

My Life of High Adventure by Grant H. Pearson with Philip Newill.

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962. 16 pages of plates. I recall sleeping soundly in a tent on Mount McKinley some years ago and being awakened by a loud cry, "Crevasse! Crevasse!" Grant Pearson, wrapped in a bedroll next to me, was talking in his sleep.

In *My Life of High Adventure* Grant Pearson is talking more calmly though sometimes the descriptions are clearly those of his collaborator, Philip Newill. The book, however, has flavor and it pictures Pearson clearly as park ranger for many years in Mount McKinley National Park, later superintendent there, and currently representative in Juneau for the 18th Alaska district (a region larger than the whole state of New York). The story mirrors the growth and development of Mount McKinley National Park as well as Pearson. There are stories of midwinter patrols by dog team, of the prospectors and miners who lived on the edge of the Park, and of bears, moose, caribou and wolves.

To the mountaineer the most interesting section describes Pearson's experiences as a member of the Lindley-Liek party that in 1932 made the second ascent of McKinley, climbing both the south and north peaks. On this expedition Grant slid 1000 feet off the mountain on one occasion and dropped 40 feet into a crevasse (unroped) on another. Climbers will find the appendix a useful reference for it lists all parties to climb McKinley from the early attempts through 1961. Better proofreading would help the book, but Grant Pearson's personality comes through loud and clear—a lot clearer than when he talks in his sleep.

ROBERT H. BATES

Sir Hubert Wilkins, by Lowell Thomas. New York: McGraw Hill, 1961.

296 pages, 28 photographs. Price \$5.95.

This is the story of an extraordinary man, truly *sans peur et sans reproche*. Our former honorary member was one of the great explorers of modern times. His life was marked by intense energy, absolute fearlessness and the restless desire to extend man's knowledge. The son of a "sundowner" in inland Australia, as a youth he learned survival techniques from the primitive "abos" and began a lifelong interest in long range weather forecasting.

His adventurous life was nothing short of amazing. For instance, he was abducted by Arabs when he was working for the Italian secret service in North Africa and barely escaped being sold into slavery. He made some of the first motion pictures taken from the air, sitting astride the fuselage of a single seater plane. After he had distinguished himself as war correspondent in the Bulgarian-Turkish war, he was sent as photog-

rapher to the Arctic with Stefansson in 1913. Learning both from Stefansson and the Eskimos, he survived desperate blizzards. Finally hearing of the World War in 1916, he left the expedition immediately to enlist. In World War I as photographer for the Australian War Historian, his heroism was legendary. After the war he flew in the England-Australia air race before leading an expedition to wild north Australia for the British Museum. He was almost speared by the dangerous "abos" but eventually learned a great deal about them. (He once told me that he ate everything they ate except some huge spiders.)

Sir Hubert's greatest triumphs came in his flights over the Arctic ice, especially with Ben Eielson. On one occasion they crashed on sea ice 100 miles north of Alaska. Eielson's hands were badly frozen but the indomitable Sir Hubert brought him back to land. Later, in 1928 these two electrified the whole world by flying a Lockheed-Vega from Point Barrow to Spitsbergen. For this flight and for his scientific and exploratory work during the previous fifteen years, Wilkins was knighted. Subsequent exploits were his Antarctic expeditions (where he was the first to use airplanes), his famous search for the lost Russian flier Levanovsky, and his achievement in taking a submarine under the Arctic ice. Though he was prevented from reaching the Pole by submarine, he pointed the way, as he did continually throughout his restless life.

Lowell Thomas gives a clear, compressed, straight-forward account of Wilkins' many adventures, and his book is very much worth reading. To those of us who worked side by side with Sir Hubert during World War II, this account, though factually accurate, is in some ways incomplete and fails to give the personality of this alert, kindly man filled with great energy and curiosity.

ROBERT H. BATES

Handbook on Ski-Touring and Glacier Ski-ing. Ski Club of Great Britain and the Alpine Ski Club. Second edition completely revised, 1961. 97 pages. Price 4s6d.

The two British clubs responsible for this useful, compact, well organized book have rendered a double service to the cause of ski touring in the mountains. Throughout there are suggestions and admonitions in the interest of safety. There is also much practical advice on making trips into the mountains as enjoyable as possible for all of the party.

For a people who live in a land where the mountains are of modest size, the snow of limited abundance, and glaciers non-existent, the British have not only a great record of mountaineering accomplishments but also have had an extraordinary influence on skiing, both competitive and