

program for the new park. Larger than all the other mountain parks combined, this presented the kind of challenge Pfisterer excelled at. For the next 17 summers, Pfisterer led park wardens on training expeditions within the park, developing systems specific to the higher elevations and colder temperatures in these mountains.

It was not always just work. In 1977, an Alpine Club of Canada member convinced then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau that he would enjoy climbing some mountains in Canada's national parks, and that Pfisterer was the guide he needed. A special relationship developed between Trudeau and Pfisterer spanning many years and included ascents of Mount Edith Cavell and Mount Athabasca.

To celebrate the centennial of the national parks in 1985, Pfisterer organized a two-day ascent

of Mount Edith Cavell for a New Year's bivy on the summit. Six wardens representing the national parks, plus Pfisterer with his daughter Susanna (author of the book) and son Fred climbed to the summit. Pulling a few strings, Pfisterer had pre-arranged a supply of firewood to be helicoptered onto the summit.

Sunset Over the Mountains, Susanna's final chapter, recounts the tragic loss of her brother, Fred, at the age of 24 in a 1987 heli-skiing accident. This was a crushing blow for the family. Throughout Willi's long career, there had been no fatalities on his watch. After decades with the park service, Pfisterer knew that it was time to pass the torch onto the younger wardens he had so carefully mentored. "In mountain rescue there are no heroes, just teammates."

—Paul Geddes

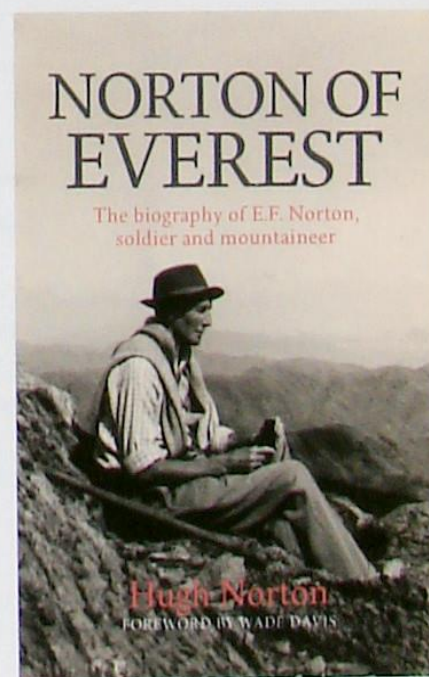
Norton of Everest: The biography of E.F. Norton, soldier and mountaineer

by Hugh Norton, Vertebrate Publishing (2017).

THIS LONG-AWAITED BIOGRAPHY of E. F. "Teddy" Norton is pivotal, despite only having one chapter dedicated to mountaineering. A highly respected professional soldier, Norton achieved the rank of Lieutenant General when he retired in 1942. His first posting was in Ireland in 1903, and four years later he was off to India where he spent much of his later career. In Europe during WWI, he served with distinction as an artillery officer, and was awarded the Military Cross and Distinguished Service Order. For 18 months during the war, he was attached to the Canadian army and later received a letter of commendation from the Canadian prime minister.

In the early 1920s, he was stationed in Turkey and played a key role in the developing situation there. Back in England, he was fast-tracked through officer training and considered to be a rising star. In 1929, he returned to India, and in 1940, he was appointed acting governor of Hong Kong where, with a Japanese invasion looming, he was credited with saving many lives by excavating air raid shelters into the granite rock around the city.

Notwithstanding his star military career, and despite taking part in only two climbing expeditions, Teddy Norton is best remembered today for his mountaineering. He had only moderate climbing experience when he applied to join the 1922 Everest expedition; his background and connections in India might have been factors in his being accepted. The 1922 expedition was the first serious attempt to climb the mountain and Norton performed well at altitude, reaching 8,230 metres; plus he impressed other team members with his climbing judgement. In 1924, Norton was accepted for a second Everest attempt, and was appointed second-in-command and climbing leader. During the approach march, General Bruce became ill and had to withdraw as leader, asking Norton to take over. Norton in turn chose George Mallory to be both his second-in-command and climbing leader, and the two worked closely



together until the latter's disappearance and presumed death on the summit ridge towards the end of the expedition.

Despite the demands on his time as expedition leader, and also having to take over duties as a correspondent for *The Times*, Norton led from the front with two very significant personal achievements on the mountain. In the first, he organized and led what he and his companions firmly believed was a suicide mission to rescue four Sherpas trapped by heavy snowfall and dwindling food supplies on the North Col. Determined not to have a repeat of the 1922 disaster when seven Sherpas died in an avalanche while attempting to descend from the North Col, they succeeded against all odds with no loss of life. Later, Norton was partnered with Howard Somervell for a second summit bid after Mallory's first attempt had failed. As they climbed towards a gully known as the Great Couloir, Somervell's cough forced him to stop. Norton went on alone, without oxygen to reach 8,573 metres, just 275 metres below the summit.

Drawing on his scrambling experience in the Alps, he had chosen a more exposed but less technical line below the ridgeline that Mallory and Irvine used on their fateful climb. The hugely exposed gully leading to the summit pyramid that Norton crossed alone is today known as the Norton Couloir, and his high-altitude record without oxygen held for 54 years until 1978 when

Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler summited Everest without oxygen. Messner later made a solo ascent without oxygen via the Norton Couloir, again inspired by Norton. Despite the 1924 expedition's tragic ending with the loss of Mallory and Irvine, Norton was credited with exceptional leadership in the face of adversity, and was felt by some to be the best of all Everest leaders.

In 1927, Norton and Somervell, who became lifelong friends, were recognized in Canada by the naming of two peaks over 10,000 feet (3,048 metres) in British Columbia's Rocky Mountains. And there is yet a third Canadian connection in the book in that its foreword was written by anthropologist Wade Davis.

Apart from his mountaineering and professional achievements, Teddy Norton was universally recognized as an outstanding leader and mentor by those of all ranks and walks of life who served or worked with him. He was also a renowned naturalist (with particular interests in bird watching and wildflowers), a talented artist, a horseman and sportsman, and an accomplished linguist, which helped him relate to local people during his overseas postings and expeditions. He was a devoted family man who took the time to imbue his learning and interests in his three sons; and now the youngest, Hugh Norton, has produced this warm and inspirational biography of his father, one of the 20th century's great mountaineers.

—Mike Nash

Surviving Logan

by Erik Bjarnason and Cathy Shaw, Rocky Mountain Books (2016).

THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF a story about three rescue workers trapped in a three-day storm at 5,500 metres, engulfed by relentless hurricane-like gale-force winds, with minimal protection or supplies on Canada's highest peak, is that they survived to tell the tale.

To consider fairing -56 C weather after losing their tent and packs to 108 kilometre-per-hour winds, severe frostbite and hypothermia, or the teeter between intense bouts of hope and despair is incomparable to the fate that protected Erik

Bjarnason and his friends Alex Snigurowicz and Don Jardine from being killed by any one of these elements.

In his debut book *Surviving Logan*, Bjarnason delves into his conscious and wandering mind during the month-long expedition of May 2005. Co-written with his younger cousin Cathy Shaw, *Surviving Logan* is wholly indicative of Bjarnason's inner-most desire—to survive on Mount Logan—as the book sincerely tells.

A pupil of high-risk rescue stories, Bjarnason