Book Reviews

EDITED BY DAVID S. ROBERTS

The Boldest Dream, by Rick Ridgeway. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979. 170 pages. Cloth $10.95.

In terms of climbing achievement, the American Bicentennial Everest Expedition was very unimpressive. True, two of its members reached the summit of the world's highest mountain on an extremely windy day and survived to talk about it. Yet, the ABEE used bottled oxygen and 25-year-old logistical tactics that had, on numerous times, been proven successful. Thus, this story is not an example of boldness as the title implies but only another account of a march up a big mountain.

I was very skeptical when I began reading this book. In fact, I had a difficult time just getting past the horrible title. In spite of my skepticism however, I found that I was immediately caught up in a moving flashback of Ridgeway, Roach and Bruyntjes climbing up to Camp VI to see if Chandler and Cormack survived the descent from the summit at night. During the first six pages I was totally absorbed by Ridgeway's feelings of the experience: the claustrophobia of waking up from a nightmare in a small tent which is being battered around by the wind, the love for his "ace pal" Chandler, the dread of the possibility that he might be dead, the effort and frustrations of trying to think clearly at 26,000 feet and the insidious apathy which slowly eats away at a person at high altitude. These first few pages are perhaps the best in the book.

The subsequent chapters drag somewhat as they describe the pre-expedition planning. At this point Ridgeway spices up the otherwise boring parts with his outstanding humor:

"In the reception room swarms of media people from newspapers were hobnobbing. . . . I spotted a good-looking young woman standing by herself and decided to do a little hobnobbing myself.

"Are you from a newspaper?" I asked.

"No, a magazine," she said.

"Oh? Which one?"

"McCall's."

"McCall's? What interest do they have in Mount Everest?" I thought perhaps they were considering doing a piece on the two women on our team.

"Interest? Oh, none. I just come to these press conferences for the free booze."

By then my drink had arrived, so I toasted her, saying she probably had the best reason of anyone for being there. (p. 30)

It was refreshing to read Ridgeway's light-hearted prose. He isn't deluded by the seriousness of it all; he realizes that climbing is, above all, a game used as a means to see some fantastic country. He wants to experience it all and I got the feeling that to him, getting cranked on *chang* with the Sherpas was as important as reaching the South Col. It's not just the summit but it's the total mountain experience that "fights the boredom."

There were several good lessons to be learned from the book, especially for those of us who go on expeditions to big mountains. Following the evolution of what was originally planned as a small, semi-alpine style expedition into a 12 climber plus film crew zoo was didactic. If you want to climb a mountain and do your own thing, then don't seek funds for your trip. The second lesson illustrated the realities of climbing and film making. Either you go to climb with maximum speed and minimum equipment or you go to make an exciting film. But never be fooled into thinking that it is possible to do both.

The film crew, then, was the source of a lot of interpersonal friction and Ridgeway deals with these and other conflicts with embarrassing honesty. All sides of the arguments are presented; yet it was difficult to have sympathy for the inane whining of some of the expedition's members over the presence of the film crew which generously donated $50,000 to the expedition and promised an additional $50,000 if the footage made prime-time TV (it did).

Although *The Boldest Dream* will never be on the same shelf with *Assault Against Everest*, *Conquest of Everest*, *Four Against Everest* or other classics, Ridgeway's prose makes for easy entertainment and will be enjoyed by both climbers and nonclimbers.

MICHAEL GRABER

Another Ascent of the World's Highest Peak—Qomolangma, (no author given). Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1975. 118 pages, many black-and-white and color photos.

It is all too easy to make fun of the Chinese on Everest. By Western standards, their 1975 ascent of the north ridge represents overkill at its most excessive—a team of hundreds (the number is not specified, but includes 70 scientists and 36 women) just to place nine climbers on the summit, a convoy of trucks to deliver fresh vegetables at Base Camp, mobs of Tibetans to cheer them on from Lhasa. The 1960 Chinese "ascent" generated a storm of controversy, when alleged summit photos were demonstrated to have been taken from a point somewhat below the

summit. This time the Chinese clearly did make the top, leaving a metal tripod there to aid in triangulation. But, the Western climber is tempted to say, so what?

Another Ascent of the World's Highest Peak—Qomolangma, a glossy, well-translated propaganda brochure, allows us to try to comprehend the achievement in Chinese terms. To this reader, at least, those terms seem contradictory. Much is made of the triumph as a combined effort of the whole Chinese people, "for whom there are no unscalable heights or unvanquishable fortresses." The achievement really belongs to "the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius." Yet the nine summit climbers are among the few team members named, and their individual portraits single them out for glory. The apparent crux, a nasty bulge in the Second Step, is led by Sodnam Norbu, who is identified for that feat as conspicuously as, say, Buhl on the Eiger.

Another claim of the manifesto is that, in Mao's words, "Whatever men comrades can accomplish, women comrades can too." One woman, Phanthog, reached the summit, and 15 others broke the Chinese women's altitude record by reaching 7600 meters. But the women are praised for their efforts in the patronizing accents familiar to bourgeois capitalism ("Not a word of complaint was heard from them . . . they tackled névé, crevasses, and ice walls in excellent form. . . .").

There is an emphasis on Science reminiscent of the late-19th-Century arctic expeditions. Yet the tangible discoveries of the teams of surveyors, atmospheric physicists, high-altitude physiologists, glaciologists and geologists remain unclear—beyond determining the altitude of Qomolangma to the nearest centimeter.

When not downright contradictory, Chinese values strike the Western climber as puzzling. The loss of Comrade Wu Tsung-yueh, who "died a hero's death after holding out to the last," is nevertheless treated almost apologetically. The reasons why New China supports mountaineering include "the interests of socialist economic reconstruction and the building of national defense," as well as instilling the lesson to fear "neither hardship nor death." There is unabashed talk about the "conquest of nature."

Most deeply anathematic to the Westerner is the compulsory cheerfulness exhibited on every page, along with the extreme regimentation. In all the photos everyone is smiling, even the factory workers producing down jackets and pack frames. Training consists of an endless single-file trudge up a lowland hill, and Base-Camp exercises are conducted in perfect ranks and files. The caption of a photo in which two climbers are grinning at each other reads, "Helping each other on with packs before setting out on an acclimatization march"; another, "The protective nylon rope, linking the climbers together, is highly treasured as a tie of comradeship."

The Chinese are careful not to risk Western comparisons. But the 1960 ascent is unblinkingly advanced as fact. And the 20-meter wall in the Second Step is cryptically upgraded as follows: "It has been described in relevant foreign literature as too great an obstacle to warrant any further attempts on it." Presumably the British of the '20s and '30s? At any rate, Sodnam Norbu made quick work of it with an aluminum ladder.

DAVID ROBERTS

The Shining Mountain: Two Men on Changabang's West Wall, by Peter Boardman, with material by Joe Tasker. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978. 192 pages, 15 black-and-white photos, 12 color plates, 2 sketches. Price £5.95.

