magic bus' is masterly:

Our bus! A travelling altar, a monument to the magpie instinct, a glitter grotto studded with tin, hung with charms and trinkets and glass and mirrors, decorated with coloured glass, paint, plastic, wood, raffia, it sat in front of the hotel as absurd and magnificent as a sultan's ceremonial elephant,

and he captures beautifully that bleak haunting landscape of the Indus valley. His sensitive feel for the people of Askole is a welcome change from the standard climbers' dismissal of the place as a 'dump'. If only the writing were always as good. At times the poet's search for metaphors seems to lead him to aggravating cleverness: small and lost in the Chagora ice-fall, he describes himself as 'a microbe walking over the face of W H Auden'. Speaking of his dead father, he sinks to the kind of language normally reserved for American sociologists: 'Since he died he lives in me. I've internalised him.'

I found passages like that hard to take, as I did the constant gratuitous switch of tenses and the over-reliance, particularly in the Everest book, on other people's diaries. Diary extracts can provide a fascinating insight, but they don't always enrich the language of the book: the Muztagh Tower is 'impressive, very impressive', delivered with all the profundity of St John's Revelation. By the time we reach Everest, stronger words are called for: 'It's big . . . f...ing big'.

Having got my personal stylistic quibbles out of the way, I will concentrate on more of the successes of the books, particularly *Summit Fever*. I found myself thinking all the time—'Yes, he's got it just right'. Once he gets over his initial hero-worship of the climbers, he becomes an acute observer. He becomes part of the expedition microcosm—the little world which over two or three months builds up its own traditions, its own cryptic language and humour. He observes the gradual shift of values as the animal obsession with food gives way to a longing for the human warmth of friends at home. I think he also succeeds in giving a convincing picture of the actual climbing—in his own initiation in the Chagora Ice-fall with the tiresome, incompetent 'American slave' Alex, and in his second-hand accounts of the lead climbers' action. He shows all too clearly how out on the edge a pair of climbers can be, going alone for the top on a 7000m peak, and he gives a gripping account, relayed by radio to Base Camp, of Mal Duff and Tony Brindle's committing summit push. After Tinker and Allan complete their summit climb and return safely, the book ends on a happy note of unqualified fulfilment and gratitude to the man Rocky who, for reasons best known to himself, has paid for the entire trip.

Kingdoms of Experience inevitably does not have the same momentum and drama. Of course there are dramatic incidents vividly described, like Urs Wiget's sudden panic-stricken flight down from Camp 4 at night-time, when he thinks he is getting oedema, but the abiding impression is one of countless climbers trudging endlessly backwards and forwards on a hopeless treadmill, getting nowhere. It is a depressing picture of high-altitude climbing—an interminable saga of painful coughing, retching, bitching and bickering. Greig

contrasts the bloody-mindedness of the lead climbers with the sanity of the women, the media man and the Base Camp manager, a layman who is understandably perplexed by the self-destructive selfishness of the non-team. And yet the book has its poignant moments, particularly towards the end when the climbers seem drawn together in their hopeless struggle with illness, fatigue, lousy weather and apparently insurmountable logistical problems. There is the heartwarming satisfaction of the supporting extras in this huge cast achieving their own personal summits. There is a warm appreciation of Sandy Allan's thoughtful introspection, Tony Brindle's uncynical enthusiasm, Allen Fyffe's reassuring maturity, Mal Duff's wry humour: 'Though I think the game is lost, we'll play it out to the end—that's the Tradition, isn't it'. Most moving for me was Rick Allen's controversial last-minute solo climb to the top of the First Pinnacle, finding relics of the attempt by Boardman and Tasker, whose ghosts haunt the whole book. Allen's lucid evaluation of the consequences of continuing reminded me of Tom Frost's solo summit attempt and 'conversation with God' in *Annapurna South Face*. In both cases God and the climber decide that it would be a good idea to go back down. They survive, and that is surely worth more than any summit.

This book reinforces what we all know—that the logistical problems of the NE ridge are huge. The successful ascents of the SW face and the E face were both achieved in seasons of unusually fine weather. The 1985 NE ridge expedition did not have that sort of luck, but even if they had done, this book suggests that there might never have been the organization and cooperation to make the most of it.

Stephen Venables

Climbing in the British Isles

W P Haskett Smith

Ernest Press, 1986, pp 388, maps, photos and illustrations, £12.00.

1986 marks two important anniversaries in our sport: the bi-centenary of the first ascent of Mont Blanc and the centenary of the first ascent of the Napes Needle by W P Haskett Smith. And it is surely the latter which is closer in our affection. To mark this event the Ernest Press have had the imaginative idea of producing in a single volume a facsimile edition of Haskett Smith's original two-volume *Climbing in the British Isles*. The first volume, England, was published by Longman's in 1894 and the second volume, Wales and Ireland, a year later. The intention had been to produce a third volume on Scotland; history does not relate why this was never published.

