

Book Reviews 1985

Compiled by Geoffrey Templeman

The Shishapangma Expedition

Doug Scott and Alex MacIntyre

Granada, 1984, pp 215 plus appendices (total 322), photos, sketch-maps, £12.95.

This is the account of the British expedition which succeeded in climbing Shishapangma (8012m) (or Gosainthan) in genuinely alpine style by its unexplored SW face at the end of May, 1982. The originator of the expedition, Nick Prescott, had never visited the Himalaya before, and wanted simply to do some mountaineering in Tibet. Permission to attempt the unclimbed face of an 8000m peak was the last thing he had hoped for. The result was that, while Prescott did much of the work which made the expedition possible and played a most unselfish supporting role when it got to the mountain, it turned into quite a different sort of expedition from the one he had intended. The leader, insofar as there was one, now became Doug Scott, and three of the five other members of the party were also climbers with outstanding records in the Himalaya and elsewhere — although one of these had to return home at an early stage for reasons of health. The remaining participant, Elaine Brook, although a climber herself, was invited mainly because of her interest in Tibetan culture, but little or none of this existed in the utterly desolate neighbourhood of their base camp; and she eventually made what must have been a brave decision, to leave the party and travel around in Tibet on her own.

Two acclimatization climbs, amounting to a total of only a few days, preceded the attempt on Shishapangma itself. Nevertheless, the ascent of the SW face, a wall over 2500m high, was achieved with just three bivouacs, plus another which occurred on the descent by a different line. This was clearly a remarkable and very bold achievement. Yet the paradoxical thing about this book is that the account of the climb may well be found one of its least interesting parts. It is difficult, for one thing, to tell how hard the route was technically; the most serious climbing clearly took place on the first day, yet it was possible to accomplish some 1000m of ascent before the party had to bivouac and on the second and third days there was apparently no need to use the rope at all until after the summit had been reached.

More absorbing, in fact, is the whole chaotic story of how the expedition came into existence, how it ever succeeded in getting to Heathrow, how, when it arrived in Peking, and later in Lhasa, it coped with the Chinese bureaucracy and (even more) how the Chinese bureaucracy managed to cope with it, how it ever got to Base Camp, with a few recalcitrant yaks as its sole transport and in spite of a totally obstructive liaison officer, how it survived the various strong tensions and disagreements which kept erupting between different members of the party. All traditional expedition rules seem to have been broken, and most conventions disregarded; indeed, one of the authors writes, admittedly only half seriously, of the party's 'reputation as the worst foreign expedition ever to

reach Tibet'. Yet it is the fascination of the story that all this somehow works out successfully, and more or less happily, in the end. Among the expedition's other difficulties was the fact that the party simply could not afford costs of the order normally charged to western expeditions by the Chinese, a situation to which, once the authorities had grasped it, they seem to have reacted with a surprising degree of helpfulness.

The bulk of the text is written by either Doug Scott or Alex MacIntyre (who, sadly, was killed by a falling stone on the S face of Annapurna later in the same year), but occasional short sections are contributed by the other members of the party. This interrupts the narrative's continuity much less than might have been expected. It is clearly the book's intention to give an honest account of the expedition and not to gloss over the quarrels and clashes of personality which occurred, and this is admirable; but both the clashes and the reconciliations which usually followed them tend to become rather tedious and to detract slightly from one's enjoyment of an otherwise very intriguing book.

It is a pity also that there is no List of Illustrations; and the photographs themselves, which are all in monochrome, are not well reproduced. Doug Scott's Appendices, however, are a real contribution, especially I, 'Early Buddhism in Tibet', and (more surprisingly, perhaps) V, 'Expedition Medicine — A Personal View'.

David Cox

The Passage of the Alps

Edward Pyatt

Hale, 1984, pp256, many illustrations and maps, £14.95.

People have been crossing the passes of the Alps for many centuries in a multiplicity of routes and methods. A pass, as the author says in his Introduction, 'can be a trade route, carrying a much-used motor road or motorway, a scenic motor road used mainly by tourists, a saddle with only a path or a mule track or a notch in an ice wall or at a glacier head accessible only to the experienced mountaineer. A passage of a range can further be effected by a tunnel carrying a railway track or a carriageway, by a rack or other assisted adhesion railway, by cableway, or even in the air above the mountains. All will be treated hereafter.' That then is the scope of the book.

The Club's first publication was, of course, *Peaks, Passes and Glaciers*, each being given equal weighting in the title; but in recent years the literature on passes has been very sparse. This book makes up for the lean years as far as the Alps are concerned. The story starts in pre-Roman times with traders and raiders crossing the easier passes, but really gets under way with Hannibal's crossing of — was it the Col de la Traversette? — in 218BC. Although fully documented by de Beer and others, this crossing by foot soldiers, cavalry and elephants remains a fascinating and impressive achievement, always worth reading about.

The story continues via the Romans and their alpine routes, then the Dark Ages, to the building of the great hospices, one of which existed on the Simplon Pass as early as 1235. By the 16th century, travellers are crossing the major passes on tours of the Alps, but the real explosion came about in the 1700s when

the Grand Tour really got under way. Further chapters cover the Napoleonic Wars, which in some ways echo Hannibal's campaigns, and the advent of road and rail traffic over and through the chain. The mountaineering side of pass-crossing is covered, and the story is brought up-to-date with the escapes over the mountains in the Second World War and events up to the present.

The illustrations are a feature of the book, and it is interesting to compare the 5-horse postal coach coming down the St Gotthard at full gallop with the acres of parked cars on the Stelvio today. Those horses must have been a wonderful sight!

The book ends with six appendices which list every conceivable pass crossed by road, railway and cableway, plus a selection of walkers' routes and glacier ways.

It does not say on the front endpaper how many books the late Ted Pyatt wrote but he must have been one of the Club's most prolific authors and this last work must count as one of his best. The amount of research needed was obviously enormous and it deserves a place on any Alpine-lover's bookshelf; it is a great pity that we shall see no more from Ted.

G.W.T.

Eric Shipton. The Six Mountain-Travel Books

Intro. Jim Perrin

Diadem/The Mountaineers, 1985, pp800, maps and photos, £16.95

Here is another sumptuous omnibus volume from Diadem Books and, like the Tilman one, how good it is. Shipton's Six Mountain Travel Books was an obvious choice for a successor to their Tilman saga, and how well it too comes over. Like Tilman, Shipton hardly ever changed his style; and like his friend, how versatile he was in his explorations. And yet, in his case, mountainous country was almost always at the heart of his explorations.