The climb that may well be the hardest yet done in the Himalaya remains relatively little-known, at least to Americans. In climbing the west wall of Changabang in October 1976, Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker brilliantly demonstrated what might be called the Shipton principle of expeditionary mountaineering: that a two-man lightweight, low-budget assault can rise to the kinds of challenges others would reserve for a massive attacking force. Changabang, which Longstaff had called "the most superbly beautiful mountain I have ever seen," was first climbed by an immensely strong Bonington team (including Scott, Boysen and Haston) by the east ridge in 1974. They had found the climb exciting enough to publish a book about it.

The west wall is another proposition altogether. A 5000-foot precipice so sustained that Boardman and Tasker had to resort to semi-hanging bivouacs, it demanded from the men both extremely "necky" climbing in severe cold and a grim dedication of purpose over a full month alone together. They chose to fix ropes continuously to a point near the summit. It is clear, however, that an alpine-style attempt would have failed early, and that the peculiar hazards of the fixed-rope assault bred an oppressive psychology of its own.

A mark of Boardman's integrity is that the tone in which he recounts the climb is *sotto voce*, without a vestige of the sort of grandiose self-appraisal indulged in (whether or not accurately) by writers like Messner and Bonington. In *The Shining Mountain* Boardman offers us a wealth of climbing specificity; but the most interesting dimension of the account, and the one the book is really built on, is the intense relationship between the two men.

It is interesting that Tasker and Boardman had not climbed together before Changabang. They were drawn to each other by mutual respect and by a mutual passion for the mountain. Tasker's fine Alpine record had been capped by an extraordinary two-man ascent with Dick Renshaw

of the southeast ridge of Dunagiri (near Changabang); within British mountaineering circles, he was regarded as a fine climber. But Boardman, thanks to the Everest Southwest Face Expedition, had recently become a media "star." The tension between the two men hinges from the start around this disparity of fame. Boardman feels he must prove himself to Tasker, who, in irritable moments, exploits his resentment—as when Boardman accidentally kneels on Tasker's photographic gear, eliciting this gibe: "I had to buy my cameras. They weren't given to me, you know."

Boardman is extremely honest in revealing his own worry that Tasker is nervier or tougher than he is. The competitive need not to confess fear or weakness seems, as much as anything, to have been the bond that drove the men upward. Tasker's diary gives a limited insight into a sensitive, introspective soul; but the long habit of keeping things to himself (from thirteen to twenty-one he had trained to be a priest) makes the passages somewhat opaque. The two men, it is clear, did not reach a level of real intimacy, except in the inevitable climbing sense. Even there, Boardman is sharp enough to see, the strength of their union was based sometimes not on trust but on its opposite. Leery of a flexing single-peg rappel anchor, Boardman unclips from it while Tasker is starting down. Tasker witnesses the act and shouts up cheerfully, "Well, if it does come out, you'll be a bit stranded up there without a rope."

Boardman makes the fascinating observation that, "If we opened up our relationship whilst on the climb, the mountain might exploit our weaknesses." (One wonders if this disturbing proposition is true in general.) A corresponding difficulty, borne out fully by other two-man expeditions, has to do with the relativity of judgment. In making any single decision, the voice recommending descent, postponement, caution can seem to the other like a coward's; vice versa, a reckless fool's. The subjective tangles that result, Boardman emphasizes, create an ominous air of unreality.

The actual narration of the climbing turns out to be matter-of-fact, and the summit itself seems anticlimactic. Tasker and Boardman's expertise resulted in a relatively safe climb; the closest incident to disaster was an exploding stove at Base Camp. But Boardman's fine eye for detail brings vividly to life the nightmarish aspects of bivouacking in hammocks, the fumbling stupidity extreme cold provokes, the peculiar terror of jümaring first on the fixed ropes—"like the jester tasting the king's food for poison." His eye picks out on the access road a wayside warning sign that could well stand as an emblem for mountaineering: "Life is short. Do not make it shorter."

Finally, the reader responds gratefully to Boardman's astute awareness of his predecessors, so that Shipton, Tilman, Longstaff and others emerge not as gray-beards but as canny light-weight trekkers years ahead of their time.

The most gripping incident in the book has nothing to do with Changabang. After their climb, Boardman and Tasker walk into the Base Camp of the Italian Garhwal Expedition. A single woman from the American Dunagiri expedition is there, having also just arrived; she seems strangely withdrawn. After trading vibrant gossip with the Italians, Tasker and Boardman talk to the woman, Ruth Erb. It turns out that she is the sole survivor of the expedition. She has just spent two days alone, trapped in a camp at 19,850 feet, having witnessed the fatal falls of the four men who were going for the summit—including her husband. The Italians had rescued her but seemed reluctant to try to reach the bodies. The next day Boardman and Tasker accomplish the job, dragging the bodies into a crevasse.

"I was feeling sick and Joe, noticing I was fighting back tears, came over to help me. But this was an overwhelming sorrow that weeping could not symbolise. 'I suppose we ought to say a prayer or something,' I said. We had never discussed religion or beliefs before.

" 'We'll stop for some moments,' said Joe."

DAVID ROBERTS

Trango: The Nameless Tower, by Jim Curran. Sheffield, England: Dark Peak, 1978. 175 pages, 42 pages of black-and-white photos; 16 color plates. £6.95.

Here is a climb that deserved a better book.

The climb was the first ascent in 1976 of the "Nameless Tower" in the Trango Towers of the Baltoro, arguably the "steepest of all Himalayan peaks." It involved 2500 feet of hard rock work on excellent granite at high altitudes (the summit is 20,500 feet). The party, a powerful one—Martin Boysen, Mo Anthoine, Malcolm Howells and Joe Brown—just did succeed in reaching the summit. Though the climb went relatively smoothly, there are at least two stories within it begging to be told well: Boysen's near-fatal epic on the attempt the year before when his knee got stuck in a jam crack, and Brown's triumph at 46 on the peak he had first fancied (on the way in to the Mustagh Tower) twenty years before.

Unfortunately, Jim Curran seems not to have been the best choice to write the book. As one of a two-man film crew, he occupied (in climbing terms) a peripheral role—far more subsidiary even than the other filmmaker, Tony Riley, who got within 200 feet of the top. Such a role could have been a virtue in disguise, had it lent balance and objectivity to the telling. But all too often Curran's own battles with load-hauling and jümaring occupy the foreground of the narrative, eclipsing the far more important doings higher on the peak. Self-consciously, the author affects the degenerate self-mockery that is the special vein of British hard men;

but he sounds too calculating, a pub-worshipper on the fringe of the inner circle. The self-consciousness gets in the way of character, too. We are told time and again how funny Anthoine is, but given a first-hand taste only once or twice ("As Mo remarked, in Nepal there is a large Joe Brown impersonation society, called sherpas"). The one incident that is really well-told is Curran's own near-death in a cascade of falling rocks. He seems to lack the empathy or sense of proportion, however, to do justice to the others' experience: the description of a spaghetti glop occupies as much space as does reaching the summit.