These two small slim red volumes were also in their way historic, for they were probably the world's first rock-climbing guidebooks. As the reviewer of Volume I in the *Alpine Journal* records, 'This little work . . . marks a distinct epoch in British holiday-making. It admits publicly, if not proudly, that there is a class of travellers who "climb for climbing's sake", to whom the ordinary guidebooks are unattractive or useless, and who value hill scenery not in proportion to the majesty of outline or grouping, or even the height of mountains, but for the number of "good bits" to be found in the rocks and gullies.'

Haskett Smith is usually regarded as the father of British rock-climbing, and his solo (shades of modernism) ascent of the Napes Needle is both the symbol of the founding of rock-climbing and his memorial. But it was by no means the first rock-climb, either by him or by others: one has only to peruse the list of first ascents in the Fell & Rock climbing guides or indeed to read this book to be astonished by the sheer range of his knowledge and explorations, not only in the Lake District but all over England and, to a very much more limited extent, in Wales.

The guidebooks themselves, one suspects, reveal this rather eccentric and quixotic man. They are a curious alphabetic pot-pourri of entries, of districts mixed with mountains, with the etymology of local names, and with the climbs. 'Back-and-knee' ('the process of supporting or raising the body in a chimney' . . .) precedes 'Band' with a lengthy paragraph on its derivation and a quotation from Virgil. There are five fascinating pages on the Rev James Jackson, the Patriarch of Pillar, under 'Patriarch'. 'Ice-axe' is sandwiched between 'How' ('a Norse word . . .') and 'Ill Bell' ('A Westmorland hill . . .'). And two interesting pages on 'Winter Climbs' lie between 'White Gill' and 'Wrynose'. It is this very jumble of entries that gives *Climbing in the British Isles* its own charm.

The Lake District was pre-eminently Haskett Smith territory and he was clearly much less at home in North Wales where he relied in large measure, as he says in his introduction to Volume II, on F H Bowring and O G Jones; and for Ireland he relied entirely on H C Hart. As he remarks in typical Haskett vein, by way of quoting Thomas Fuller, 'it matters not how meanly skilled a writer is so long as he hath knowing and communicative friends.' A curious feature of the Wales section is his preoccupation with accidents—there is scarcely a page without some reference to a fatality. But as a climbing guide, Wales is in many ways rather more fully dealt with than the Lake District; for example, he gives more pages to Lliwedd than to Scafell, although at the time of writing climbing on the latter's cliffs was more highly developed.

For the facsimile edition Jim Perrin has contributed a 13-page introduction: 'Playful Progenitor—W P Haskett Smith and the Development of British Rock-Climbing.' This seems to me to capture well, with literal use of quotations from Haskett's own articles and of others on him, the essence of the man.

Roger Chorley

(First published in *High* magazine.)

On and Off the Rocks—Selected Essays 1968–85

Jim Perrin

Victor Gollancz, 1986, pp 192, 80 photos, £10.95.

This perfect book mixes the sublime and the ridiculous to give a complete picture of climbing in our time. Perrin has wit and ecstasy, and is willing to push the boat out as a writer. These articles (written for magazines over seventeen years) breathe the spirit of an era of 'no holds barred'—an era which is lucky to have had Perrin as a chronicler.

But he still has his greatest challenge ahead of him: the book on Don Whillans. My advice is to tone down his style a bit. He fills every line with exclamations as if, like Dostoevsky, every moment of his life took place in front

of a firing squad. I can hear Whillans saying: 'Perrin? He hasn't been right in the head since he was inside.'

On and Off the Rocks has the pick of photographs, and is composed in the Messner format of text plus long italicized captions, so the book makes quick and easy reading. Perrin self-reviews his own work as 'communicating not by the distancing effect of achievement but through the common factor of humanity'. He is a master of the 'let it all hang out' approach, supposedly employed (but in fact not) by Bonington (whom he warmly pens as 'so basically honest and direct, that you come away from his company thinking well of him'). Perrin's style is at its best in the Al Harris obituary: 'But we have our memories. Of driving along the motorway in the dead of night, blowing a joint, changing drivers at 110, playing to the hitch-hiker we'd just picked up; of climbing through friends' windows at four in the morning and jumping gleefully into bed with them; of keeping going on speed for days on end, boozing and partying and whoring and soloing around on crags here and every-damned-where there were people to be played with and get revved up about this or that . . .'