But the two men's styles of writing differed. Shipton's descriptions of his travels are full of romance and adventure. Tilman's play down the romantic streak in his nature, which was undoubtedly there, but make up for this by his laconic wit and flair for apt quotations. Of the two Tilman is possibly the better writer; but Shipton the more exciting and readable one for some people, perhaps. And yet I don't know! After all there is nothing much to choose between them. That is why these two volumes of their respective collective works complement each other so well. Surely no-one possessing the Tilman volume will like to be without this Shipton classic too?

Jim Perrin's otherwise interesting introductory biography is marred, at the end, by an intemperate and unfair attack on the old Himalayan Committee over the events of 1952 which not only is offensive but inaccurate over the way in which it deals with the infighting at the RGS over Hunt's election to the leadership on Everest in 1953. Particularly unfortunate, I feel, are his remarks about Claude Elliott's chairmanship of the Mount Everest Committee at that time, based upon the words of one contemporary observer whom he fails to name.

But what an extensive contribution Eric Shipton did make to mountain exploration and its literature! Two of his books I know almost by heart: *Nanda*

Devi and Upon That Mountain. The former I like for the sheer excitement of the adventure; but also because it tells of his party's excursion to the Gangotri glacier where I happened to have been the year before with Marco Pallis's expedition. The latter perhaps my favourite, because in it he gives us so much of his wise mountaineering philosophy. But with regard to the former, it is quite extraordinary how few people had actually set foot on the Gangotri glacier before we went there in 1933. Captain J A Hodgson was probably the first European to do so and that was in the 1820s. It was only the more ardent and ascetic of the Hindu pilgrims to Gangotri who pressed on to Gaumuck, the place where the sacred river Ganges emerges from beneath the ice. One of the important things to have been sorted out in this book is Shipton's explorations in and around the Gangotri area. Birnie's col has now been properly identified, as has the peak formerly known as Kunaling.

Ken Wilson has done an important service for the mountaineering world with the publication of this book. Research workers will be eternally grateful to him for his own valuable historical appendix at the end on Shipton's Mountaineering Record. I have been asked, however, to point out an error in this section, between 1962 and 1964/65 should come: 1963, *Chile: Mt Burney and Tierra del Fuego*. A season has been missed out.

The publishers are to be congratulated on the nice form in which this most acceptable book has been produced, printed and illustrated. It is good value for money, and a worthy successor to their splendid Tilman volume which I reviewed in the *AJ* 89.

Charles Warren

On Edge — the life and climbs of Henry Barber

Chip Lee

Appalachian M C, 1982, ppxxviii + 292, photos, \$14.95.

The Breach. Kilimanjaro and the conquest of self

Rob Taylor

Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1981, pp254, photos and drawing, \$14.95.

'Hot' Henry Barber has not been fortunate in his biographer. Chip Lee is an admirer, uncritical to the point of sycophancy. The book started as a college assignment and Lee's subsequent graduation does nothing for one's faith in education. He completed the book hurriedly while engaged in other projects, which may help to explain why the text is often repetitive, sometimes incoherent and occasionally factually wrong. It is also in places incredible. Beery tape recording sessions with Barber produced an unmanageable mass of information — oral history which loses something of its heroic quality when imprisoned in cold print. Paradoxically Lee serves his readers well in so far as he gives, unintentionally perhaps, a 'warts and all' portrait of his hero.

Barber emerged in the early 1970s as an outstanding rock climber with a world-spanning reputation. He had opted out of the urban ratrace to become a full-time rock climber — he climbed on 325 days in 1973. Unhappily he substituted another sort of rat-race on mean cliffs rather than the mean streets. He was intensely competitive and aware of the commercial value of well

publicized success. By concentrating on technical climbing he neglected to develop some of the traditional mountaineering skills and for this he was to pay dearly later. He tried to combine the roles of Superstar and One of the Lads. In this he was not always successful. His dynamism and lack of empathy made it difficult for him to build relationships with other people.

Fate caught up with him on a visit to East Africa with Rob Taylor. The last chapter of the book gives an account of the events before and after the near-fatal accident to Taylor, in what is the biggest mountaineering scandal at least since Maestri's imaginative first ascent of the Torre Egger. Barber by his own account emerges as an incompetent knave. Taylor's account supports this conclusion and labels him liar as well.

Barber put himself in a situation which illustrates the distinction between commercial and professional mountaineering. He had sold his story of the first ascent of Breach Wall before he left the States. Africa has a way of dealing with presumptuous young men. Administrative and communication hassles eroded his limited time. He was psyched by the wilderness. He was too self confident to make effective intellectual preparation for several days on a large and unfamiliar mountain — despite being the guest of the editor of the new guide book (which inconveniently gave details of three previous ascent routes on Breach Wall). His relationship with Taylor was strained and corrosive.

Nevertheless they reached the base of the great icicle which linked the Balletto ice-field and the Diamond glacier before noon on their fourth day on Kilimanjaro. They had avoided the problems of the lower tiers of the wall by traversing onto the ice-field from the Heim glacier. The icicle was rather 'vertical slush' according to Taylor who advised waiting for it to refreeze at night. Barber conceded that it was 'real unstable and dangerous' but pressed for an attempt. After all 'the whole financial success of the trip had come to depend on the climb'! Against his better judgement and stung by Barber's unconcealed contempt Taylor began to climb. At 7am he put in a solid ice peg. A metre or so beyond this he fell. Barber's negligence — Lee's phrase is 'normal brief inattentiveness' — allowed a fall of perhaps 10m onto the ice. Taylor smashed an ankle very messily. Incredibly Barber suggested continuing the climb — there was only about 100m of vertical difficulty to the Diamond glacier and about a kilometre of gently sloping ground to the summit. His claim that this proposal was based on the 'rescue possibilities and nothing more' does not convince me. Taylor insisted on going down.