Curran's prose exhibits an addiction to dangling participles, run-on sentences and feverish fragments. As if that were not obstacle enough, alas, this is the most wretchedly proof-read book I can remember seeing in print. The average daily newspaper has fewer typos.

DAVID ROBERTS

Sivalaya, by Louis Baume. Reading: Gastons-West Col Publications, 1978. 316 pages, 30 sketches and maps. Price £12.

Not everyone will appreciate this book, but for the next several years it will remain the definitive work on the history of the 8000-meter peaks. Louis Baume has utilized his life-long love of these summits and man's ventures on them to write a work that is an important contribution to mountaineering literature. This tome will be cherished by those who share his infatuation with the Himalaya.

The book is divided into three parts—a general history of the Himalaya and Karakoram; the individual sketch of each 8000-meter peak; and an extremely useful bibliography of the works on these mountains. The first part will interest all readers but is not sufficiently unique to make one buy the book. The second and third parts may bore the casual reader because space limitations prevented Baume from recreating more than a hint of the dramas that were enacted by the expeditions he chronicles and there are no photographs of the peaks, only some very fine drawings by Mario Alfonsi. For the cognoscenti, however, these chronicles are gems, well worth the purchase price, and are essential for the library of anyone with serious aspirations on these summits. First, the chronicles are complete and contain very few errors. The only omission I noticed was lack of reference to the 1964 Chinese-Pakistani treaty that fixed the border in the Baltoro region along the divide formed by the four 8000-meter peaks. Secondly, Baume has done an excellent job in enumerating maps and expedition accounts, identifying the most useful of these, and reconciling the multitudinous inconsistencies in names, descriptions, and altitudes that are a real barrier to digesting critically this literature. As I read the book, I became aware of what a formidable task

this must have been and what a high proportion of Himalayan mountaineers have contributed inaccuracies to the literature.

Anyone who has visited these regions will certainly find these accounts extremely interesting; those with mountaineering libraries will value the bibliography; alpinists who climb there will share these sentiments, but will also, I suspect, wish that Baume some day share more of his notes and publish a book much longer with photographs as useful as his text. In summary, it is an interesting and helpful guide to the lands and literature of the high Himalaya, also the abode of Siva.

LOUIS F. REICHARDT

Himàlaya e Karakorùm, by Mario Fantin. Milano: Club Alpino Italiano, 1978. 248 pages, 97 photographs, various maps.

Mario Fantin, the well-known Italian authority on the mountains of the world, has given us an excellent and handsome book and a highly useful one for those who read Italian. The text portion is a reference book packed with pertinent information. The first 40 pages contain data on the Himalaya: geology, glaciology, climate, geography, information on names, fauna and flora, communications, geographical divisions. A second 35-page section is devoted to the many varied peoples of the area, followed by over 40 pages of climbing history and bibliography. Then twenty pages are given over specially to the Karakoram.

The text is generally authoritative and contains much useful information. I quarrel with only a few points. "Chogori" and "P'alchan Kangri" are synthetic names given by Europeans to K2 and Broad Peak which are not used in Pakistan or by the Baltis, who live closest to the region. In fact, I have heard angry protests by Pakistanis over the use of these names. And I am surprised at the reference to "the most heavily glaciated region outside the polar regions of the Canadian Arctic Islands, Greenland and Antarctica" as being in the Karakoram, when the mountains of temperate regions of Alaska and the Yukon Territory are much more heavily glaciated. These are perhaps quibbles and do not really detract from this carefully researched volume.

It is the last third of the book that will appeal to any climber. Signor Fantin has put together an outstanding collection of black-and-white photographs of all parts of these mountains. These he has obtained from photographers all over the world. They alone will make this volume a treasured addition to the mountaineer's library.

H. ADAMS CARTER

Tenzing, After Everest: An Autobiography by Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, as told to Malcolm Barnes. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1977.

Tenzing's second autobiography is a worthy successor to *Tiger of the Snows*, his first autobiography, written with James Ramsey Ullman more than 20 years ago. Though Tenzing can neither read nor write in any language, and has no written records, his phenomenal memory produces details that bring out his character clearly and show that though he has lived vastly different lives before and after Everest, he has remained the same basic person. *After Everest* describes no mountain adventures but delves into the founding in 1952 of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling with the help of Pandit Nehru, Dr. Roy (chief minister of West Bengal) and various Swiss, including Arnold Glatthard, head of the mountain school at Rosenlaui. Under Tenzing as Director of Field Training for 22 years, 4,600 men and women have been taught to climb at this fine institution and there have been no fatalities or serious accidents, a proud record. Many of the most distinguished contemporary Sherpa and Indian climbers have had their schooling there.

After discussing the Institute and its operations, Tenzing tells us about his family and his many travels. Though he has been fêted by famous people throughout the world, he has retained his common sense and his capacity for friendship. Raymond Lambert, Lute Jerstad, Achille Campagnoni and Lord Hunt, for instance, mean a great deal to him, yet he cares little for many aspects of the modern world. "The things that hold me," he says, "are people and animals, mountains and flowers."

Tenzing's honesty and kindness are evident and also his deep concern for the future of the Sherpa people and the changes that tourism has brought. He complains of pollution and of "dreadful destruction of the forests." "Food wrappings, beer cans, untidy campsites, toilet paper, rubbish . . . are becoming more numerous. . . . The tourists who come to Nepal to see the wilderness are actually destroying it." He adds, "You bring to people a new way of life . . . you give them schools and hospitals, all of which is good, but at the same time you tear them up from their roots . . . in Solu Khumbu a special way of life is dying and with it a language and a culture." How to save the special strengths of Sherpa life he doesn't know, and he fears that the same destruction of old values will occur also in wild and beautiful Bhutan.

Tenzing's own life has reached a turning point with his retirement from the Institute. He thinks of the pastures where he used to herd Yaks among the great peaks and he reasons that perhaps he can now return to his native village and there train Sherpa climbers who will be satisfied to stay in their villages as guides for tourists and climbers, and so begin to revitalize the life and culture of the Khumbu. Possibly, but it seems unlikely.

One puts down the book with added respect for Tenzing and an inner sadness at the rapid changes in old Sherpa ways.

ROBERT H. BATES

Master of Rock: The Biography of John Gill, by Pat Ament. Boulder: Alpine House Publishing, 1977. 197 pages, many black-and-white photos.

The idea of someone who can climb levels harder than anyone else, which is what I had always heard about Gill, is completely intriguing. So when *Master of Rock* came out I was delighted and couldn't wait to read it. Unfortunately the book was for me no better, and perhaps even worse, than the ten or more other climbing biographies I had read. It is different from many biographies in that it isn't merely a chronological account of a climber's life, with route description followed by route description. The different format helps, but it doesn't save the book.