Not all the book is so meaty. There are descriptions of hillwalking and the general joys of mountaineering at a less fateful but equally absorbing level. Wales, for him, is 'a culture which still rages, to keep its light from dying'. He writes from firsthand knowledge of the working-class escapers who (like Bill Peascod) found the *Journey after Dawn*. And he writes well about the mountains themselves. Here, again, the photography is superb. There is an interesting article on the preservation of paths against soil erosion. Most importantly, there is some attempt to voice the needs of Welsh farmers. This book is both poetry and memorial. It is a Bedside Companion.

Ronnie Wathen

The Everest Years. A Climber's Life

Chris Bonington

Hodder & Stoughton, 1986, pp 256, maps and photos, £14.95.

This is Bonington's ninth book and the third volume of his autobiography—it is definitely the best. It comes as something of a surprise to realise that it is now 20 years since the publication of the first volume, *I Chose to Climb*, and 13 since the second, *The Next Horizon*.

This volume starts even further back, with a brief account of the Nuptse ascent in 1961, rattles past the Frêne Pillar and Annapurna, and by page 18 has reached Everest South-West face. Changabang follows very briefly, but the pace slows down as the South-West face expedition of '75 is reached and the previous volumes are left behind. Inevitably, a number of the expeditions that follow—Everest '75, the Ogre, the K2 attempt—have been written about by other participants and make familiar reading, but the author has his own very definite views and outlook on these events and, in fact, they make fresh, interesting reading.

With Kongur and Everest North-East ridge, we are still in familiar territory, but by 1983 and the ascent of Shivling we break fresh ground and the interest is maintained to the end of the book. An unusual interlude is the ascent of Mount

Vinson in Antarctica as climbing leader of one part of two American millionaires' dreams of topping the highest mountain on each continent, but the book reaches its obvious climax with his ascent of Everest in '85 at the age of 50. He joined a Norwegian expedition for this trip; when first announced this seemed odd, but it emerges as a perfectly natural event as related here. One imagines that, in Arne Naess, Bonington found a kindred spirit for organization and drive.

Looking back through the book, one is struck by the incredible variety and amount of climbing that the author has crammed into his 50 years—Everest was in every way a fitting climax. The touches of home life and climbs spliced into the narrative add considerably to it, but one knows from the final paragraphs that, in spite of his considerable family ties, he will be off into the far mountains again at every opportunity. Menlungtse this year!

The Everest Years is one of the few mountaineering books to hit the best-seller lists, and this is not surprising, for it tells a good story well, is well produced and has excellent illustrations.

The Cuillin of Skye

B H Humble

Ernest Press, 1986, pp xx + 140, maps, diagrams and photos, £15.95.

The Ernest Press are continuing their excellent series of facsimile editions of British climbing books with Ben Humble's 1952 classic, which has been a collector's item for many years now. Bill Murray contributes a lengthy foreword, in which he shows what a lovable character stone-deaf Ben Humble was, although he tried the patience of those who didn't always appreciate his views! The two new photos of him are delightful—particularly the one of him eating kippers outside his tent, that he so objected to! When the original edition was reviewed in *A759*, Robert Jeffrey said 'The book contains a wealth of information . . . and must have involved the author in a vast amount of research . . . Written in good and readable language, Mr Humble's book is a notable addition to Scottish mountaineering literature . . .' It remains the premier account of climbing history in the Cuillin.

Ben Nevis. Britain's Highest Mountain

Ken Crocket

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1986, pp 16 + 320, maps, diagrams and photos, £14.95.

For many years, continental climbing clubs have been publishing magnificently-produced monographs on individual mountains, valleys and mountain areas; not climbing or walking guides, but an historical perspective on the subject. The Italians in particular have produced some lovely volumes in recent years. Up to now, Cloggy has really been the only cliff treated in this way in Britain, in *The Black Cliff*, with Ben Humble's book (see above) doing something similar for a larger area. Now, Ken Crocket and the SMC have produced *Ben Nevis*. It is in the same attractive format as *The Munros*, (or *Welsh Rock*, for that matter)—black glossy covers, with good typography and excellent colour photos, an immediately desirable book. Inside, it is obvious that

one's expectations are not going to be disappointed. 12 chapters and four appendices cover man's interaction with the Ben in its entirety, and not only the climbing—the observatory, whisky, foot-races, car ascents and aluminium are also covered. The history starts in 1585!

Tom Weir, in his foreword, says that Ken Crocket 'looks at every aspect of Ben Nevis . . . it has been a privilege to go over the work with him before publication. His is an absorbing story and he tells it well.' One can only agree. The author not only knows his mountain from having pioneered new hard routes on it, winter and summer, but must also have spent many, many delightful hours immersed in old copies of the *SMCJ* and early books. As expected, all the big names in Scottish mountaineering are here, from Ramsay and Naismith onwards, plus a few Sassenachs, with a marvellous array of early photographs. At the other end of the scale, the last climb mentioned is one of Ken's own, 'Phosphorescent Grooves', III/IV, on Moonlight Gully Buttress, climbed in December '85. From 1585 to 1985 there has been a lot happening on the Ben and the author has got it all down in a detailed but very readable style.