To their credit they made an effective withdrawal to the snout of the Heim. Having made Taylor comfortable and 48 hours after the accident Barber set off to raise a rescue. Unladen he might have been able to descend the Umbwe route, familiar as their route of ascent, the same day. Instead he decided to traverse at a high level for some 13km across rough and unfamiliar ground in fog, to reach a hut on the tourist route up the mountain. Unladen this too could have been achieved the same day. Barber failed to rise to the demands of the situation. He had been six days on the mountain, four of them at over 4000m though conditions had enforced inactivity from about midday. He had been under stress throughout the trip to Africa. He was exhausted and did not have the hill skills required by the emergency. He was terrified by the prospect of

being attacked by a leopard. Above all he lacked the commitment to his companion that would have released the resources he needed. Instead of leaving his gear he burdened himself with the bulk of it, significantly even taking Taylor's camera and film. He found a well marked trail leading to the tourist route but diverted off it descending to the Uweka Huts far below his chosen route. Having spent the night there it took him hours to get back to the traversing route. Incredibly he failed to follow it to the Horombo Hut where there was a wireless — he did not want to deal with any Africans! He rushed down the tourist track, lost it, thrashed about in the bush and did not raise the alarm until delivered to the Park Entrance at 7pm by some missionaries to whom he had been taken by a friendly helpful African. A pathetic performance by any standards, but for a superstar! Small wonder that he preferred to escape to a Houston Sports Convention rather than wait until Taylor was out of danger in hospital.

Back in the US he felt confident enough to call on Taylor's family assuring them that he had seen Rob comfortable and well cared for in hospital.

Taylor describes the hospital in graphic detail. An insanitary, uncaring hell on earth and is understandably bitter at being abandoned there; a bitterness compounded on returning home to find his family had been lied to by Barber.

For much of his book Taylor irritates. Parts are sentimental, parts contrived fantasy. There are trivial errors about mountains which a graduate in geography could have been expected to avoid. He invents a new name for Barber — Harley Warner, which seems to be pointless. Most damning he describes how Barber treats him like dirt on their trip and does not have the self-respect to quit. He pays a high price for his tolerance. Once his ordeal begins he reveals great physical and mental strength. He refuses to succumb to shock. He deals with his own leg, reducing and splinting the fracture thus making a rescue attempt possible. He controls his own descent, secured by Barber but little aided otherwise. Even after five days suffering he is able to help the rescue team take him off the mountain. The journey of self-discovery leads him to a spiritual satisfaction he might never have achieved had the climb been a technical success.

John Temple

Journey after Dawn

Bill Peascod

Cicerone Press, 1985, pp(14) + 174, photos. npq.

It was a tragedy that, so soon after the success of the *Lakeland Rock* television series and the completion of this autobiography, Bill Peascod should die from a heart attack on Cloggy. As we know from the book, he had nearly succumbed to a similar attack several years before, but the intervening years described towards the end of the book, when success as an artist, a happy second marriage and return to his beloved Lake District had all happened, seemed to combine to ensure a happy future, a new dawn indeed.

Bill Peascod was born into a mining family in Cumbria, and describes vividly his introduction to the life of a coalminer at the age of 14, and to the beauty of

the fells when he was 17. This occurred after a night shift, when the following morning was so beautiful that he just cycled off through Buttermere, and was hooked from that moment. Many expeditions into the hills followed until, in 1940, he met Bert Beck and formed a partnership which added many new climbs to the guidebooks over the next seven or eight years. Eagle Crag, Buckstone How and others are described in detail.

Following a gradual change from coalmining which led to his being a lecturer in mining, the Lakeland scene suddenly lost Bill Peascod in 1952 when he emigrated to Australia. The next 28 years are not dealt with in great detail, but it was here that his reputation as an artist became established. He had numerous one-man shows, and particularly one in Japan which changed his life, as it was here that he met his second wife.

The final chapters describe his return to the Lakes, establishment of a new home and re-commencement of his climbing on his home ground. His paintings too were now being exhibited in London and, as I said earlier, all seemed set fair.

I found this a delightful book to read. Whilst possibly not of great literary quality, it has a directness and, if you like, a 'homeliness' which ring true and which give an excellent portrait of the author. The photos back up the text and are historically interesting. It can be recommended unreservedly to anyone who has not yet got a copy.

The Great Climbing Adventure

John Barry

Oxford Illustrated Press, 1985, pp4 + 252, maps and colour photos, £8.95.

I have not read any of the other books in the Great Adventure series, such as *The Great Railway Adventure* or *The Great Travelling Adventure*, but I doubt if they could compare with John Barry's tale. And it is a tale, a good old-fashioned adventure yarn which, just incidentally, is also John's climbing life story to date.

It starts with a Royal Marine posting to Singapore in 1969 which, the delights of climbing in Malaya quickly beginning to pall, turned into a mini-expedition to Mt Cook — successful — and then to Menthosa in the Himalaya. Adventures in the Alps and on British rock and ice follow, to end up with his disappointment at having an accident on Gauri Sankar, and a tremendous achievement on the E ridge of Mt Deborah. Stated like that, it may sound just another book of climbing reminiscences, but it is told with a raciness and humour that make it difficult to put down once started. It belongs to a 'Great Adventure' series alright.

Smythe's Mountains, The Climbs of F S Smythe

Harry Calvert

Victor Gollancz, 1985, pp224, maps, diagram & photos £14.95

In this study Professor Calvert reviews the career of Frank Smythe as a mountaineer, deliberately confining himself to the 'character that emerges from the literature'. Only in the first chapter does he touch upon any biographical detail, and only in the last upon the springs and motives of Frank's life. The

resulting sparseness of such material may disappoint some readers. The author obviously regards his subject with great affection and the book is prompted by his wish to repay the debt owed to the pleasure and inspiration he has found in the writings of F S Smythe.

The climbs themselves are divided into 11 chapters in chronological order. Most of them are also described in Smythe's own works, with which this book must inevitably bear comparison. Open any one of Smythe's volumes at random, as I have recently done after a lapse of years, and you will have difficulty in resisting the temptation to read on. One would have liked to be able to say as much for Professor Calvert, but his book contains too many passages in which the details of climbing and topography are piled into a catalogue which can mean little to a reader not himself familiar with the terrain. As a result much of the description makes heavy going. However, all the information about the climbs is there, and compressed into a volume sufficiently small for those prepared and interested to dig it out.

Chapter X, the 'Valley of Flowers', makes the most enjoyable reading. It includes good accounts of Mana Peak, considered by Frank the 'longest, grandest and hardest' of all his mountains; and of Nilgiri Parbat, his 'finest snow and ice peak', of which there is a lovely photograph. On that expedition, too, his mountaineering partnership with Peter Oliver was the 'happiest of his experience'.

