

of the *Himalayan Journal*, by at least leafing through some pages. Now it is some hours later and I have been unable to put it down. Not only is Harish a most competent mountain chronicler, he is also a distinguished mountaineer and, what is rarer in this day and age, a noted explorer of the less known mountain ranges of the Himalaya, in particular in India. In the past 30 years, he has climbed and trekked in some of the most remote valleys of Sikkim, Kumaon, Garhwal, Kinnaur, Spiti, Lahul, Zaskar, Ladakh and the East Karakoram. He has arranged his experiences and adventures by region, rather than chronologically, which will make it easier for one not familiar with each region to follow the theme. It was a great pleasure to read his vivid descriptions of places which I had personally visited. The many maps are of the greatest value, not only to the casual reader, but also to the climber intent on following his footsteps into fascinating, remote regions.

Harish writes with such skill that he holds your attention throughout. Not only is valuable mountaineering history recorded here; he relates accidents, deaths, personal injury and agony, along with the joys and triumphs that his life dedicated to the mountains have brought to him. He recounts the history of remote valleys, their legends, culture. For me, I am particularly interested in his explanation of the names of many of the mountains, for mountain names always reveal so much about beliefs and culture of mountain people. For him, mountaineering is a way of life, always done in "good style." Those who have climbed with him have included many of the best Indian mountaineers as well as renowned foreigners. They have found him a delight, whose sharp, yet gentle, sense of humor shines through in the pages of this book.

This is a book for both the active climber and the armchair mountaineer.

H. ADAMS CARTER

Mount Everest—The Best Writing and Pictures from Seventy Years of Endeavour. Edited by Peter Gillman with a forward by Sir Edmund Hillary. Little Brown & Co. Boston, 1993. \$35.

What has been prominently missing in the profuse literature of the history of attempts to climb Everest is a compendium of the essence of these climbs, many told in the words of those who made them. With the publication of *Mount Everest—70 Years*, Peter Gillman has remedied this omission in a manner grandly befitting the subject. In a coffee-table format book of breath-taking graphic beauty, he has excerpted the climbers' own stories with an editorial focus on the human side of this epic history of three generations of climbers.

Most histories of Everest are third-person interpretations. What gives Gillman's work its distinction is that it is comprised almost entirely of firsthand accounts. These include a startling kaleidoscope of raw sentiments—sentiments that are desperate, exultant, grief-stricken, eccentric, oft cantankerous or crude, and reflect the momentary moods and personalities of climbers under great stress.

Gillman places unobtrusive editorial observations in captions of photo-

graphs that have rarely been better reproduced, or in boxes separated from the climbers' own words.

Mal Duff's voice rings hard and true with his description of life on the mountain: "We were numb. Not cold numb, although that was there at times, just battered numb; numb from eight weeks of strain; from scything wind cutting at the flesh; from pirouetting columns of spindrift driving and dancing around us; from weighty effort and load carrying; from eating and drinking and living high on the northeast ridge of Everest."

What a contrast to the serene prose of Sharon Wood, the first North American woman to summit Everest: "At nine in the evening on top of Mount Everest the sun can be seen setting over an awesome curving horizon. I am sure it was beautiful but to us it meant something very different. We took our masks off and kneeled down, succumbing to wind and fatigue. We were aware we had made it, but there was nothing more. The radio was silent, long forgotten; there was nothing anyone could do for us now."

Mount Everest—70 Years is more than a compilation of known material. With invaluable help from mountaineering historian Audrey Salkeld, Gillman has managed to sift the ashes and discover new material to surprise even the most knowledgeable Everest hand. A previously unpublished photograph of George Mallory shows him about to ford a river en route to Everest, wearing nothing but a hat, a rucksack and an arch smile.

There are so many treasures in this book: Kurt Diemberger's astonishing photograph showing the snow-fluted Kangshung Face scaling steeply up to two climbers standing on the tiny summit cornice; a shot of Australian climbers nearly lost to view on the dour immensity of the North Face; a full-color high definition aerial photograph looking straight down at the summit depicts the jagged terrain as no map can.

Despite the book's keen attention to historical detail, it is odd to find missing one of Everest's revived mysteries—Japanese climbing leader Ryoten Hasegawa's report of being approached by Chinese porter Wang Hung-bao in 1979 describing his discovery of the body of "an English dead" at a location that can only be that of Mallory or Irvine. A single second-hand account might leave room for doubt, but this sensational report was then confirmed to me by CMA official Zhang Jun Yan, who was Wang's tentmate at 8100 meters on Everest at the time of the discovery.

Although most of the important bases are touched, it is from a decidedly English viewpoint. Maurice Wilson, the brilliant and hare-brained Cornishman who died in 1934 below the North Col trying spiritually to transport his body to the summit, is given loving coverage. (His bones turn up routinely near C-3. When will they be properly interred?) Yet American Woodrow Wilson Sayre's equally illegal, and much bolder four-man oxygenless climb of the same route to 4000 feet higher in 1962 is nowhere mentioned. Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker, whose tragic failed attempt placed them prominently in the British pantheon of Everest heroes, receive their own memorial chapter written by Tasker's friend, Maria Coffey.

The back-of-the-book compilations of Everest events will delight the left brain-sided. Sherpa Ang Rita's *seven* ascents are described, achieved from 1983 to 1992. The 485 known ascents are tabulated by the 428 climbers making them (through 1992), along with their nationality, date, expedition, and leader. The 115 deaths are noted by date, location and likely cause; fifty-one ascents without oxygen are listed, and 16 women summiters: The seven progressively older men are ranked (now 55 years old) and the youngest (17 years old). Statisticians will have a field day.

Mount Everest—70 Years has spent many months on our coffee table. Each time I pick it up to place it in the bookshelf, I find myself dipping in to reread a selection. Soon I am engrossed once again. At this rate, it will be many months before it finds its place on the top shelf of my most cherished mountaineering books.

THOMAS HOLZEL

Mount Everest Massif. Jan Kielkowski. Explo Publishers, 1 Maja 40/6, 44-100 Gliwice, Poland. 1992. *Climbing Guide*, 201 pages, 9 maps, 97 illustrations, \$18.50. *Mountaineering Atlas*, 21 pages, maps and indexes, \$6.50 plus \$2.50 postage for each.

If you need a thumb-nail mountaineering résumé of Mount Everest and its immediate vicinity, these little books, written in English, are it. The *Climbing Guide* contains brief descriptions up to the middle of 1992 of all climbing routes on Everest and its immediate neighbors, Lhotse, Nuptse, Changtse, Shartse and lower trekking peaks such as Imja, Pokalde, Kongma Tse (*not* including Pumori, Makalu and their neighbors, which are included in others of Kielkowski's booklets). Every side of each peak is illustrated by overall and close-up sketches, showing the climbing routes, often in remarkable detail. In the *Mountaineering Atlas*, "orographic" maps show ridge configurations and there is a detailed bibliography and index of names and maps to complete this remarkable little publication.

BRADFORD WASHBURN

Climbing Mount Everest, The Bibliography: The Literature and History of Climbing the World's Highest Mountain. Compiled by Audrey Salkeld and John Boyle. Sixways Publishing, Clevedon BS21 7SL, England, 1993. 120 pages, soft cover. \$20.

As a leading historian of Himalayan mountaineering, Audrey Salkeld needs little introduction. Over many years, hundreds of authors, journalists and film makers have relied on her expert knowledge to research or verify climbing episodes, dates, the backgrounds of climbers, both celebrities and unsung, along with hard-to-find expedition minutiae.