If I have criticisms of the book, they are on the production side. Firstly, the layout at the beginning is so good that it comes as rather a let-down in the main part of the book to find that such a large amount of space is wasted in the wide gaps above and below quotations. In some cases these are only one or two lines in length, and the result is very disjointed. The second criticism concerns the photos. I have already praised the early ones, but some of the later ones are so small and dark as to be virtually useless, historical or not. Again, they are all black-and-white. Bearing in mind the excellent colour covers and frontispiece, plus some of the author's magazine work—and thinking of *The Munros*—some mountain colour shots would have been a welcome addition. However, these are minor points. This is a grand history of Britain's grandest mountain. Everyone should have it!

Clouds from Both Sides

Julie Tullis

Grafton, 1986, pp 14 + 306, maps, diagrams and photos, £12.95.

Julie Tullis died on K2 this autumn; this book tells her story up to this, her last and fateful expedition. For someone who had become well known with her film-making partner Kurt Diemberger, the photographic content of the book is disappointing. The early photographs and family illustrate the story well, but her mountain career less so.

Her story starts with the now traditional discovery of rock climbing in Wales, and moves through Yosemite and small expeditions to her partnership with Kurt Diemberger. Her first major expedition, with Pierre Mazeaud's Nanga Parbat team, was her only unhappy one.

K2 had been her goal on two previous expeditions, and her obsession becomes sadly apparent.

She contributed a great deal to the lives of others less fortunate with her introduction of handicapped youngsters to the pleasure of outdoor activities. Her background in martial arts gave her the will to pursue her dreams.

Her story is written. It makes good essential reading for anyone with the will to succeed. However, it has a tragic real ending.

Alison Jane Hargreaves

The Quest of Simon Richardson. A Biography

Dorothy Richardson

Victor Gollancz, 1986, pp 172, map and photos, £10.95.

Simon Richardson was skipper of the boat 'En Avant' which he had bought cheaply and completely refitted to sail from Southampton to the Antarctic in 1977. The boat left Rio de Janeiro on 1 November and was never heard of again. Of main interest for readers of this Journal will be the fact that, included in the mainly-young crew, was Bill Tilman.

Simon Richardson had sailed to Greenland with Tilman in 'Baroque' in 1973, and his journal of this trip fills the middle part of the book. Tilman did not always appreciate the qualities of some of his scratch crews, but there is no doubt that a bond of friendship sprang up between the 'old man' and Simon Richardson, who was 20 at the time of the Greenland trip. This is well brought out in the journal. Dorothy Richardson is Simon's mother, and is therefore too close to write a purely objective biography, but it comes across very clearly that the subject was a remarkable person with an unquenchable spirit of adventure.

Walking Up and Down in the World

Smoke Blanchard

Sierra Club Books, San Francisco 1985, pp 299, photos, \$15.95.

It is hard to pin down Smoke Blanchard. First and foremost he is a pioneering American mountaineer of the old school but, as his delightful autobiography reveals, he is also a professional truck driver, homespun philosopher, a bicyclist in India, linguist, solitary walker and trek leader. And to it all he brings a wry humour which is a byword among his American climbing friends.

We are told of great deeds on Mt Hood, Oregon, in the pre-war days, and expeditions to McKinley and Mt Logan. Most of us who identify California as the summer oven of Yosemite will learn with surprise that lakes in the high Sierras can be frozen in August. There are accounts of long walks across California, along the west coast and treks in the Himalaya and Japan. There is a particularly penetrating portrait of the American mountaineering eccentric, the late Norman Clyde, an exploratory Sierra climber. His pack would not only weigh more than 45kg, but it would contain an incredible collection of boots, pistols, a heavy woodman's axe and up to five cameras! Smoke's book is a tale most excellently told.

Mike Banks

Everest Grand Circle

Ned Gillette and Jan Reynolds

The Mountaineers, 1985, pp viii + 216, b&w historical + colour photos, \$22.50.

When Ned Gillette came off Muztagh Ata in 1980 after a successful ski ascent, a chance remark at a rather alcoholic banquet with the Chinese Mountaineering Association led to his receiving approval in principle for a skiing expedition in

Tibet. From this sprang his idea for a ski circumnavigation of Everest, in which he was joined by Jan Reynolds, his companion from Muztagh Ata.

The border between Nepal and Tibet being closed at that time (1981/82), the circle had to be done in two halves, neither the Nepalese nor Chinese authorities knowing—or letting on that they knew—that the other half was planned. This book tells the story of their two trips, both of which were carried out with an assortment of never more than two other companions, and which started with the Everest walk-in in November '81. The high point of this southern circuit was the winter ascent of Pumori, on the border, after which they backtracked eastwards, hoping to reach the border again near Makalu. Failure to meet up with their Sherpa back-up team meant that they had to give up a few miles short of the border on the Barun Glacier and to beat a difficult and hungry retreat to the Arun River.