In the first section of the book Ament hears a climbing partner of his telling about Gill. In the second, Ament is climbing with Royal Robbins and decides he has to meet Gill. In the next three short sections the author and Gill climb together. These are somewhat interesting sections because they show how important Gill has been for some climbers and also because they contain some nice scenes of relaxed, pleasant afternoons bouldering in the sun. On the other hand they contain so much about the author that I got impatient to hear more about Gill.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the book is the middle section, in which a number of climbers write about Gill. The best is an amusing anecdote in which Kevin Bein uses Gill's reputation to "sandbag" Steve Wunsch.

The last half of the book is a tape-recorded conversation that Ament has with Gill. In it Gill gives the impression of being very courteous and modest, and also of being very controlled. There seem to be no hesitations or exclamations in the interview. Gill seems to speak always in complete, well-thought-out sentences. It is almost like hearing a lecture. He tells Ament where he went to school and what areas he climbed at. He talks about getting into gymnastics and some about training, but somehow we don't get any sense of passion or even of real excitement.

The only two dramatic events that Gill and Ament talk about are Gill's ascent of the Thimble, and Gill's being 90 feet out on a lead during a windstorm. They are very interesting, but both are dealt with so briefly and rationally that the reader scarcely has time to get involved.

We don't find out about any deep relationships. We don't see the source of inspiration in Gill's life. We don't see any crises or any really decisive moments. There also seem to be no great issues to involve the reader. Issues are discussed that relate to bouldering, but they are talked about in such a dry, intellectual way that the reader begins to yawn.

The book is filled with photographs—well over 200 of them. All black-and-white, mostly snapshot-sized, they are particularly interesting when one is familiar with the climb. But when one isn't, they start to blur together. Partly, I think, this is a problem of photographing boulder

problems. The climber could be standing on thin 5.8 footholds or on B-3 footholds and the reader couldn't tell the difference from a picture.

I was delighted, as I've said, to see the book come out. I think John Gill is such a unique and important figure in climbing in the United States that, despite its shortcomings, the book is well worth looking at.

ED WARD

Classic Rock, Compiled by Ken Wilson. New York: Granada Publishing Company, 1978. Many photographs and topos. Price $19.95.

Classic Rock is a large-format book which chronicles fifty-five British rock climbs, none more difficult than Hard Severe (approximately F6), written in the same manner as Ken Wilson's earlier book *Hard Rock.*

Classic Rock is characterized by Wilson's well-known thorough approach, precision of detail, and professionalism throughout. Each climb is given from three to six pages which in each case include a photograph of the cliff, a topo giving pitches and named features, action photos of each climb, a written account (each account by a different writer), and tabulated information on locations, campsites and bunkhouses, map references, weather, and literature sources.

The most noteworthy attribute of *Classic Rock* is that it lends a little glamor to the easy and mid-range climbs—a long-overdue seal of legitimacy to help compensate for years of inferiority feelings on the parts of those who have never been able to manage the harder routes. These are wonderful climbs. Grand climbs. Climbs that beginners and experts alike can savor. Wilson has chosen well and one cannot quibble with his selection.

Though certainly functional, the book does not have the zing of its predecessor *Hard Rock.* This stems from inherent limitations in the quality of both photographs and prose. Photographs of easier climbs are unavoidably less graphic than of steeper and harder routes. Typically there is neither the verticality nor the architecture of line. A particular weakness is that Wilson devotes a full-page photo to each cliff. This is less than useful as the book is too big to carry to the base where eyeball comparison might serve a purpose, and, fairly uniformly, the cliff photographs are undistinguished. In contrast, the quality of the eight color plates is very good, some of the sharpest and most vivid color reproduction that this reviewer has seen in a climbing publication.

Variable, with a tendency towards the ordinary, best describes the prose, which all too frequently degenerates into extended guidebook description. In his preface, Wilson refers to the *Hard Rock* "formula" and it is this characteristic which is *Classic Rock*'s undoing, for indeed it is a formula book. With a compulsiveness that will delight the methodical, each climb is given precisely the same treatment. With repetition comes

a certain dullness. Giving the climber this much detail before he arrives at the cliff takes some of the magic and some of the soul out of the climbing. On the easier climbs where technical demands are not high, charm is correlated highly with mystery. There is little doubt that Allen Austin could *not* have had the splendid adventure he describes in his account of Clachaig Gully had he read a book like this before he went.

Likely *Classic Rock* will serve the socially useful purpose of funneling the majority of route baggers onto the fifty-five climbs listed, making them even more classic than they are now, and leaving the lesser-known gems for those of us insiders who prefer a little more peace and quiet. For those who prefer a somewhat less prescribed approach, who have a predilection for the less-trodden path, the book serves the purpose of telling you the climbs to avoid (particularily on weekends and holidays). There are other commendable ways that *Classic Rock* can be used. Enough detail is given that you will be able to bone up sufficiently on each climb to talk about it confidently and authoritatively—*without the necessity of ever actually having done it.* Another possibility is to buy the book but not read about a climb until *after you return*—thereby preserving the sense of the unknown whilst still availing yourself of the opportunity for coffee-table reminiscence.

ROBERT GODFREY

The Big Walls, by Reinhold Messner, Translated by Audrey Salkeld. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. 144 pages. Price $19.95.

The immediate impression is good. Here is a handsome book about some of the most interesting climbs on record, and a book, moreover, by Reinhold Messner, who is arguably the most successful climber on the world stage today. We start in the Alps, make a quick swing into South America, and end up in the Himalaya, and in so doing are taken up not only the Three Big Walls of the Alps, but also the Three Big Walls of the World. When the reader gets down to the substance of the book, however, he may be in trouble. Is this a book in the great climbs format? There are photodiagrams of the climbs, with the usual dotted lines and notes on equipment and so forth. But the amount of detail is woefully inadequate, and no one would embark on any of these climbs without seeking better sources. In this an autobiographical work? There is quite a bit of personal anecdote, yet so many of Messner's major climbs are omitted, while relatively unimportant ones are included. Furthermore, Messner has written a book on the Rupal Face of Nanga Parbat, and the treatment here is brief.

What is the theme, the connecting link, between these Big Walls and the histories and personal experiences that Messner weaves into his book? Are there, in fact, Three Big Walls of the World—or is it just

a handy concept around which to structure a book? Messner is a prolific writer, and a good one, and in the last analysis it seems that here we have an author in search of a subject. Lash together some old Alpine chestnuts: Matterhorn, Grandes Jorasses and Eiger, add a dash of obscurity (Monte Agner), pull in Aconcagua for flavor, top off with Nanga Parbat, (a summit), and Dhaulagiri, (barely got off the ground), and serve to an eager public. Wait a minute, you say, if there are Three Big Walls of the World, and Messner did not get up Dhaulagiri, is one of the Big Walls still unclimbed? No, it's simpler than that: the Eiger does double duty—it's both one of the Three Big Walls of the Alps *and* one of the Three Big Walls of the World. Messner dreams up the concept, fishes around for some handy slides, dashes off the prose, and he is in business. If the whole book took more than a couple of months I would be amazed. And to add to the insult, many of the pictures are ludicrously tipped, and the translation is quite abominable.