The chapters on Everest and Kangchenjunga are not equal to Smythe's own accounts either in descriptive power or information, but that on Kamet brings out very well the conspicuous success achieved by a harmonious party of six Europeans in climbing the highest peak then attained by man. Frank Smythe's leadership and organization were the crux of that success.

The great but controversial climbs with Graham Brown on the S face of Mt Blanc are described in Chapter VI. The account adds little to the much already written. (See especially: 'T Graham Brown — A Footnote to Alpine History' by Lord Tangle. *A771*, pp51-57.)

A study of this book will certainly confirm to any reader Smythe's reputation and stature as a mountaineer of the very first rank. His expedition to Kamet; his solo traverse and descent of the Everest N face; his part in the Brenva face climbs and in the first ascent of Longland's route on Clogwyn du'r Arddu — any one of these would put him in such a category.

As a writer he is more difficult to assess, though not as a photographer where he again enters the top flight. Professor Calvert brings out the fact that Frank was the first climber to earn his living, and to need to earn it, by writing about mountains; and in that respect the first of those professionals so firmly established among us today. The appeal of his writings lies especially in their sensitive and lucid prose, untainted by even one of those four-letter words which besmirch today's mountain literature, and bent on telling us all, as none other save perhaps Winthrop Young, of the inner workings and insights of the mountaineer's heart and mind.

One other important point about Frank Smythe, one which this book does not fail to emphasize, was his 'notorious safety' on the mountains. Neither he himself nor any member of a party in his charge (including the Commandos he

trained in wartime) ever suffered death or serious injury. As Frank put it in his own words: 'The measure of the worth of mountaineering lies not only in achievement but in the margin of safety over and above that achievement.' Not altogether a popular view today.

Edward Smyth

Wierchy — the Jubilee Issue

Ed W A Wójcik

PTTK, Warsaw/Cracow, 1983, npq.

The 50th volume of *Wierchy* (The Peaks) — beside *Taternik*, which has been published since 1907 — the most important Polish periodical of mountains and mountaineering, appeared in 1983. Its first volume was published in 1923 in Lvov by the local branch of the Polskie Towarzystwo Tatrzańskie (PTT, The Polish Tatra Association) and it was dedicated 'to PTT, as a mother association, on its half-century jubilee'. The Tatra Association was founded as the first Polish tourist society in 1873 in the Austrian — at that time — part of Poland (the word 'Polish' was added in 1918, when the country became independent). But *Wierchy* was not the first journal of PTT. In the years 1876–1920 37 volumes of *Pamiętnik Towarzystwa Tatrzańskiego* (The Tatra Association Memoires) were published.

The content and themes of *Pamiętnik* were criticized a few years before the First World War began. J G Pawlikowski, professor of Dublany Agricultural Academy, a member of the PTT management and chief of Tatra Mountains Preservation Section, wrote in 1913: 'the main part of *Pamiętnik* is full of reports; a few articles are added for decoration only'. In spite of this opinion the last volumes of *Pamiętnik* were published without any changes, in the traditional way. That probably made up J G Pawlikowski's mind to suggest at the meeting of the Lvov branch of PTT, that a new annual, entitled *Our Mountains*, be prepared. The PTT management in Cracow observed this activity and Pawlikowski's project with reserve; they were afraid that the new journal would be a competitor for their *Pamiętnik*, but after 1920 *Pamiętnik* was never published again. So, the members of the PTT had to wait for 3 years for a new yearbook, *Wierchy*. The annual was edited by J G Pawlikowski, A Chybiński — musician, professor of the Lvov and Poznań Universities, R Kordys — lawyer and journalist, pioneer of Polish mountaineering and skiing, and J Zborowski — ethnographer, for many years the director of The Tatra Museum in Zakopane. The next volumes were edited by J G Pawlikowski and W Goetel (later a professor at the Mining Academy in Cracow) and also by W Goetel and J A Szczepański (journalist); we encounter the name of B Romaniszyn once.

Wierchy was very soon accepted by the PTT management in Cracow and by 1933 had become the journal of the whole Association. Before the Second World War 16 volumes of *Wierchy* were published; the first post war (the 17th vol.) dated 1947 was printed in 1948. The articles had mainly been written before the war. On the first pages there were a list of war-casualties — names of Polish scientists, alpinists, skiers, guides and other people whose job and activity were connected with the mountains.

In 1950 The Polish Tatra Association (PTT) and The Polish Touring Association (PTK), est 1906, merged to form The Polish Tatra Tourist Association (PTTK) with management in Warsaw. The Mountains Tourist Committee of PTTK in Cracow became a successor of PTT traditions and it is still the official editor of *Wierchy*.

Immediately after the Second World War *Wierchy* was edited by W Goetel (chief editor), W Krygowski (secretary), B Malachowski, and J A Szczepański. From 1951, for over 25 years, *Wierchy* was edited by W Krygowski together with an editorial board, but its staff changed a few times. The next change took place in 1976 when M Sobolewski (professor at Jagiellonian University) became a chief editor with W A Wójcik as a secretary. Since 1983, after M Sobolewski's death, W A Wójcik has been a chief editor, and J Kolbuszewski (assistant professor at the University of Wrocław) the chief of the new editorial board.

Wierchy records important facts and notes connected with the mountains and mountaineering around the world, especially the successes of Polish expeditions. The main objects of this yearbook are Polish mountains of course, and very often the nearest countries — Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria etc. Each volume is divided into three parts. In the first, there are articles, memoirs, scientific and historical notes, biographies, surveys etc. In the second (in the chronicle) we can usually find many chapters such as 'Scientific Research', 'In and near the mountains', 'Mountaineering', 'Rockclimbing in the Tatra Mountains', 'Touring', 'Speleology', 'Mountain rescue', 'Preservation of mountain nature', 'Historical notes' and — of course — 'Report of the Mountain Tourist Committee of PTTK.' Their make-up follows the yearbook tradition. The third part of *Wierchy* is filled by the 'Mountain bibliography' (Polish only) written by K Polak, obituaries and summary in five languages: Russian, English, German, French and Spanish. Many pictures (black and white only), some drawings and map sketches illustrate each annual, and a colour cover has appeared since 1976. Each number has usually over 400 pages and is distributed in 3400–3900 copies. The *Wierchy* yearbook is theoretically sold in bookshops, but practically, because of very small circulation and great demand, it has to be distributed mainly by subscription.

