

Off the Beaten Track. Elizabeth D. Woolsey. Wilson Bench Press (PO Box 104, Wilson WY 83014). 208 pages, black and white photographs, glossaries. \$19.75.

Off the Beaten Track, Elizabeth Woolsey recounts a life that from her birth in New Mexico to the present day, seems to have had hardly a dull moment. Introduced to the mountains at an early age by her forester father, she has sustained a lifelong affection for them, as this book clearly demonstrates.

From New Mexico, the family ultimately removed to New Haven where there were family connections: her grandfather Woolsey was professor of international law at Yale and an earlier Woolsey had been president of the university. Here she would form her own connections—meeting many friends with whom she would later spend time in the mountains.

Undoubtedly the best known of the climbs she describes is the 1936 expedition to Mount Waddington (then Mystery Mountain) in the Coast Range of British Columbia and, at that time, the highest unclimbed peak in Canada. Supported by Elizabeth Woolsey and Alan Willcox, Bill House and Fritz Wiessner succeeded in making the first ascent—news of which was sent to the outside world by carrier pigeon.

Climbing was not her only interest, however. A ski trip to the Alps in 1934 led to her participation in the trials for the 1936 Olympic Games, which, for the first time, would include Alpine skiing. She not only made the team, but served as its captain from 1937 to 1940.

During the war years, when competitive skiing in Europe was no longer feasible, she became managing editor of *Ski Illustrated*. However, as the offices were located in New York City, the job had the disadvantage of taking her far from the mountains she loved, in particular from the Tetons where, in 1943, she had bought land. This property would soon become Trail Creek Ranch and the center of her life. Although the transition from editor to ranch owner and manager was hardly easy, she successfully met the challenges involved and thrived in her new career.

This is an engaging and forthright autobiography of an interesting and varied life—one that anyone could be justifiably proud of.

PATRICIA A. FLETCHER

Menlove: The Life of John Menlove Edwards. Jim Perrin. Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1985. (Distributed in the United States by David & Charles, Inc., North Pomfret, Vermont.) 344 pages, photographs. \$34.95.

Jim Perrin has found a difficult, indeed a problematic biographical subject, with whom he has had a long but ultimately rewarding struggle. Why should J. Menlove Edwards be so difficult to write about? "The pioneer explorer of the Llanberis pass," as Joe Brown has called him, Edwards was considered, with Colin Kirkus, the finest British rock climber of the 1930s. He made numerous