Back in Tibet in the spring, they met Bonington's North-East ridge team at Rongbuk, reaching the border at the Tho La and then out eastwards again, via the Lhakpa La and Karpo La, to almost join their previous circle before returning to Kharta and out, helping the search for Boardman and Tasker on the way. The story, told in alternating passages by Gillette and Reynolds, relates their feelings and disagreements, but is not too much in the 'warts and all' category of many recent books. I found it absorbing reading, although some comments by the other members would have been interesting, and the general standard of production and illustration is excellent.

Whymper. Le Fou du Cervin

Max Chamson

Perrin, 1986, pp 288, map and illustrations, paperback FF85.

This is a straightforward, well-written biography, with good illustrations and many valuable references.

Sweep Search

Hamish MacInnes

Hodder & Stoughton, 1985, pp 192, map and photos, £9.95.

This book is a continuation of the story of rescue operations in Glencoe, following on from the author's earlier book *Call-Out*. The period covered is from the late sixties to the present day, with 15 major rescue stories being described in detail. Hamish MacInnes insists that he and his team like rescue work because it 'keeps us fit, gives us something to talk about and bestows on us the selfish satisfaction of feeling that we are doing good'. I am sure that this is a genuine attitude held by many rescue team members, to whom many of the climbing public have reason to be grateful, including the survivors in this book. The author also hopes that his book gives an insight into the mountain rescue scene. It does.

The Great Walking Adventure

Hamish Brown

Oxford Illustrated Press, 1986, pp 256, maps and colour photos, £8.95.

Hamish Brown is now becoming a prolific author of mountain walking books,

and this is the latest in the 'Great Adventure' series. A number of areas in Scotland are covered, including St Kilda, plus the High Atlas, the Cordillera Blanca and the Nanda Devi sanctuary among others. The style is one of personal reminiscence, making pleasurable reading.

Die Schwankungen der Grindelwaldgletscher

Heinz J Zumbühl

Birkhäuser Verlag, 1980, pp 280, maps, diagrams and illustrations, npq.

A rather late note to draw members' attention to this large, scholarly work, in German, on the history of the Grindelwald glaciers. It includes approximately 100 pages of early prints, drawings and photographs of the glaciers, some of them in colour.

History of Andean Mountaineering Series

No 1 The AACZ Expedition to the Cordillera Blanca 1948

Pieter Crow

Priv Pub 1985, pp 46, photos, npq.

No 2 Leigh Ortenburger. Climbs in the Cordillera Blanca 1952-1982

Mike McWherter

Priv Pub 1985, pp 34, npq.

The first two in a projected series of typescript monographs on Andean mountaineering. The first, of the Academic Alpine Club of Zürich, includes the first ascent of Nevado Santa Cruz and the first attempt on Alpamayo. The second lists many of Ortenburger's climbs but, although photos are listed, none are included in the monograph.

Escalades et Randonnées au Hoggar et dans les Tassilis

Bernard Pierre & Claude Aulard

Arthaud, 1985, pp 260, photos, maps, topo diagrams, FF98.

It is 35 years since Bernard Pierre wrote his original *Escalades au Hoggar*, and he has now sent us his latest book which brings climbing in that area up-to-date. The mountains of the Sahara have always held a particular fascination for French climbers, and the first part of the book gives a history of climbing in the area, with a diary of M Pierre's own major explorations. The main central section gives detailed descriptions of climbs in Hoggar Central, with topo diagrams and descriptions of walking routes, before proceeding to the Tefedest, Tassilis, the area SE of Amador and other granite massifs. It is the ideal guide for anyone contemplating travel in the area who has a smattering of French.

The Lake District: A sort of National Property

Countryside Commission/Victoria & Albert Museum, 1986, pp 124, illustrations, £10.

Following their exhibition at the V&A, the organizers have produced this rather highly-priced book containing the papers given at a symposium held in association with the exhibition. The paper on 'The Art and Sport of Rock Climbing in the English Lake District' is by Douglas Milner.

VII Jornades de Medicina de Muntanya

Abstracts, in English, of the 7th conference of mountain medicine organized by the Union Excursionista of Catalonia in Barcelona in November 1985. Many aspects of medicine are covered, with particular reference to observations obtained on recent Spanish expeditions.

II Reunion sur la Documentation des Montagnes du Monde

Report of the conclusions reached at this second meeting of the UIAA conference on the documentation of the mountains of the world, held in Sabadell in April 1985. English section included. The third meeting should be worth attending as 'it was decided to entrust the organization . . . to the friendly French ladies'.