Jerzy W Gajewski

Parque Nacional Huascarán. Ancash-Perú

Jim Bartle

Dai Nippon, Tokyo, 1985, pp 40, 68 colour and 4 black & white photos, 3 sketchmaps, paper, large format. USA\$8.

Adventuring in the Andes

Charles Frazier with Donald Secreast

Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1985, pp 262, 23 black & white photos, 9 sketchmaps, paper. USA\$10.95

Parque Nacional Huascarán is a pictorial complement to the author's own *Trails of the Cordilleras Blanca & Huayhuash* (1981). In large format, 28 x 22cm, it is beautifully illustrated and well balanced with finely reproduced photographs of peaks, unclimbed walls, glaciers, lakes, flowers and highland people. The book

was originally designed to support conservation projects in the Peruvian Andes. Its text (Spanish and English) has therefore a slant on conservation. This second work by Bartle is an excellent composite picture of Peru's most imposing mountain land.

The purpose of the Frazier-Secrest guidebook is to indicate adventures that are possible within the realm of the old Incadom, today the modern nations of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. While it is true that some beaches, islands and jungles are also included, the major part of this book deals with the Andean highlands. Of its seven chapters, four cover the three Andean nations, the Galápagos Islands and the Amazonian basin; another, the regional human and natural history and two, with 50pp, the planning and undertaking of trips into the regions described. There are also two glossaries (Spanish, Quechua). Although basically a travel guide, it contains sections on climbing in the volcanoes of Ecuador and of Arequipa, as well as on high altitude pass crossing in the Cordillera Blanca and in the Ausangate area (Cuzco, Peru). But the book's greatest contribution to mountaineering lies in its many pages of excellent advice on solving problems of mountain travel in the central Andes. Information is both exact and practical and will make any other guidebook with the same geographical scope appear incomplete and outdated.

Evelio Echevarría

Modern Rope Techniques in Mountaineering

Bill March

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

This is the third revised edition of Bill March's essential manual, brought up-to-date to include the latest ideas in technique and equipment.

Medicine for Mountaineering

Ed J A Wilkerson

The Mountaineers, 1985, pp 446, diagrams, £8.95 softback.

Mountaineering First Aid

Lentz, Macdonald & Carline

The Mountaineers, 1985, pp 112, diagrams, £3.95 softback.

Both of these issues are also third editions of long-established standard text books on all the medical aspects of mountaineering.

Samivel des Cimes

Editions Hoëbeke, 1985, pp 104, illustrated.

Samivel's mountain illustrations have been known and loved by British climbers for many years, through his books such as *Sous l'oeil des Choucas* and *Contes à Pic*, but this is the first time that a representative selection of his work has been available. It is a beautifully produced art book, almost entirely of illustrations with minimal descriptions plus a bibliography, covering a selection of all his work from 1931 to 1984. Whilst the majority have mountain themes, a few of Samivel's illustrations to classic novels and children's books have been included to give balance. Whilst one or two of the subjects are a trifle 'twee',

there are some beautiful classic illustrations in this selection which can rival the best in mountain pictures. The book can be obtained from Lionel Hoëbeke at 20, Rue d'Aumale, 75009 Paris 9, at FF175 + FF20 p&p. For the real enthusiast, there is a limited edition of 100, with an original drawing, for FF600.

The Glaciers of Equatorial East Africa

Stefan Hastenrath

D Reidel Publishing Co, 1984, pp xxiv + 354, maps, diagrams, photos, etc, npq. During the last century the Lewis Glacier on Mt Kenya has decreased in volume by about 75%. Mt Kenya has lost seven out of its 18 glaciers. It seems probable that the mountain will be deglaciated by the mid 21st century. Kilimanjaro's ice will last no longer. Only the Ruwenzori, notorious for its cloud and rain, will retain its ice and that will be much reduced.

Professor Hastenrath has assembled and organized a mass of information and photographs to provide a framework for his account of his own research. The bibliography and photographs will be of interest to anyone who has visited the area or who plans to. (Go now while the glaciers last!) His research methods will be of assistance to anyone planning an expedition which, for financial reasons perhaps, has a scientific objective.

He concludes that the dramatic decline of East Africa's glaciers is mainly due to a reduction in precipitation of about 15%. The grim pictures of famine and expanding deserts in Africa suggest that this is at least a continent-wide trend.

John Temple

Climbers and Hikers Guide to the World's Mountains

Michael R Kelsey

Kelsey Publishing Co. Available in Great Britain from Cordee
2nd Edition 1984. pp 800. 380 black and white photographs. 377 maps. £15.95 paperback.

Michael Kelsey feels, and he is probably right, that he has climbed more mountains in more geographical regions of the world than anyone else. Almost all of these trips which appear to flow into a continuum of travel beginning in 1970, have been made solo and include some impressive efforts, notably (though illegally) reaching over 7400m on Masherbrum and 6000m on Tirich Mir in 1975.

This book is a culmination of his experience and each individual mountain or mountain area is given a double page format. The lefthand side details information on how to get there, usually from the capital city or some major town to the base of the mountain; weather seasons and useful equipment; some indication of a trek in the region or an ascent of the peak by its normal route; the length of time needed for the round trip; best place to buy food; last place to buy food, get water, etc. Below this lies a black and white print of the peak or area in question while the righthand page is devoted entirely to a map. The maps, in every sense, are excellent — the photographs possibly the worst I've seen in print; I am sure the originals were fine, but the reproduction . . .

Everywhere you have heard of and a good deal that you have not is dealt with in this book and, as one might expect of an author from Utah, the coverage of north, central and southern regions of the Americas is especially detailed.

A book packed with useful information to get one started on the road to some enticing and esoteric corner. A book offering a diversity of ideas together with food for thought to the discerning traveller. Pity about the photographs.

Lindsay Griffin

Expedicion Navarra al Himalaya '79. Dhaulagiri 8172m

Gregorio Arig

Pamplona, 1979, pp 104, photos, maps and diagrams, npq.

Buru Ilhun Lurruntsua. Euskaldurek Everest Mondian

Felipe Uriarte

Elkar, 1981, pp 320, photos and diagrams, npq.