Having said all this, I must admit that I nonetheless enjoyed the book. Parts of it are quite awful, as in the ten or so pages excerpted from his mate's diary on Aconcagua, and yet Messner definitely does have something original to say. For this reviewer the interest does not lie in the descriptions of the climbs, but, as in his *The Seventh Grade,* in Messner's reflections on present-day climbing. There are provocative pieces on success and competition, on record seeking, on the need for training, on current expedition philosophy, and on the stresses under which the foremost climbers operate. The section entitled "The Will to Survive" chillingly begins: "Experience shows that of the most successful mountaineers of any generation, only half die from 'natural causes.' The others plunge to, freeze to, or otherwise meet, their deaths in the mountains. Alpine history confirms this situation as a brutal reality: it used to make me think of giving up big mountaineering."

CHRIS JONES

Mountain Passages, by Jeremy Bernstein. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1979. 278 pages. Price $12.50.

In *Mountain Passages,* Jeremy Bernstein has collected eight of his articles —previously published in the *New Yorker,* the *New York Times Magazine,* and *Mountain Gazette*—on climbing and mountain travels. Bernstein, a physicist by profession and an exceptionally talented science writer, has climbed for seventeen summers in the French Alps under the careful supervision of Chamonix guides, and his essays center, understandably, on the Mont Blanc range. He does range afield in a biographical sketch of Yvon Chouinard and in a lengthy account of a drive from France to Pakistan with his long-time climbing guide Claude Jaccoux and Jaccoux's wife Michele, but the focus of his attention is on the history of climbing in the French Alps and his own tours with Jaccoux and others.

His perspective is well defined by a comment early in the book. "In a real sense," he writes, " 'climbing' and 'the Chamonix Valley' are practically synonymous."

Bernstein is at his best in these essays as a reporter. For example his account of the political maneuvering involved in a plan to build an automobile bypass around Chamonix is of interest to anyone familiar with that particular town, or with any mountain village faced with an increase in visitors and traffic. Bernstein also shows an admirable concern for the history and culture of the areas in which he travels, reflected in his willingness to quote extensively from Whymper on the Alps and in his discussions of Pakistan's ancient and recent past. One might perhaps do better to go back to the originals and read *Scrambles Amongst the Alps* or Fosco Maraini's *Where the Four Worlds Meet,* which Bernstein uses extensively in his final chapter, but if *Mountain Passages* increases the readership of either of these classics, it has served an admirable purpose.

When Bernstein turns to climbing, however, his essays reflect his lack of real climbing experience. This failing would be of no consequence if the book were a personal account of one man's experience, but it is not. It is written as a general introduction to the mountain world, and Bernstein frequently assumes a didactic tone as he informs the reader about the history and practice of climbing. In this context, the book's limited viewpoint becomes a major flaw, and the essays read at times like a dated and overcautious instructional primer, at times like a climbing thriller by an author who has not quite captured the language or tone of climbers. The reader, for example, is told that so much friction is generated by rappelling that gloves must be worn and is ominously warned that "it is very important to avoid being out in the Alps late in the afternoon." Mick Burke is introduced as "an English specialist on the Dru" (as if he had done postgraduate sudies on the subject); Hermann Buhl is identified as a German and not an Austrian; Maurice Herzog's brother Gérard, hardly a name to be reckoned with, is described as "one of the best climbers in France." The list could go on.

A more serious failing is the book's parochialism. It is one thing to call the Chamonix Valley synonymous with climbing; it is another to assume, as Bernstein seems to, that the Chamonix guides are synonymous with climbing in Chamonix. These guides, for all their admirable qualities, represent only a small portion of the Chamonix climbing community and as a whole they do not stand in the forefront of Alpine climbing. They are efficient at getting their clients up and down standard routes in a minimum amount of time, but they are not infallible. Bernstein, for example, was stuck on an *étrier* in a storm for forty-five minutes because Jaccoux had run belay ropes to two different clients through the *étrier*'s single carabiner. In his enthusiasm, Bernstein failed to recognize how elementary a mistake Jaccoux had made. More serious, Bernstein romanti-

cizes climbers and the climbing fraternity, and, in his attempt to depict an international mountain elite presided over by professional guides and a few "very serious amateurs," he glosses over some of the more bitter conflicts within the ranks of the guides and between guides and other climbers. One case in point is his description of the famous rescue in 1966 on the west face of the Dru engineered by Hemming and Desmaison. Bernstein mentions the expulsion of Desmaison from the Company of Chamonix Guides as a result of his role in the rescue, but he ignores the jealousy of many of the guides and their reluctance to enter the field officially until it appeared that outsiders might successfully bring off the rescue. Hemming, incidentally, is described as having a face with "the beauty of the paintings of the Christian saints," "a delightful smile, an air of inner strength, and great serenity." An appropriate description, perhaps, for a member of the climbing elite, but not one that fits well with his American reputation, or his death.

In these essays, Bernstein focuses on one of the great centers of Alpinism, and he touches on important questions for climbers, including the degradation of the mountain environment, the increasing frequency of highly publicized and costly rescues, and the threat of regulation. Unfortunately, he does so without the sureness and authority that mark his writings in science.

MATTHEW HALE, JR.

Tales of a Western Mountaineer, by C. E. Rusk. With a portrait of C. E. Rusk by Darryl Lloyd. Seattle: The Mountaineers, 1978. Offset reprint of the original edition of 1924, including title page and 41 photographs, 309 pages, plus 14 pages of introduction, 2 maps and 18 additional photographs. Paperbound. Price $6.95.

Long out of print and virtually impossible to find, Rusk's *Tales of a Western Mountaineer* is one of the classics of American mountaineering. Now, thanks to Darryl Lloyd and The Mountaineers it is available in a well-produced yet inexpensive edition, together with supporting materials that enhance its present-day impact. Raised, like Rusk, in the magnificent country just southeast of Mount Adams, Lloyd, who now directs the Mount Adams Wilderness Institute, has long devoted himself to collecting biographical data and to retracing Rusk's pioneering ascents. The result is an illuminating memoir which supplies the sort of personal material about the author that is missing in the *Tales*, as well as annotations of Rusk's nomenclature and routes on a fine series of photographs by Austin Post.