Twenty Years on Ben Nevis

Wm T Kilgour

Anglesey Books, 1985, pp 174, illustrations, paperback, £5.95.

This is the first facsimile publication by Anglesey Books in a projected series of reprints of famous books on the British hills. Originally published in Paisley in 1905, it has been a sought-after item for many years. Its sub-title, 'Being a Brief Account of the Life, Work, and Experiences of the Observers at the highest Meteorological Station in the British Isles', sums up the contents.

Into Thin Air

John Pilkington

George Allen & Unwin, 1985, pp xvi + 172, maps and photos, £10.95.

The author is already widely travelled in the mountainous areas of the world. This book recounts his first trip to Nepal, where he carried out a solo walk from Pokhara north-westwards to the Indian Border at Jhulaghat. It is competently written and gives a good impression of the country and people met on the way.

The Good Skiing Guide

Ed Chris Gill and Adam Ruch

Consumers' Association/Hodder & Stoughton, 1985, pp 480, maps and diagrams, paperback, £7.95.

The Consumers' Association are known for the thoroughness of their investigative publications, and this guide to the 200 best winter sports resorts in Europe is no exception. Approximately two-thirds of the guide is taken up with descriptions of the centres, maps of the runs and lifts, details of accommodation, travel, night-life, etc. The remainder is a primer on equipment, exercises, travel facts, cross-country touring, and a brief history of skiing. An excellent guide.

La Corse. I Monti d'a Corsica

Henri Agresti & Jean-Paul Quilici

Denoël, 1986, pp 240, many colour and black-and-white photos and maps, FF240.

The much-acclaimed series of 'Les 100 Plus Belles Courses et Randonnées' books has come up with another winner on Corsica. The format is as before;

alternate pages of excellent colour and black-and-white photos, with a map or topo-diagram for each of the 100 sections. As usual, also, whilst most of the photos are representative of the route concerned, a number are of general or human interest. An excellent introduction to a beautiful island for the walker or climber.

The Windhorse

Elaine Brook and Julie Connelly

Jonathan Cape, 1986, pp 224, map, decorations and photos, £9.95.

The trek to Everest Base Camp is today a well-worn trail and is featured in many magazine articles and tourist holiday brochures. The difference in this account is that one of the two participants, Julie Connelly, is blind and, whilst Elaine Brook tells the story of their trek in an excellent narrative style, the extracts from Julie's diary record her feelings and impressions of the unseen world around her. Julie suffered from acclimatization problems but, with Elaine's great help, including her fluency in the Sherpa language, and with the devotion of their Sherpa companions, she finally made it to Kala Pathar. Different from the normal run of mountain travel books, it gives an interesting picture of the area, and a moving account of one person's struggles.

The Munros in Winter. 277 Summits in 83 Days

Martin Moran

David & Charles, 1986, pp 240, maps, diagrams and photos, many in colour, £12.95.

'Munroitis' is becoming increasingly popular year by year, and we will soon be having the 'youngest child' or 'oldest pensioner' to do the round and record it. Few, however, will have Martin Moran's stamina, will-power or, indeed, technical ability, to do all 277 summits in one continuous push in winter. With his wife Joy as efficient back-up team and as companion on 120 summits, having sold their home to purchase a Ford transit to use as a mobile base, he accomplished this over 83 days in the winter of 84/85. The story is well told, and there are useful appendices on equipment, weather, etc for future aspirants.

Catalogo della Biblioteca Nazionale. 1° Supplemento 1969-1984

Domenico Mottinelli

CAI, 1985, pp 136, npq.

Supplementary bibliography of the books in the Central Library of the Club Alpino Italiano.

Ireland

W A Poucher

Constable, 1986, pp 206, colour photos, £12.95.

The latest in Poucher's all-colour photographic books.

The County Tops of the British Isles

Paddy Dillon

Gastons-West Col, 1985, pp 160, maps, drawings and photo, npq.

An alphabetical, county-by-county, list of the highest point of land in each, with a description of how to reach it. Includes Southern Ireland.

Hypothermia, Frostbite and other Cold Injuries

Wilkerson, Bangs and Hayward

Mountaineers, 1986, pp xiv + 114, photos and diagrams, £7.50.

A most useful handbook on the prevention, recognition and pre-hospital treatment of cold-related injuries, written specifically for the outdoor enthusiast. The major part of the book deals with hypothermia, with an added chapter on frostbite.

Scrambles amongst the Alps

Edward Whymper

Webb & Bower, 1986, pp 262, maps, drawings and colour photos, £14.95.

Although advertised as being with 'additional material from Whymper's diaries', this is Tyndale's 1936 edition in a sumptuous new form complete with all the drawings, but with the added bonus of 32 pages of marvellous colour photographs by John Cleare.