Jannu. Una Primavera del Himalaya

Mari Abrego

Editorial Aramburu, Pamplona, 1983, pp 132, photos, maps and diagrams, npq.

These three books, presented to the Club by Sr Arig, detail the activities of Basque climbers in the Himalaya in recent years — Everest in '74 and '80, Dhaulagiri in '79 and Jannu in '81. All three books are very well produced, with excellent colour photographs, the Jannu volume including what must be one of the most stunning summit photos ever taken. It is only a pity that the double page spread effectively reduces its impact to zero. Whilst two of the books are in Spanish, the Everest volume is in Basque. Although this will make it unreadable to the great majority of members, it still remains one of the best photographic records of the 'normal' route up Everest.

Le Regard Intérieur

Marcelle Durieu-Zappelli

Michel, 1984, pp 72, photos, paperback in French, npq.

A small volume of thoughts on life in general followed by an account of climbs on various alpine peaks in the '50s.

Adamello Vol 1

CAI-TCI

Pericle Sacchi pp 388, maps, drawings and photos.

The title is misleading — it should be 'Adamello Group' — for the principal mountains in the range (Adamello itself, 3554m, and the slightly higher Presanella) are not included and are presumably left to Vol 2. The mountains and passes that do appear (310 of them) are dealt with thoroughly, eg 19 routes up Caré Alto are detailed, and there is a good ski section. The 100 pages of general information are comprehensive, as is usual with this series (*Guida dei Monti d'Italia*) of which this is the 46th volume.

Blackshaw's *Mountaineering* describes this group as 'Interesting mainly for novices or hill walkers' but the present reviewer recalls climbs up to TD grade and plenty of yawning crevasses.

WLR

Derwent Gritstone

Ed Geoff Milburn

BMC, 1985, pp 264, photos — some colour — maps and diagrams, £6.50.

The second volume in the Fourth Series of Peak District Climbs, covering the area from the big favourites in the north — Froggatt, Curbar, Gardoms — via the Cratcliffe groups and Black Rocks to the smaller crags in the south. A worthy successor to the Stanage volume, with reasonable photos and excellent diagrams.

Bibliography of Nepal. List and notes of Japanese Literature

Ed Prof Jiro Kowakita

Nichigai Associates, 1984, pp 10 + 470, photos, diagrams and map, Y9800.

The Japan-Nepal Society has produced this volume to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of the society. It contains nearly 4000 entries of books, pamphlets and articles published in Japan about Nepal, covering all aspects of life there, politics, science, history, *etc* and including mountaineering. In Japanese.

Speak to the Hills

Ed Hamish Brown & Martyn Berry

Aberdeen University Press, 1985, pp xxx + 530, photos, £14.50.

This is an Anthology of Twentieth Century British and Irish Mountain Poetry, — and what can you say about it other than to urge people to buy a copy? Five hundred and thirty pages of 20th century poems about hills, from the sublime to the ridiculous, from Winthrop Young to Patey (without inferring anything ridiculous in the latter!), from Louis MacNeice to Anon, with a sprinkling by Hamish Brown himself. A marvellous anthology to dip into with many old favourites, but also many that have been culled from club journals and other not easily accessible sources. One's view of anthologies of this kind is often coloured by omissions or inclusions of personal favourites: many years ago I liked a little poem that appeared in *Punch* entitled 'Guard's Van to Wales', and cut it out to keep in a cuttings file. I did not expect to see it again but — p 16 — it's there!

Les Alpinistes

Yves Ballu

Arthaud, 1984, pp 468, paperback in French, FF98.00.

Yves Ballu has written a history of alpinists and alpinism from the earliest days — Mont Aiguille, 1492, — to the present, based on the lives and exploits of the individuals concerned. The book is, naturally, packed with facts, but is written in a chatty style, including such chapters as an imaginary interview with Mummery. All the major ascents and personalities in the Alps are included and the book includes a geographical list of major peaks in the Alps and Pyrenees with principal first ascents.

Trek the Himalayas

M S Kohli

Air India, nd (1972) pp 4 + 104, maps & illustrations, paperback, npq.**The Himalayas. Playground of the Gods**

Vickas, 1983, pp xii + 244, maps and photos, paperback, npq.

In writing *The Himalayas*, Capt Kohli has attempted a trekking guide to the whole range, with chapters on India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bhutan, China and Afghanistan. In each area described, general information on permits, access, etc, is given, followed by detailed maps and descriptions of a number of treks in each district. *Trek the Himalayas* is an abbreviated booklet on various trekking routes, complete with adverts for hotels and airlines, written by Capt Kohli in his capacity as Manager for Tourism with Air India.

Medicina de Montana

Eusko Jaurlaritza

Gobierno Vasco, 1984, pp 414, photos and diagrams, paperback, npq.

Numerous papers, in Spanish, on mountain medicine.

Randonnées Pédestres dans la Sainte-Baume

Alexis Lucchesi & Daniel Gorgeon

Édisud, 1985, pp 192, maps & photos, npq.

The indefatigable Alexis Lucchesi has sent us the latest in his Édisud guides — the second of the *Guides de Randonnées*. This one is to the Sainte-Baume area and is to the usual high standard. Eighty routes are described and a number of separate maps are included.

Haute Randonnée Alpine.

CAF

Édisud, 1985, pp 192, maps, diagrams & photos, FF60.

A further randonnée guide from Édisud, this time the high level route from Lac Lemman to the Mediterranean at Menton, 1000km, in 50 stages, following the frontier between France and Switzerland or Italy.

Le Monoski

Pierre Raison

Denoël, 1985, pp 142, photos, maps and diagrams, FF140.00.

This is a complete guide to mono-skiing, a cross between skiing and surfing. The author is obviously a keen advocate and gives a complete manual from learning to sit on a chair lift to descending the Vallon de la Meije.

A Chance in a Million? Scottish Avalanches

Bob Barton & Blyth Wright

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1985, pp vi + 120, diagrams, paperback, npq.

This book looks at the questions 'Is there an avalanche problem in Scotland?' — 'Where and when?' — 'Can avalanches be avoided?' and 'How can you survive one?' It provides the answers by studying the anatomy of snow structure and avalanche patterns, and relating them to specific happenings.

Advice on improving the odds and on survival and rescue techniques complete a most useful book.