Born in Illinois in 1871, but raised from the age of three in Klickitat County, Washington, Rusk belongs to the Pacific Northwest. In his variegated career as school teacher, newspaper editor, lawyer, gold miner, justice of the peace, conservationist, and author, Rusk's whole life was

deeply entwined in the unfolding history of the region. Throughout it all ran the thread of his great love affair with Mount Adams. His first ascent of the mountain was made in 1898, and the following year he persuaded his mother and sister to accompany him on a circuit of the mountain, no small feat. In 1901 he accompanied Harry Fielding Reid on his journey around Mount Adams as part of the eminent geologist's project of mapping the glaciers of the Cascade Range. It was on this trip that Reid named Rusk Glacier for him. In 1902 Rusk was invited to become one of the founding members of the American Alpine Club. His famous expedition to Mount McKinley in 1910, about which he wrote numerous articles, was not included in the *Tales*. There are, however, accounts of ascents of Mount Baker, Mount Rainier, Glacier Peak, Mount Hood, Mount Stuart, and Mount Shasta. Perhaps the most impressive of all Rusk's tales is his epic conquest in 1921 of Mount Adams' great east side. It was an audacious route for the time and, indeed, has seldom been repeated.

For those who have themselves climbed in these mountains Rusk's book will have special associations. For a wider audience, however, the greatest appeal may lie in Rusk's splendid prose. Here is an authentic American counterpart to the writing of English mountaineers such as Whymper and A. W. Moore. Its rhetorical fullness recalls the grand Victorian tradition of the public lecture, which lingered in the Pacific Northwest well into the twentieth century. Yet, while rich in descriptive passages, Rusk's prose is nontheless disciplined by the author's personal stoicism, and by the strenuousness of the adventures it narrates. Time after time it evokes in vivid fashion elemental sensations of mountaineering—the apprehension before a major assault, the glacial flow of time during an icy bivouac, the sequence of thoughts during a fall. Indeed, Rusk's writing is a "Ridge of Wonders" of its own. We can be grateful to The Mountaineers for this reprint, and we wish them well in their continuing reprints of other hard-to-find classics.

T. C. PRICE ZIMMERMANN

Climb! Rock Climbing in Colorado, by Bob Godfrey and Dudley Chelton. Boulder: Alpine House, 1977. 275 pages, with photos and one map.

Climb! is an impressive book, and should be a welcome addition to any mountaineer's library. It contains a selective history of rock climbing in Colorado from 1820 to 1975, together with hundreds of black-and-white photographs and an interview with two famous climbers. The authors, Bob Godfrey and Dudley Chelton, are to be commended for their work in assembling the wealth of photographic and narrative materials.

The photographs are the heart of the book, and they are unquestionably a success. Priceless shots of Colorado Sightseeing Company excursions and the Stettner brothers with their motorcycles gradually give way to striking close-ups of modern climbers at grips with the trade routes of Eldorado Springs. The latter form a collection unique in American climbing. Although the newer photographs are uneven in technical quality, they are overall more dramatic than comparable work published to date in Britain. To obtain these pictures, climbers were persuaded to make ascents of specific routes under specific lighting conditions, while Godfrey and/or Chelton hiked, hung, or climbed nearby. The subjects sometimes chose their clothes or trailed an unnecessary haul line for effect, and in many cases entire climbs were redone and rephotographed if initial results were disappointing. The pictures finally selected show leader after leader in the middle of a crux, often from only a few feet away and from angles never seen by climbers on the routes themselves. The best shots are remarkably effective in conveying the essence of the climbs.

One sour note mars the *Climb!* illustrations: a number of route diagrams are drawn with surprising carelessness. For example, misplaced dotted lines confuse the locations of Rosy Crucifixion (114), Le Toit (114, 208), the initial pitches of Redguard Route (80), and the upper half of Diagonal (90, 124).

Like the photography, the text of *Climb!* reflects painstaking work by the authors. Many active and historical climbers were interviewed or consulted in preparing the book. Frequently, the climbers involved speak of their climbs in their own words, either through published writings, solicited letters, or through specially arranged tape recorded interviews. The text thus contains dozens of narrative fragments embedded in a matrix of the authors' (mainly Godfrey's) prose. Some of the writings quoted show care in construction and make good reading, and other sources—Bob Culp and Steve Komito, in particular—stand out as lively storytellers. To them, *Climb!* owes much of the vitality of its portraits of Kor and the sixties. Many other passages, however, resemble those detailed, forgettable discussions of moves and protection which fill so much of climbers' conversations. Not all readers will find these fascinating.

Elsewhere in the book, Jim Erickson remarks, "It seems clear that history makes men, rather than men making history" (265). *Climb!* is written from the opposite premise, and belongs with that school presenting history primarily as a succession of heroes and their battles. This is, of course, the way climbers themselves usually think of it. Within roughly chronological periods the book is organized by climbs and, increasingly toward the end, by climbers. The chapter on free climbing in the sixties, for example, is subdivided into sections on Dave Rearick, Royal Robbins,

Pat Ament, John Gill, and Larry Dalke, with a brief general postscript. Given this orientation, it becomes important to ask of the history whether the right heroes and battles were included. Much of the informal criticism I have heard of the book takes this approach, complaining that specific individuals or achievements are given insufficient due. The authors readily admit their selectivity, which seems to have operated along two major lines. First, the book (like the authors) is centered in Boulder. Second, it gives alms to the wealthy. Climbs and climbers that were widely known before *Climb!* get even more attention here, while with a few (exclusively older) exceptions those that were heretofore obscure remain so. The two lines of selection are by no means unrelated, as Boulder is an exceptionally well-publicized climbing center.

As the first-ascent potential of Redgarden Wall became depleted, some Boulder climbers turned their efforts towards cliffs slightly farther from the limelight. Chris Reveley's series of intimidating climbs on Rincon Wall (from 1974 on) are among the most notable products of this movement, which goes unchronicled in *Climb!* During the same period, perhaps for the same reasons, interest in the high and low cliffs of Rocky Mountain National Park surged dramatically. Of these only the Diamond (which Mike Covington once referred to as the "glory wall" of the region) gets much attention in *Climb!* Activity by Western Slope climbers in the Black Canyon, Taylor Canyon, Colorado National Monument, and elsewhere is also not mentioned. The little-known stories of the Western Slope await future climbing historians.

The state's second foothills citadel of relative affluence and higher education, Colorado Springs, has long nurtured a strong climbing scene independent of the one in Boulder. While Boulderites were establishing the modern routes described and photographed in *Climb!*, Colorado Springs climbers were developing bad-rock skills (later put to good use in Utah and the Black Canyon) in Garden of the Gods and pushing free standards at high and low elevations on Pikes Peak granite. A group of Colorado Springs climbers later became leading figures in Estes Park which, like Aspen, developed its own vigorous scene in the 1970s. Others made Black Canyon ascents that stand as the boldest Colorado rock climbs to date.

