

CLOUD WALKERS: SIX CLIMBS ON MAJOR CANADIAN PEAKS. By PADDY SHERMAN. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1965. 9 x 6 inches, vii + 161 pages, 17 photographs. \$4.95.

The six climbs selected by Sherman are excellent examples of Canadian mountaineering in its varied aspects. They range from fierce Mount Robson near Jasper in the Rockies to Mount Slesse in the Cascade Mountains; from Mount Waddington in the Southern Coast Mountains, known for a long time and with reason as "Mystery Mountain", to Mount Fairweather in the St. Elias Mountains; and to Mount Logan in the Yukon Territory, highest of them all.

The description of the regions and the history of the attempts and victories are vivid and accurate, showing great personal knowledge of the topography of the various districts and the insight of a true mountaineer in the reactions and feelings of the pioneers who explored and climbed in some of the remotest parts of the world. The author, an Englishman who moved to Vancouver in 1952 and is now a journalist in Victoria, has himself an excellent record of mountaineering in Europe and Canada.

The description of the expedition by Don and Phyllis Munday to the Mystery Mountain district, sometimes in the merciless weather of these parts of the Coast Range, makes very interesting reading; and the conquest of its highest point by Wiessner and House is a real climax. The names of the different climbers who took part in the various expeditions described in the book read like a roster of many of the great mountaineers of Canada, England and America who climbed in Canadian mountains. The tragic death of Rex Gibson on Mount Howson is described with great simplicity. Many details of

certain climbs are of historical interest, for instance the confusion of the true summit in the first ascent of Robson by the Rev. George B. Kinney in 1909, accompanied by a fearless prospector from Ontario, Donald Phillips, who was climbing for the first time and nearly made it.

One of the most vivid accounts is the description of the ascent of Mount Fairweather, the *Mont Beutems* of La Pérouse, one of the points of the British Columbia-Alaska border, by an expedition led by the author himself, as a part of the centennial celebration of the Province in 1958. After a successful climb of the 15,300-foot mountain in howling winds, they returned to Lituya Bay, where La Pérouse had stayed in 1786 on his voyage around the world. He had written, "I doubt whether the lofty mountains and deep valleys of the Alps and Pyrénées afford so tremendous yet so picturesque a spectacle, well deserving the attention of the curious, were it not placed at the extremity of the earth." At 6 p.m. the plane came, twelve hours in advance, and the party took off safely at 9 p.m. "Two hours and seventeen minutes later, an earthquake and a mountainous tidal wave all but destroyed Lituya Bay." The wave that followed was the biggest yet recorded anywhere in the world and this narrow escape is indeed one of the most curious in mountaineering history.

The conquest in 1925 of Mount Logan, (19,850 feet, the highest Canadian peak, situated in the Yukon near Alaska) by Albert McCarthy and his colleagues was an extraordinary feat for the time. In order to start the climb in good condition so far away from any base, a first expedition had left early in February to cache under winter arctic conditions four and a half tons of food and equipment in various key places.

Then on 12 May the climbing party set off from a place called McCarthy in Alaska and reached the summit on 22 June, returning on 15 July, after having surmounted great difficulties and hardships.

One of the chapters deals with the accidental discovery in 1957, while mountaineering on Mount Slesse, an 8,200-foot peak in the Chilliwack region of British Columbia, of the wreckage of a TCA North Star airliner which had crashed there. Sixty-two died. For five months it had been impossible to locate the place of the accident.

The book also contains good maps and photographs.

Notwithstanding the variety of the subjects undertaken and their apparent lack of coordination, the book is full of interesting observations on mountains and on human nature and makes very good reading. It is a remarkable and pleasant introduction to Canadian mountaineering and deserves special mention.

PAUL BLANC

FREDERICK ALBERT COOK: PIONEER AMERICAN POLAR EXPLORER. By RUSSELL W. GIBBONS. Hamburg, N.Y.: The Dr. Frederick A. Cook Society, 1965. (Distributed by Sullivan County Historical Society) Pamphlet, 23 pages, illustrated. 30 cents (Can.).

The 100th anniversary of Dr. Cook's birth has revived interest in one of the most baffling historical and geographical puzzles of the century.

This 24-pages pamphlet is published by the Dr. Frederick A. Cook Society, an organization founded in 1957 to "gain official recognition for the scientific and geographical accomplishments of the American physician and explorer . . ." The emphasis is on Cook's achievements rather than on the revival

of any unfortunate controversy. There is a brief description of the Centennial ceremonies held 13 June, 1965 at Callicoon, New York, near Cook's birthplace. The historical marker erected on the occasion cites Cook as a "Pioneer American Explorer, Arctic & Antarctic, 1891-1909," without specific reference to the north pole. The pamphlet seems to have a twofold purpose: to commemorate the anniversary and to set forth the essential facts of Cook's career as briefly as possible.

The biographical sketch by Russell Gibbons is straightforward and fair, although obviously much of the rich detail of Cook's turbulent and complex life had to be omitted. There is no bitterness and little reference to the controversy with Peary; Cook's priority at the pole is treated as an historical fact. One thing surely emerges from a study of any of the more responsible statements made over the years and now summarized in this pamphlet: Cook's own story of the polar journey is virtually unassailable. To this has now been added powerful *ex post facto* evidence concerning ocean currents and ice islands. He was far out on the ice and certainly could have reached the pole. Judged on its own merits, Cook had a very strong case, and while the absolute truth may never be known, it may now be possible for fair-minded men to render a just verdict.

It was of greatest interest to learn that the Cook Society plans to establish a Cook Memorial Library at an eastern university. This will contain the unique collection of Cook materials and memorabilia, now in the possession of his daughter Helene Cook Vetter, including all original records, charts, manuscripts, and the closely written, almost illegible diary that Cook kept on the north pole journey. This diary has never been fully transcribed; probably