North-East Outcrops of Scotland

Ed D Dinwoodie

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1984, pp 284, maps and diagrams, npq.

The three previous editions of this guide were published by the Etchachan Club, and covered only the coastal cliffs. The present edition has been enlarged to cover all sea-cliffs and outcrops north-east of a line from Arbroath to Inverness, but excluding the Cairngorms.

Bergell, Disgrazia, Engadine De Badile à la Bernina

Giuseppe Miotti & Alessandro Gogna.

Denoël, 1985, pp 240, maps, route diagrams, photos — many in colour, npq.

One of the latest issues in the *100 Plus Belles Courses* series which is so popular and of which the Club now has several volumes. (See A789 for list.) This one comes up to the usual high standard and includes classic routes on the Badile, Bernina, Roseg and Disgrazia, among many others.

Le Massif Central

Annick and Serge Mouraret

Denoël, 1985, pp 240, numerous photos, maps and diagrams, npq.

One of the latest issues in the *100 Plus Belles Courses* series features the Massif Central, that vast area stretching from the Puy de Dôme near Clermont-Ferrand in the north, to the hills of the Cevennes and even closer to the Mediterranean in the south. This is a fascinating book, more varied than most in the series, in that the 100 are split up into 40 walks, 6 *passages Aquatiques* in the gorges, 30 rock climbs on the fantastic outcrops and gorges in the area, 7 nordic ski traverses, 7 alpine expeditions and 10 canoe expeditions on the famous rivers in the area such as the Tarn. Quite a mixed bag!

McMurdo Sound Area, Antarctica

Molenaar Maps, 1985, npq.

Not a book but a single folded sheet 'oblique-view pictorial landform map' published by Dee Molenaar in association with the AAC. The front of the sheet gives an excellent pictorial representation of the McMurdo Sound area, whilst the back has a summary guide to the region which itself contains as much information as a small book.

Mountain and Cave Rescue. 1985/86

Mountain Rescue Committee, 1985, pp 40, diagrams, £1.20.

The official handbook of the Mountain Rescue Committee, which not only gives the basic information on first-aid and mountain-craft as applied to safety in mountains, moors and caves, including notes on helicopter rescue, but lists every rescue post and rescue team in Great Britain and Ireland.

Cuadernos de Alpinismo: Chaltel. (Fitzroy)

Pyrenaica/SGIM, 1985, pp 48, numerous photos, maps and diagrams, Ptas 300.

Three years ago, Pyrenaica issued the first of their mountain monographs on Aconcagua; this is the second on the Fitzroy group. The photographs and general production are excellent and, as well as giving general descriptions and histories of the various peaks, detailed topo-diagrams are included for each major route. Text in Spanish.

A Guide to Trekking in Nepal

Stephen Bezruchka

Cordée, 1985, pp 352, numerous maps and photos, paperback, £8.95.

This is the fifth revised and enlarged edition of this excellent guide to Nepal, covering not only the major trekking routes in the country but virtually all information that any traveller there will want to know. Indispensable for anyone going to Nepal.

Randonnées Pédestres dans la Sainte-Victoire

Alexis Lucchesi and Daniel Gorgeon

Édisud, 1985, pp 156, maps, diagrams and photos, paperback. FF50.00.

This is the third in the series of footpath guides edited and, in some cases, written by Alexis Lucchesi, the two previous being to the Luberon and Sainte-Baume. The area covered in this volume is not only Montagne de Sainte-Victoire itself, but also Montagne de Concors and Montagne des Ubacs to the north.

Back on the Piste

Barry Waters

Queen Anne Press, 1985, pp 96, drawings, £5.95.

This successor volume to *Piste Again* is rightly sub-titled 'A Guide to Armchair Skiing'. With chapter headings such as 'Selecting your Stube' and 'Chalet-maids and Chalet-mates' you know what to expect. If you want advice on how to go skiing without actually setting foot on the slopes, this is the book for you.

Northwest Discovery. The Stevens and Van Trump Ascent of Mount Rainier, August 1870

Northwest Press, 1985, pp 86, photos and diagrams, \$5.00.

This is, in fact, the March 1985 issue (Vol 6, No 26) of the *Journal of Northwest History and Natural History*. In it the editor, Harry Majors, puts forward a detailed case to substantiate his argument that the actual summit was not reached by Stevens and Van Trump in August 1870, but by Emmons and Wilson two months later. A fascinating piece of detective work for anyone interested in mountaineering history.

Dhaulagiri I. 8167m

1985, pp 211 + xiv of English summary, maps, photos, diagrams and drawings, npq.

An account, in Japanese, of the Academic Alpine Club of Hokkaido Expedition

which climbed Dhaulagiri I in mid-winter 1982, with a brief summary in English at the end.

Sentiers de l'Himalaya

Bernard Germain and Henri Heidsiech

Limited edition, 1981, not paginated, drawings, npq.

This is a limited edition published by the authors of poems and thoughts of Nepal by Bernard Germain and drawings by Henri Heidsiech. It is accompanied by a typescript English translation by Linda Collinge, without the drawings.

Le Jeu de la Montagne et du Hasard

Anne Sauvy

Montalba, 1985, pp 284, paperback, FF75.00.

This is Anne Sauvy's second collection of mountain short stories — the first *Les Flammes de Pierre* having received excellent reviews on the Continent. In view of the fact that many of these 16 stories have their origin in mountaineering history, it is a pity that a British publisher cannot be found to allow their appreciation by a wider audience.

Rock Climbs: Glen Nevis and the Lochaber Outcrops

Ed Grindley

Cicerone Press, 1985, pp 130, photos, maps and route diagrams, £5.95.

Scrambles in Lochaber

Noel Williams

Cicerone Press, 1985, pp 152, photos and route diagrams, £5.95.

Two further guides from Cicerone, the first covering the modern crags in the area, the main ones being the Polldubh Crags in Glen Nevis, but also including Loch Leven-side, the Steall area, Glenfinnan and the Mallaig area amongst others. The second covers the major scrambling lines on mountains from Ben Cruachan in the south to the Saddle in the north, and out east to Ben Alder. Ben Nevis and Glencoe are, of course, in the middle, and such favourites as the Aonach Eagach ridge should make this a good seller.

Climber's Guide to the Cairngorms

Allen Fyffe and Andrew Nisbet

Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1985, pp 364, photo-topos, route diagrams, npq.