Kuksar Conquered. The Diary of an Expedition

Timothy Hurrell

Privately printed manuscript, undated, pp vi + 78 typescript, maps and colour photos.

This is the diary found after Tim Hurrell and Steve Brodrick were killed on their descent from the summit of Kuksar in 1982.

La Grande Traversée de l'Atlas Marocain

Michael Peyron

Peyron/West Col, 1984, pp 284, maps, diagrams and drawings, paperback, npq.

A detailed guide to the Grand Traverse of the Moroccan Atlas, some 650km from Imi n'Tanoute in the SW to Taza in the NE. A general, mid-altitude line is described, with numerous side-tracking excursions, some high-altitude routes, ski-touring possibilities and easy routes up the main summits. Introduction and brief chapters on each area in English.

Classic Walks in France

Rob Hunter and David Wickers

Oxford Illustrated Press, 1985, pp 136, maps and photos—many coloured, £12.95.

A further volume in the 'Classic Walks' series, covering 20 walks in France, ranging from the tour of Mont Blanc and mountain walks in the Pyrenees and Corsica, to the chateaux country and the Breton moors, and in length from 80 to 280km.

Travels

Hamish Brown

The Scotsman, 1986, pp 230, maps and photos, paperback, £5.50.

A collection of the author's articles which have appeared in 'The Scotsman' and the 'Evening News' over the past 20 years.

Escalade. Les Plus Belles Falaises d'Europe de l'Ouest

Jean-Claude Droyer

Denoël, 1986, maps, diagrams, many photos, FF278.

A departure from the usual '100 Best . . .' series, in that this is Droyer's selection of climbs on 64 cliffs—the 'best in Western Europe'. In fact, the majority are the rock-climbing cliffs of France, with one or two straying over the borders into Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Spain, and a selection in Britain from North Wales, the Peak, and Devon and Cornwall. Produced to Denoël's usual high standard.

Climbing Guides, Manuals, etc

In view of the increasing numbers being produced, it is only intended to give a brief note on the contents of the majority of those received.

Alta Via. High Level Walks in the Dolomites

Martin Collins

Cicerone Press, 1986, pp 144, maps, diagrams, drawings and photos, £6.95.

A detailed guide to Alte Vie 1 and 2 in the Dolomites.

The Kalkalpen Traverse

Alan Proctor

Cicerone Press, 1986, pp 96, map, diagrams, drawings and photos, paperback, £3.55.

A guide to a walk through the limestone Alps of the Austrian Tyrol, from Lake Constance to the Kaisergebirge.

Modern Rope Techniques in Mountaineering

Bill March

Cicerone Press, 1985, pp 200, diagrams, paperback, £3.95.

The third revised edition of this excellent, all-embracing guide to rope techniques.

Mountain Navigation Techniques

Kevin Walker

Constable, 1986, pp 160, photos, maps and diagrams, £5.95.

Continuing their series of pocket books for walkers and climbers, Constable have produced this beginner's guide to mountain navigation.

The Mountains of Greece. A Walker's Guide

Cicerone Press, 1986, pp 176, maps and photos, £7.95.

Greece is essentially a mountainous country, largely unexplored by the walker and totally undeveloped. This guide covers the whole country and ranges from a month-long expedition through the Pindos range to shorter, even one-day, walks in more accessible areas.

South Devon and Dartmoor

Pat Littlejohn and Pete O'Sullivan

Cordée, 1985, pp 226, maps and photo-diagrams, £6.95.

This is the latest in the series of guides produced for South Devon over the years, and covers the Dewerstone and Dartmoor Tors, the Torbay area and the quarries and cliffs near Plymouth.

Lundy Rock Climbs

Gary Gibson

Royal Navy & Royal Marines MC, 1985, pp 152, maps and diagrams, npq.

Gary Gibson has taken over from Bob Moulton for this fourth edition of the Lundy guide. It shows how standards have risen and routes multiplied in the last few years.

Tour of the Oisans

Andrew Harper

Cicerone Press, 1986, pp 112, diagrams, drawings and photos, £5.50.

A guide to GR 54, the circular tour of the Ecrins Massif.

Jaskinie Wyzyny Krakowsko-Wieluńskiej

Mariusz Szelerewicz and Andrzej Gorny

Kraj, 1986, pp 200, maps, diagrams and photos, pb.

A very detailed guide, in Polish, to the caves of the Cracow-Wieluń hills.

Escalades dans le Massif de la Chartreuse

Serge Coupé

Édisud, 1986, pp 112, maps and topo-diagrams, FF60 pb.

Guide to the rock-climbs in the Chartreuse.

Assure Sec! Techniques d'Escalade en Falaise

John Rander

Édisud, 1986, pp 152, diagrams, drawings and photos, FF60 pb.