It is well to forewarn the reader of these omissions. Godfrey and Chelton make clear in their preface that they are to some extent aware of them, and considered them either unavoidable or desirable. A casual or non-Coloradan reader, however, could easily finish the book with no sense of what has been left out. More regrettably, *Climb!* lacks the effort at analysis and synthesis—at thinking about its subject—that enriches Smythe's *Rock Climbers in Action in Snowdonia* or Jones' *Climbing in North America.* A preoccupation with heroic deeds leads to historiography of inevitable shallowness.

The authors' twin biases, towards Boulder and towards already famous climbers, come together in the final chapter: a long interview with the two most famous Boulder climbers, Jim Erickson and Steve Wunsch. Some readers will find this interesting document, almost entirely a discussion of ideas, quite opaque. However, Wunsch and Erickson are original and intelligent climbers whose contributions may consist as much in ideas as in climbs.

Buy *Climb!* for the pictures, take the text with a few grains of salt. Despite its shortcomings it is one of the best books on American climbing to date.

LAWRENCE HAMILTON

The Mountains of Canada, by Randy Morse. Hurtig Publishers—Edmonton, Alberta; Mountaineers, Seattle, 1979. 105 color photographs. Price $29.95.

This is the first quality-format overview which I have seen on the awe-inspiring mountains of Canada, and it is interesting to note this overdue production was written and published in that nation. After I had enthusiastically skimmed through the full-color photographs, printed on heavy-gloss enamel, and with true color-balance reproduction, the first words that struck me were those by Andy Russell. In the introduction he observed that "Mountains have always been something of a paradox to man." How true, for the earth's high points have long been invested with mystic powers from early man to today's cults which believe in extra-terrestrial beings living within Mount Shasta. But the glittering mountains of Canada, as Thorington portrayed them, largely escaped the fear and dislike of medieval Europe (although they have not totally escaped the callous devastation of the timber companies and dam engineers). The vast array of northern ranges did not need the enlightenment of Rousseau, for they had the Canadian Pacific Railroad to advertise their glories. Indeed, as the introduction states, these mountains are a very special heritage—a national treasure for hikers, climbers, and nature worshippers from all portions of the world. Without question the multiplicity of ranges from Baffin Island to the Coast Mountains bordering the Pacific Ocean presents a magnificent tribute to the geological and ecological processes of Earth.

From the fjords of Baffin to those of the western coastline, the vast geologic exhibits, the magnificent waterways that divide the principal ranges, the great coniferous and boreal forests, the alplands and icefields, are beautifully illustrated in this heavy, handsome book. It will certainly beautify any living room coffee table—for which it is meant. Because the radiance of this publication is the color, it would have enhanced the propriety to give more credit to the various talented photographers, and

perhaps summarize their background and perspectives. While the selection of pictures includes many of Canada's most noted mountains, the choices are made from certain availability, and the very title suggests an overview which should include Mount Waddington and other Coastal Range summits.

The text has some appropriate historical comment related to early mountaineering and here I found the material on Robson, Alberta, Columbia, and Victoria well-selected, and the interjection of Frank Smythe and his ethics proved a thoughtful commentary. Morse gives a well-done earthy description of Conrad Kain's great Bugaboo Spire ascent, an epic exploratory climb done with nearly primitive equipment in a situation where there was no reversing of moves once on the slab. The best essay is that on Assiniboine, a peak which has become synonymous with Canada. The author points out that from a distance Assiniboine exudes an elegance, a cleanness of line and symmetry of form rivalled by few other mountains in the world. At close quarters, however, the shape, form, and character change dramatically: the impression of firmness gives way to the crumbling reality of sedimentary rock. "Elegant lines disappear, dwarfed or blocked out by bands and bulges of friable stone interlaced with veins of snow and ice." Yet, the knowledge that one is climbing Assiniboine makes unpleasantries easier to accept. A dermatologist might get this same reaction examining the pimples on a beautiful lady's face or buttocks.

The balance of written matter and imagery is good, and a mark of thoughtful book design. However, I found the succession of non-related quotations from historical and literary luminaries such as Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott, Churchill, Stanley, Mark Twain, and Schiller out of context. And the tragic Toni Kurz episode is totally gross here—in a book praising the glories of mountain ranges on another continent. What detracts from the text is an occasional historical imbalance and a sufficient inclusion of errors that lend a question to the thoroughness of research. The omission of the biggest routes on Mount Temple is curious when the praise of adventure is restricted to earlier routes. The text stands correction in regard to Russell in 1891 being the first to reach Mount St. Elias. Both the 1886 Schwatka and the 1888 Topham expeditions preceded the gallant professor on this gigantic mountain, and it was on Russell's second expedition that he reached so high and proved out the route for the Duke of Abruzzi.

The first ascent of King Peak was not as late as 1972. There are directional errors in Robson and Assiniboine captions. Neither Kor nor Cooper is best known for his Yosemite climbs. I cannot vouch for Jack Arnold's origin, but he was considered an American (first ascent of Lost Arrow), not a Canadian. A bit more care during a revision would correct a few spelling errors (Hermann Ulrichs, Walter Willcox, Jock

Glidden); for a $30 purchase one should not need to speculate on the full names of such alpinists as E. Cromwell, E. Grassman, and J. Jones.

My recommendation is definitely to purchase the book as an artistic tribute to some of the most compelling alpine creations on this planet.

FRED BECKEY

Mountain Climbing for Beginners, by Mike Banks. Edited for American readers by Andy Kauffmann, Stein and Day, 1978. Softback. 96 pages, 37 line drawings. Price $3.95.

Here is a gem of a little book, the kind of climbing manual Americans have always wanted but never have quite been able to get. There are many books available on climbing techniques, but nowhere in English does there exist anything as basic, terse and at the same time complete as this American version of English climber Mike Banks' *Mountain Climbing for Beginners.*

The title is something of a misnomer. True, the text is intended primarily for novices, but it also provides a basic refresher course for those of us who have been too long away from the mountains and are preparing to return. Even better, the subject matter is presented in a simple, superb expository style rarely found except among the best professional writers. Not a word is wasted, yet nothing important is omitted. Clearly, Mr. Banks is not just a first-class mountaineer: he is a splendid writer as well.

The book, which has been edited for American readers, begins with as good a rationale as any as to why people are attracted to mountains. It takes the reader progressively through the stages of hill walking, rock-climbing equipment, rope work, rock techniques and thence to direct aid, snow and ice, and survival and rescue. There is a comprehensive though necessarily incomplete appendix by the American editor on where to climb in the United States and Canada, together with the names, addresses and telephone number of principal climbing organizations which can supply interested persons with more detailed local and regional information. The appendix also points to possible shortcomings in American professional services which leave the reader wondering whether corrective measures, when they come, will be the work of national climbing organizations or State and Federal authorities.

The section on hill walking is the best one known to this reviewer and contains a lucid description of map reading. The book's emphasis, however, is on rock climbing which, of course, is the sport's principal form in both the United States and Britain. But, as he proceeds, the author betrays his personal preference for ice and snow, mixed climbing and exploratory adventure. He is careful, however, to discipline his bias to serve his readers' needs.

