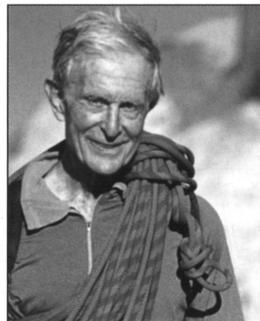


IN MEMORIAM

EDITED BY CAMERON M. BURNS

STIMSON BULLITT 1919–2009

Stim Bullitt, by his own admission, was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and he spent the rest of his life trying to live it down. Being delivered to school in his mother's Rolls Royce, he would lie on the floor and beg the chauffeur to drop him off a block away so that his classmates would not see him arrive in this ostentatious manner. While a student at Yale, he joined the varsity boxing team, "so that I could compete with the poor black boys from Harlem, man-to-man." When taking the train home to Seattle, he declined his mother's preferred accommodations, a Pullman car. Instead, he would "ride the rails" in cold, dirty cattle cars with hobos, whom he respected ("They were not bums, they were hobos!").



Stimson Bullitt. *Cliff Leight*

It is small wonder that his love of nature, combined with his spirit of independence, resulted in enthusiasm for climbing. Stim's exposure to the outdoors of the Pacific Northwest started with family outings and the Boy Scouts. Later he took his own children on hiking trips, but it wasn't until he turned 50 that he discovered the joy of actual mountaineering. Still later came the thrill of climbing hard rock, which eventually made him a legend.

He was in his sixties when he climbed Denali—on his third attempt. He teamed with Fred Beckey for first ascents of peaks in the Coast Range of British Columbia. When he couldn't find climbing partners, he would not hesitate to solo routes—routes normally done by roped teams. It was just the expedient thing to do. He found his true passion in climbing hard rock, savoring multi-pitch routes on Liberty Bell, Slesse, Squamish Chief, and Mt. Sir Donald, to mention but a few. One indoor climbing competition included a "Masters" division for anyone older than 50. I was 54 and was proud to get third place. Stim got first place, at 74.

When his stamina for carrying heavy loads started to wane, he focused on sport climbs. Always pushing himself to the limit, he sought routes that were aesthetically attractive. One such route, Illusion Dweller, is rated 5.10b. At the age of 83 he led this classic. Patagonia ran a full-page photo showing Stim struggling up the final move. "Alex, this is one of the happiest days of my life," he declared with a boyish grin when he finished the climb. This accomplishment inspired climbers all over the world. "This gives me hope that I may still climb when I'm 83," I often heard young climbers say when they realized I was there to belay Stim.

Stim was a lawyer until his mid-seventies. For a time he was president of King Broadcasting Corporation, a communications conglomerate his mother founded. Nevertheless, this president of the largest television station in the region disdained watching television. He was a prolific reader and writer. One of his proudest moments came when he heard that his name was on President Nixon's "enemies list," an honor earned for his vocal opposition to the Vietnam War. He made most of his many millions through the real estate development company

he founded—rebuilding inner city areas of Seattle and expanding ski resorts in the Cascades.

He strongly believed in helping rectify social and racial injustices and contributed most of his considerable wealth to such causes, often as an anonymous donor. He co-founded the Bullitt Foundation, which is still addressing the conservation needs of America's wilderness and mountain areas. True to his principles, he made sure that he was broke (or nearly so) when he died, sitting in his house in view of the mountains he loved.

ALEX BERTULIS

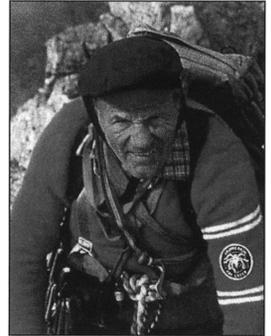
RICCARDO CASSIN 1909–2009

In 2009 the (British) Alpine Club accorded its honorary membership to Riccardo Cassin, one of the legends of Italian mountaineering. Cassin had celebrated his 100th birthday just three and a half months before. Though he could not travel to Chamonix to receive the certificate, he was still in good health. Four months later, however, he died at his home at Piani Resinelli, facing the spectacular crags of his Grigna.

Cassin was born in Friuli, an eastern region in northern Italy, which then was one of the poorest in the country. His father had emigrated to the United States, hoping to have his family rejoin him, but was killed in an accident at work. Little Riccardo, bound to help his mother and younger sister, moved to Lecco (in northernmost Italy just below the Swiss border) with an uncle and worked as an apprentice at a blacksmith's shop. Cassin loved to recount his amazement arriving at Lecco—a wonderland to him, with a beautiful lake and astonishing hills a few minutes from anywhere in town. He worked hard at the smith's shop, yet he had time in summer daily to swim, run, and scramble uphill, all without spending a cent. He loved sports and was fit for many. He ran on foot because he had no bike and he borrowed one to win bicycle races. Those were the years when the Italian Government, created free gyms for working people, where Cassin practiced boxing. He was very good at it, but his coach told him that he had to choose between boxing and rock climbing. He opted for rock.

For climbers, Lecco was, and is, a paradise, with steep walls rising all around the town and, higher, the Grigna unfolding a countless number of even steeper towers and spires. The Grigna has been the first playground for generations of climbers. An extraordinary woman alpinist, Mary Varale, also came to the Grigna. She was from the Mediterranean Liguria region and was rich enough to climb all over the Alps. At Piani Resinelli, the departing point for ascents of the south face of the Grigna, she met Cassin. They climbed together, appreciated each other's ability, and Mary returned with Emilio Comici, a famous climber from Trieste who knew the sophisticated techniques being practiced by Austrians. He taught those techniques and skills to Riccardo and his friends, transforming them from rough amateurs into formidable alpinists.

The deeds and achievements of Riccardo Cassin are well known and recorded in numerous anthologies and histories of mountaineering. What made Cassin and his partners so different from almost all other climbers in the 1930s was their talent on both rock and ice. What distinguished Cassin from his partners, though they were as skilled and tough as he, was his



Riccardo Cassin in 1987.