A French rock-climbing manual notable for its humorous drawings involving mice, the devil and various other exotic characters!

Greece on Foot. Mountain Treks, Island Trails

Marc Dubin

Cordée/The Mountaineers, 1986, pp 240, maps and photos, £6.95 pb.

Guides to walking in Greece are popular at the moment, and this is a good one, well illustrated and described. It covers Crete and the main island groups as well as the mainland.

Winter Climbs in the Lake District

Bob Bennett and Bill Birkett

Cicerone Press, 1986, pp 96, photos, maps and diagrams, £5.25.

This second edition of the guide shows the progress that has been made in winter climbing in the Lake District in the six years since the first edition.

A Topo Guide to the Rock Climbs of the Mont Blanc Area

Michel Piola

Piola Editions, 1986, pp 160, topo diagrams, maps and photos, £9.95 pb.

As Alessandro Gogna says in his foreword, topo guides have until now only related to individual cliffs. Here the whole Mont Blanc range is covered, established favourites such as the Bonatti Pillar, the Brown-Whillans and the S face of the Fou appearing side by side with the more modern climbs of Piola and his friends, plus the more 'boulderish' routes on the lower slabs. The format seems to work well, description is at a minimum, and the diagrams and photos are excellent and clear.

Mount Everest. Massiv Nord. Himalaya—Handbuch Band 1

Johannes Kielkowski

Aree Greul, 1986, pp 88, maps, topo-diagrams and drawings, DM 22.80.

A new-style guide for the Himalaya, this is a detailed climbing guide to Mount Everest with excellent topo-diagrams of all faces and routes and details of every expedition up to Spring 1986. Changtse and surrounding peaks are included. The first in a projected series to include Everest Massiv Süd, Makalu, Cho Oyu and others. (A privately published edition has also been received.)

Devil's Tower National Monument. A Climber's Guide

Steve Gardiner and Dick Guilmette

Mountaineers, 1986, pp 136, maps and photos, \$6.95 pb.

The unique Devil's Tower now has its own guide, giving history, notes on geology and wildlife, and a detailed climbing guide to 145 routes. The unusual nature of the rock is emphasized by the photo-topos which show the routes as a series of parallel straight lines, like railway tracks going steadily upwards.

Mercantour Park. Maritime Alps

Robin Collomb and Tony Moulam

West Col, 1985, pp 148, map, diagrams and photos, npq.

Guide to mountain walking, touring and climbing in the Central Maritime Alps.

Ecrins Park. Dauphiné Alps

Robin Collomb

West Col, 1986, pp 148, map, diagram, drawings and photos, npq.

Mountain walking, scrambling and trail guide with selected principal ascents and standard mountain climbs in the Dauphiné.

Gran Sasso. Le piu belle ascensioni dal 3° al 7° grado

Ciato/Pennisi/Vitale

Edizioni Mediterranee, 1986, pp 176, map, diagrams and photos, L20,000.

Rock-climbing guide to the Gran Sasso in the Apennines.

Black Cuillin Ridge. Scramblers' Guide

S P Bull

SMT, 1986, pp 112, maps, diagrams and photos, npq.

Reprint of the 1980 edition.

Randonnées Pédestres dans le Centre Varois

Josiane Alor and Alexis Lucchesi

Édisud, 1986, pp 144, maps, diagrams and photo, npq.

Walks in the area NE of Toulon.

Escalades dans le Massif des Calanques—en Vau

Alexis Lucchesi

*Édisud, 1986, pp 160, maps and topo-diagrams, npq.***Escalades dans le Massif des Calanques—Les Goudes, Saint-Michel**

Alexis Lucchesi

*Édisud, 1986, pp 200, maps and topo-diagrams, npq.***Escalades dans la Chaîne de l'Étoile**

Christophe Kern and Alexis Lucchesi

Édisud, 1986, pp 48, map and topo-diagrams, npq.

Outcrops to the north of Marseilles.

Escalades dans le Massif du Vercors

Serge Coupé

Édisud, 1986, pp 128, maps and topo-diagrams, FF60.

The line of cliffs stretching south-westwards from Grenoble, from Les Trois Pucelles to the Rochers de la Balme.

The Southern Highlands

Donald Bennet

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1986, pp 238, maps, diagrams and photos, npq.

A revised, up-dated version of the 1972 edition, with some new illustrations.

Swanage

Gordon Jenkin

Climbers' Club, 1986, pp 252, photos, maps and diagrams, £7.50.

The latest guide to the Dorset coast, including not only Portland, but also a short section on the Isle of Wight.

Borrowdale

D Armstrong and R Kenyon

F&RCC, 1986, pp 265, photos, map and diagrams, npq.

The sixth edition of the Borrowdale guide, detailing some 42 individual crags, and including a graded list of difficulty of all climbs described.