Described as 'A Comprehensive Guide', this fourth volume in the new series of SMC guides is exactly that, covering in one volume what was previously intended to be five, and bringing up-to-date climbs which, in most cases, have not seen the light of day in book form for more than ten years. The authors give full descriptions for good routes and a summary of poorer ones, which can however be pursued in notes of further reading in the comprehensive first ascent list.

Turkestan Solo

Ella Maillart

*Century Publishing, 1985, pp 334, maps, £4.95.***Scrambles Amongst the Alps**

Edward Whymper

Century Publishing, 1985, pp xxii + 410, map and illustrations, £4.95.

Two paperback reprints in the excellent Century Travellers series, the first, telling of Ella Maillart's travels in 1932 from Moscow through Russian Turkestan, has an introduction by Julia Keay. *Scrambles* is the revised 1936 edition with extracts from Whymper's diaries, and has an introduction by Ronald Clark.

Skakki Podkrakowskie

Krzysztof Baran & Tomasz Opozda

PTTK, Warsaw/Cracow. Vol 1, 1983, pp 120, maps and topo diagrams. Vol 2, 1985, pp 112, maps and topo diagrams. Each volume zł 130.

These are the first two volumes of rock-climbing guides to outcrops in the Cracow area of Poland, produced by the Mountain Tourism Committee of the PTTK. Whilst comparatively few members will be able to follow the text, the numerous clear maps and diagrams will enable anyone who finds themselves in the area to follow the routes.

The Mountains of Wales

Terry Marsh

Hodder and Stoughton, 1985, pp 256, map and photos, npq.

Following his *The Summits of Snowdonia*, the author has now produced this walker's guide to the 600m summits of Wales which, personally, I think is a big improvement on his earlier book. The grouping is geographical from north to south, the photos are generally excellent, and the descriptions clear and concise.

Lakeland Rock

Adrian Bailey

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985, pp 144, photos, many in colour, £5.95 paperback.

Most people will, I suspect, agree that the series on TV last year under the above title was the best rock-climbing TV-viewing yet, and there are probably more home videos still showing the series again as well! This, subtitled 'Classic Climbs with Chris Bonington' is the book of the film (we have not had the LP yet) and gives, in addition to written versions of the five climbs we saw, a layman's introduction to climbing in the Lakes, and Bonington's own climb 'Holy Ghost', which we did not see. The book is written by a layman, chiefly for laymen, but despite a few gaffes and a marked difficulty in distinguishing between Pete Whillance and Dave Armstrong, it is attractively produced, with some excellent photos. It is certainly worth having for the last, marvellous, portraits of Bill Peascod and Don Whillans.

Rock Climbing in Ireland

Ed Calvin Torrans and Dawson Stelfox

Constable, 1984, pp 260, maps, photos and photo-diagrams, £6.50.

Constable are doing a service to hill lovers everywhere in their uniform series of walking and climbing guides. This current volume lists over 300 rock climbs in all parts of Ireland and is a companion to the general hill guide by Joss Lynam. Probably of greater use than the selective guides to the Lakes, etc., as the average climber from Britain is more interested in having a selection presented to him for a quick holiday visit.

Compte-Rendu de l'Expédition Française 1985 — Aconcagua — 7000m

Jean Paul Chassagne

Expedition report, maps, diagrams, and photo.

Report of the French expedition which climbed the SE pillar to the junction with the 1954 French S face route.

A Delicate Wilderness. The Photography of Elliott Barnes. 1905–1914

Edward Cavell

Altitude Publishing, Whyte Foundation, 1983, pp 48, photos, npq.

Legacy in Ice. The Vaux Family and the Canadian Alps

Edward Cavell

Whyte Foundation, 1983, pp 100, photos, npq.

Two volumes of turn-of-the-century photographs. Elliott Barnes was a romantic character who tried to establish his family in the wilderness close to Banff, and in so doing took a number of excellent photographs. The Vaux family were well-to-do Quakers who spent much time in the Banff area studying and photographing the glaciers and mountains and making a number of ascents. This book includes the scrapbook of the Glacier House Hotel, with a number of entries by AC and ACC members.

Classic Walks of the World

Ed Walt Unsworth

Oxford Illustrated Press, 1985, pp 160, maps, photos — many in colour, £14.95.

This book, together with one on France, starts a projected 'Classic Walks' series. Seventeen walks are included, the editor being responsible for six — the Pennine Way, Tour de Mont Blanc, Via delle Bocchette, Kilimanjaro, Lidder Valley in India and the Everest Trek. Dennis Kemp and Al Rouse deal with Annapurna and Concordia, respectively, John Hunt with the Pindos Mountains, Hamish Brown with the Cordillera Blanca and Kev Reynolds with the Pyrenees, among other interesting routes. One of the more unusual is Christopher McCooley's traverse of the North Alps in Japan, which shows that the coverage justifies the 'world' title. The format is to give a description of each route split into days' marches, with a sketch map and a mixture of black and white and colour photos. It is essentially an armchair book for day-dreaming about future possibilities.

Yorkshire Limestone

Ed Graham Desroy

YMC, 1985, pp 320, colour photos, maps and diagrams, npq.

The very much up-to-date and long-awaited guide to Yorkshire Limestone, including, of course, the major crags of Malham, Gordale and Kilnsey, as well as a host of less-frequented ones. Written with humour, and with excellent diagrams and photographs, the guide is one that the YMC can be proud of.

Yi Un Sang. Epic Poet

Jenifer Payne, 1985, photos, paperback in English and French, npq.

A small booklet of poems by Yi Un Sang, who was President of the Korean Alpine Club. Arising from an idea expressed at the UIAA Assembly at Seoul, it is hoped that this will be the first of a series of booklets on mountain poets.

Kamtschatka

Wadim Gippenreiter

VEB F A Brockhaus Verlag, 1985, pp 48 of German text and 91 colour photos, npq.

German edition of a Russian colour-plate book on the volcanoes, geysers, flora and fauna of the remote Kamtschatka peninsula at the far eastern end of the Russian continent. One of the very few books available on this fascinating area.

UIAA/Mountain Medicine Data Centre

Members should be aware that the Library has a folder of medical information leaflets on altitude sickness, frostbite, first aid kits, oedema, oxygen kits, etc, published by the Mountain Medicine Data Centre.