From the outset Mr. Banks' tone is cautionary. He points out that mountain climbing is potentially a dangerous sport, not to be undertaken lightly, and then only with the assistance and under the supervision of qualified teachers and companions. This tone of caution is, if anything, the thread that weaves together this fine little work.

The illustrations by Tony Buchan are as clear as is Mr. Banks' writing, though to the practical eye one or two appear to contain errors which should be corrected in future editions.

The volume comes in a convenient size. It can be fitted easily into the flap of a rucksack for consultation in the field.

This book is a must, not only for the beginner, but for all of us.

SAMUEL H. GOODHUE

Cannon, Cathedral, Humphrey's and Whitehorse, A Rock Climber's Guide, by Paul Ross and Chris Ellms. International Mountain Climbing School, Inc., North Conway, N.H., 1978. 157 pages, 15 cliff photographs, 16 climbers-in-action photographs, and 2 sketch maps. $9.95.

Paul Ross and Chris Ellms have finally done it. New England's best rock climbing has been captured in one complete volume. Sure they had a lot going for them. Joe Cote published in 1972 *A Climber's Guide to the Mt. Washington Valley* and Howard Peterson wrote *Cannon, A Climber's Guide* in 1975, but these books were not the only source from which the authors drew. Paul Ross, following a British tradition, kept a new route book in a local mountaineering store. The completeness of this guide and the authenticity of the route descriptions are owed to the thousands of entries in that "ego book." Everyone in the White Mountain rock climbing scene felt an obligation to set it straight for all to see in that book. Soon it became the sole source for the latest new route or hot aid elimination. The book fairly bulged with entries and cried out to be published.

The authors plunged into that new route book, fanatically editing and rewriting based on their extensive experience climbing on those cliffs. The result of these efforts produced route descriptions which are clear, concise, and easy to follow. The writing is never verbose, nor is it terse. I even found it enjoyable just to read about routes I'd never done and to be inspired to do them.

The other factor which makes this guide book so significant is the historical essay by Al Rubin. Al is the man with his finger on the pulse of New England climbing. He knows the people and the events. Simply put, the essay is factual and well written. But more importantly, it shows an interest in "the human aspect—the companionship and the competition, the legends and the laughs . . ." (p. 11). I like these local histories crowded into the fronts of so many tattered guide books across

this country. They form collectively a truer history of American climbing than any single volume on the subject.

With all that's so good, what could go wrong? Well, for one, I just can't see how anyone would organize the descriptions the way the authors did for Cathedral and Whitehorse. Neither cliff is described from one end to the other or from a landmark in the middle to either end. Cannon sensibly uses the former strategy, while Humphrey's with its eight routes follows the latter. The descriptions of Cathedral and Whitehorse were organized, I believe, around the authors' knowledge of the most efficient approaches to the several different sections of the cliffs. These approaches are never explained thoroughly or mapped and are primarily used by the locals who are privy to their whereabouts. Most occasional users and certainly newcomers leave their cars and walk to all climbs. Cathedral's muddle of routes becomes comical in the retrograde progress as we read from the Prow to Refuse. What a mess! Whitehorse suffers a similar fate but it is not nearly so fragmented. Ninety-nine percent of the climbers approach from the north, yet the descriptions start with two insignificant climbs at the very south, move to the middle and work south, and then finally start at the north and work to the middle. The authors must want to promote the South Buttress routes by putting them first.

The photographs are excellent in quality and clarity, and certainly having them will help to straighten out the complicated order of the descriptions. It would be much clearer if the order of the list of routes shown on the photographs were in sync with the descriptions.

Another major criticism I would like to air is the inclusion of the photographic route guides to selected ice climbs. I suppose that when you mention winter ascents of some of the rock climbs (some of them are real classics), it is natural to throw in what you have on ice climbing in the general area. I think they are out of place and should be omitted. Let winter ascents and ice climbs be in a new book update of the excellent *Shades of Blue* by Peter Cole and Rick Wilcox.

I find the notes and editorial comments promoting aid in this day and age a little disturbing. However, despite their self-serving nature, I find them completely refreshing. It's Paul Ross through and through. He's careful to counsel restraint in using nuts and fixed pins only, and never to place additional bolts over those indicated by the first ascent. This flexible attitude is certainly preferable to the dogma of those who profess "climb free or not at all."

All in all I find this guide book to be professionally and attractively done. The difficulty and effort that goes into producing such a book is enormous. I have nothing but awe and appreciation for those who carry it off. For Paul Ross and Chris Ellms (and Al Rubin), your efforts show in the high quality of the result.

SAM STREIBERT

A Climber's Guide to Devils Tower National Monument, by Terry Rypkema and Curt Haire, 1977, 80 pages, 8 photos. Price $5.95.

The review is written from the point of view that this guide was much needed, and there is little this reviewer can write that will please readers who disagree with the concept of guidebooks.

The only previous effort to provide a compilation of the routes at this popular climbing area was in Bonney's *Guide to the Wyoming Mountains and Wilderness Areas*, which first appeared in 1960 and has been succeeded by two subsequent editions. The revisions of the Devils Tower material do not reflect the pace of climbing activity at the Tower since the 1977 edition of Bonney's guide describes only thirty of the fifty-five routes included in the Rypkema-Haire guide.

The Devils Tower guide is a compilation of the climbs done since Wiessner's first legitimate alpine ascent in 1937. The real contribution of this volume is that it makes an effort to get the prospective climber started in the correct place. Beyond this, the route descriptions are brief enough (usually one sentence per pitch) to leave a spirit of exploration and adventure. The descriptions are nonetheless detailed enough to prevent the climber from starting up the wrong crack or traversing in the wrong direction, once on the climb. As far as this reviewer is aware, the routes given represent all existing routes in 1977 with the exception of several variations and some missing first-ascent data. All of these inaccuracies concern events of the 1950's and primarily those of "Mountaineer's Week" in 1956 which celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the national monument. They involve first ascents accomplished by the climbers of the Army Mountain and Cold Weather Training Command who, among many others, were involved in the celebration. These omissions were probably the result of inadequate climbing records. In the initial portion of the book there are some interesting and little-known details concerning the pre-alpine climbing history of the Tower.

This guide is a product of modern, active climbers with a growing consciousness of style, both in their climbing and that of their peers. This consciousness is reflected in their derivation of a "C" rating to denote those direct-aid pitches which can be accomplished solely with chocks. The ratings on climbs which were originally done with aid and have subsequently been free climbed are rated with the current free-climbing difficulty. The difficulty of climbs has been pushed to levels comparable to other popular rock-climbing areas in the country. The newcomer, however, should be aware that the ratings for climbs of difficulty 5.9 and higher are usually lower than for pitches of similar difficulty in Yosemite Valley.

In summary, this is a fine little guide and a must for anyone with the desire to climb in this popular area.

RAYMOND G. JACQUOT