

Published by the producers of *The New Cross-Country Ski Book* by John Caldwell, it has the same slick paperback format. Photographs and drawings are plentiful. Unfortunately, the artist does not possess an adequate knowledge of snowshoeing. The ice axe illustrated on page 71 must be seen to be believed. The illustration on page 81 shows ski poles way short of the armpit length recommended by the authors. Many illustrations have lettering that did not reproduce large enough.

JAMES KOLOCOTRONIS

*The Ski Troops*, by Hal Burton. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1971. 192 pages, with 14 photographs and two sketches by George Earle.

In *The Ski Troops* Hal Burton tells the story of the formation and training of the 10th Mountain Division and its combat in Italy in World War II. It is a nostalgic book, full of rewarding anecdotes, with special appeal to veterans of the 10th Mountain and their families. "Written as a labor of love and in a spirit of pride for the bravery of so many of my good friends", it particularly concerns Minnie Dole, founder and director of the Ski Patrol, and his efforts to develop "ski troops" in the U.S. Army. The Army eventually authorized the Ski Patrol to recruit men for what became the "10th", and Minnie's office during the war provided 10,634 enlisted recruits.

For those readers without previous knowledge of the division, the two chapters (of fourteen) that deal with the 10th in combat (Riva Ridge, Belvedere and the Advance Across the Po) will prove especially clear and interesting. Gen. Hays' analysis and his anecdotes give insight into command decisions that must have confused many members of the division. Rock-climbing skills had military value for the 10th in combat, though skiing techniques did not. It is true that many of those who volunteered for this special division originally joined because of an interest in skiing, but others, primarily outdoorsmen and climbers, perhaps brought more useful skills to the division. Burton stresses the influence of skiing on the division. The work of the American Alpine Club, and especially of Walter Wood, in helping the Army prepare for mountain troops could be more fully recognized; and as Hal himself suggests, there are errors. For instance I have never been on Nanda Devi and didn't start working at the War Department until after the Wood Yukon Expedition in the summer of 1941 (when we had two B-15 bombers attached to us at one time). And it was Bill House who was largely responsible for developing mountain troop equipment. But the informal tone of the book and the lively spirit of it are all right, and Hal does capture the feeling of the "old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago." Despite the criticisms, this is far and away the best account of the origins and operations of the only division ever formed of American mountain troops.

ROBERT H. BATES