

Kathmandu to Base Camp with only one load lost en route. He also was responsible for the movement of supplies on the mountain. In this regard it is a bit staggering to learn that after the ordinary porters left Base Camp, 72 climbers, high altitude porters, scientists and others were left behind as the basic expedition.

There is no question that the success of the group rested in part at least on the resources of the expedition: financial, material and human. For instance the work went on despite the death of one climber and the short but serious illnesses of two others. I have no wish to discuss here the pro's and con's of large and small expeditions. This one was big business. To the great credit of its leader and its team members, the whole party showed the strong love of mountains and of challenge that has so characterized smaller parties of the past. I hope that the day never comes when a climbing expedition loses this essentially amateur spirit.

James Ullman well describes the shock of Jake Breitenbach's death, and introduces poignant excerpts from personal diaries. He often describes the climbing vividly, much better than he does the life in camp, but of course there is nothing so compelling as the story of a man who can write and who was there. Ullman is our outstanding writer on mountaineering, but I would have enjoyed first hand accounts of Big Jim Whittaker's climb to the summit, of Dyhrenfurth's descent to the South Col, or of Hornbein and Unsoeld's amazing traverse of the summit. I would also prefer more full page illustrations, fewer small ones and better quality plates. But like the rest of the Everest team Jim Ullman has done a difficult job and done it well.

If you don't own the book, go and buy it.

ROBERT H. BATES

Four Against Everest by Woodrow Wilson Sayre. Englewood Cliff, N. J.; Prentice-Hall, 1964. 259 pages. Illustrations. Price \$5.95.

Who in his boyhood has not dreamed of attempting some great exploit? And if the exploit also involves a great prank, why, so much the better. What could be a greater exploit than climbing Everest? What could be a greater prank than doing it without permission, by a forbidden route and with a party whose experience and competence is minimal at best? Then what matter that the host country, Nepal, was embarrassed because of the illicit entry into Tibet? Indeed what matter if our own country was embarrassed or even jeopardized by the prank? It should be noted parenthetically that *after* his return Mr. Sayre actually debated whether to publicize the trip in *Life Magazine*. The urge to publicize won after Mr. Sayre's unnamed advisers told him that the Department of State

greatly exaggerated the potential harm. It is understood that the Department of State took a less sanguine view of the affair.

One must suppose that the fact that this trip placed the American Mount Everest Expedition in danger of being denied permission at the last minute was the best joke of all. Well organized, with many dedicated and experienced members and, worst of all, having legitimately sought and obtained permission, it is easy to understand why Mr. Sayre should have had so little concern for a group whose undertaking was so anti-thetically opposed to his own.

Mr. Sayre certainly recounts his attempt to carry out his prankish exploit in a very engaging manner. In the time-honored way he takes us through his preparation, approach, attempt and finally retreat. The general public will undoubtedly find the climbing details properly chilling. Knowledgeable climbers should find them even more so.

Some of the things that Mr. Sayre neglects to tell are almost as interesting as the things he does tell. For example Mr. Sayre gives several reasons why he did not attempt to obtain official permission to climb Everest. Various other groups had previously obtained permission for several years in advance and permission would have been doubtful for such a small, inexperienced party. So he sought and obtained permission from the Nepalese to climb Gyachung Kang, a smaller peak near Everest. What Mr. Sayre neglects to add is that by means of this ploy he not only neatly avoided queuing up with other groups seeking to climb Everest, but also managed a saving of several hundred dollars. The Nepalese charge a fee for climbing in their country and the size of the fee depends on the size of the mountain. The sum saved by the deception was small, but on a limited budget every cent counts, as Mr. Sayre points out more than once.

Another point that Mr. Sayre is quite vague about is the helicopter ride out from Namche Bazar. One gets the distinct impression that Sayre's party merely hired a commercial helicopter to save themselves a rather long, uncomfortable walk in the rain. After reading a letter addressed to the Editor of the *Boston Herald* by the American Ambassador to Nepal, printed on July 15, 1964, one begins to wonder about the condition of the party on its return to Namche Bazar and about several other facets of the narrative. Ambassador Stebbins points out that the message for the helicopter was sent on a military wireless unit available only in an emergency. In addition the only helicopter available was one under exclusive contract to the U. S. Government and that in this case its use was authorized because an emergency evacuation had been requested by Sayre.

Sayre expends a good deal of effort in attempting to justify his trip.

However the gravamen of his argument seems to be that grown up people should have a right to risk their own lives. Any sensible climber knows that the second part of this argument will almost never be true. When a dangerous climb is undertaken one must always remember that other climbers have never, and probably will never, stand idly by when there is the faintest chance of rescue, no matter how dangerous. As to the first part of argument each reader will have to form his own opinion as to whether Sayre and his party fit into the category stated.

JAMES P. MCCARTHY

The Mountain World 1962/63. Published by the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research. Directed by Hans Richard Müller. English version edited by Malcolm Barnes. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.; Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1964. 240 pages, 70 plates (12 in color). Price \$6.95.

Once again we wish that this book would appear annually, as formerly. The publishers, director and editor are to be complimented on another tremendous edition. Having exhausted my superlatives, I can only say, "On to the contents." The articles are in the order: Europe, Asia, North and South America and Antarctica.

Three grand shots of the North Face of the Matterhorn by Bradford Washburn introduce an inspiring account of its first winter ascent written by Hilti von Allmen. This article, in only four and a half pages, focuses on the inner spirit of the climber: his philosophy, his idea of comradeship and his view on adversity. To illustrate: how do you break the news to your companion high on the face of the mountain that you have lost your crampons? Truly a gem!

The book offers an extensive article for speleologists. "The Exploration of Hell Hole," by Alfred W. Bogli, with six photos. The exploration of the limestone cave in the Muotatal in Switzerland is complete with syphons and rationing of food till low water allows escape, a combination of terrors to shake the stoutest of hearts. For the lightheaded there are four (one overleaf) photos rounding out a factual narrative of ballooning across the Alps by Fred Dolder. There is a comprehensive yet easily understood article on avalanches and their causes by the specialist, André Roch.

Nick Clinch's article on Masherbrum, written with great depth of feeling, is a tribute to human endurance. Some of the highlights are tense moments in an avalanche, fire in the high-camp tent, and the second team's ascent of the peak followed by an overnight descent without adequate rappel ropes.