

sible." The level of information given in the book meets the first objective in most cases, but there is much less success in satisfying the second objective. A satisfactory route description is not always given, but to compensate, the author does provide four pages at the end of the book which list specialized guidebooks to individual ranges.

In summary it would seem that there are two ways to utilize this book. One is to skim through, learning about curious peaks in strange places where one will probably never go. Read in this manner, the book is truly fascinating. The second way would be to determine, prior to a trip anywhere—to Europe, Africa, South America, or Nevada—what manner of climbing or hiking might be done along the way. In some cases this book will provide sufficient information, but more likely a reader will wish to consult one of the more detailed guides listed in the bibliography.

LEIGH N. ORTENBURGER

Southern Rock. Chris Hall. East Woods Press, Charlotte, North Carolina, 1981. 143 pages, black and white photographs, maps, diagrams. \$7.95.

To call a climber's guidebook *Southern Rock* and to cover the rock climbs in a five-state area, one would expect quite a weighty volume. Such is not the case with this book. True, it is the only one in print at this time; but, unfortunately, too little effort went into updating the old guidebooks. Then, too, some very significant climbing areas have been intentionally left out because of the author's assumption that being privately owned, access to them is impossible because prohibited. This is not the case. The fact is that some of these very areas are where we are seeing some of the greatest route development in the south and where standards are being constantly pushed to higher levels.

Another criticism I have is that some climbing areas have received an unjust amount of space compared to the amount given other areas of equal or even greater stature. The most obvious example is the lack of attention given to Whitesides Mountain in North Carolina. A brief mention of the highest and most exposed rock face on the East Coast (1000 feet), does not do justice to the potential for future development that this area surely holds. Only a handful of routes have been completed on this most appealing face—equal in size to Cannon—and only a few of those are listed in *Southern Rock*. Much remains to be pushed up here and in many other fine areas in North Carolina and the surrounding states.

The book's strongest point is its organization. Most of the areas it covers appear to be as well-detailed as possible. The maps and photographs help in beginning one's quest for a particular route and most are of a good quality.

Overall, the book will be a significant help to those unfamiliar with climbing areas in the South, but it is not definitive or really comprehensive.

RICHARD W. TYRRELL

Columbia Icefield—A Solitude of Ice. Don Harmon (Photographer), Bart Robinson (Writer). The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1981. 103 pages, black and white and color photographs, maps, glossary, bibliography. \$29.95.

Even with the flood of heroic tales and spectacular photographs from the great mountain regions of Alaska/Yukon, South America, and Asia, the Canadian Rockies maintain in my mind a certain image of special beauty, boldness, and scale not to be matched. There is something about the broad sweep of the deep wooded valleys, the azure rivers and lakes, water tumbling over cliffs, and the majestically architected glaciers that leads one to forget that these mountains are not very high and are made mostly of atrociously rotten rock.

Columbia Icefield—A Solitude of Ice is a book that catches this image. It is not a book about mountaineering. It is about place. Principally, it is a book of fine pictures by Don Harmon, a well-known photographer of the Rockies. The pictures speak through a complimentary text by Burt Robinson. The text is organized in three sections: one describing the Icefield and its glaciers; one giving an overview of geography; and one telling the stories of discovery and exploration by Europeans.

As a scientist involved in the study of glaciers, I read the first section about understanding glaciers with an especially critical eye. Even though certain details and ideas don't level with current generally accepted understanding, a good picture of glacier behavior is conveyed. As a personal view, I would have preferred more understanding and fewer terms. But in the fine selection of photographs, there is a lot to try to understand and puzzle about.

A look at the geography is accomplished by means of a helicopter trip around the icefield region described in picture and text. One can follow the flight route on a map to get a good mental image of the geography of the ice, principal mountains, and rivers. The first photograph of the book was apparently taken on this flight. It shows a uniform area of snow broken only by a single gaping crevasse and a thin line of tracks behind two climbers headed up onto the icefield. It is an appropriate opening photograph. It gives the sense of an icefield and its solitude. Just above the climbers, clearly visible, is the shadow of the helicopter, which reminds us how hard it is to come by real solitude these days.