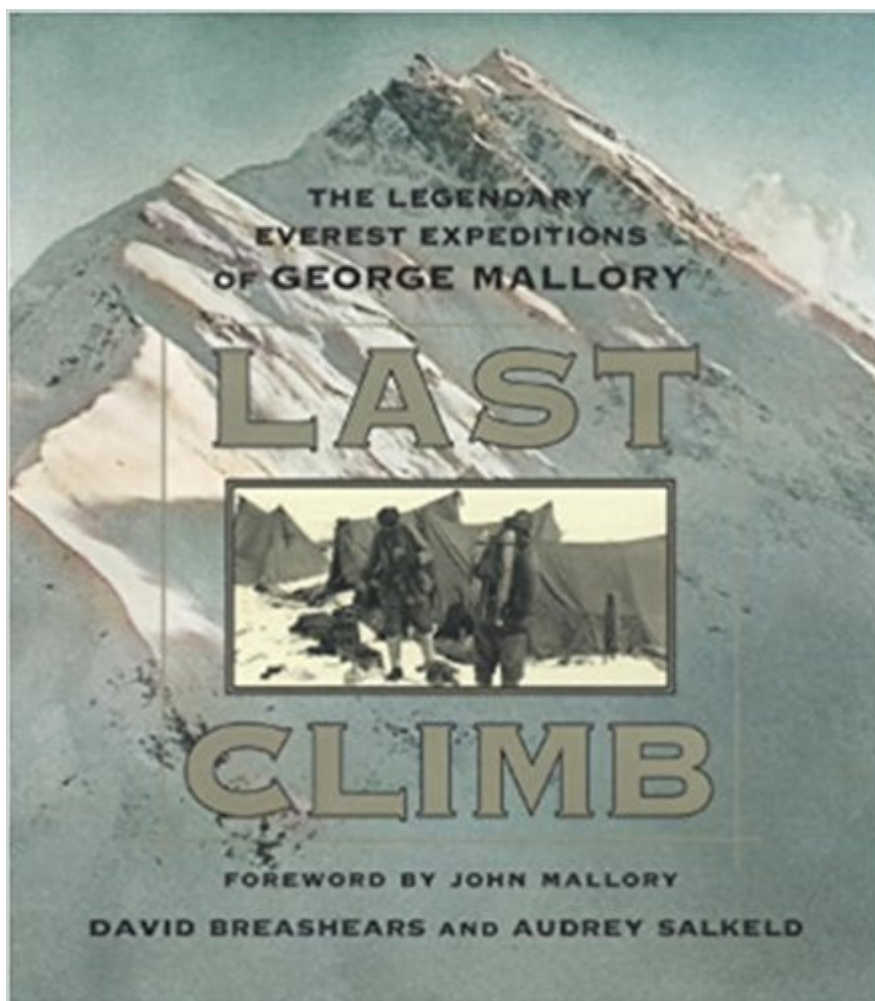


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# Last Climb: The Legendary Everest Expeditions Of George Mallory



## Synopsis

Describes Mallory's final expedition to Mount Everest in 1924, the mystery surrounding his disappearance, and the discovery of his remains in 1999.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The issue will shortly be decided. The third time we walk up East Rongbuk Glacier will be the last, for better or worse. George Mallory wrote those words in May 1924, just days before he and Andrew "Sandy" Irvine made their final attempt to summit Mount Everest. They disappeared on June 8, 1924, and mystery has swirled around them ever since. Did they reach the summit, 29 years before Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary? The recovery of Mallory's body in May 1999 provoked more questions than it answered. Clearly Mallory fell and then died of exposure. But was he on his way up or down? David Breashears (of IMAX Everest fame) and mountaineering historian Audrey Salkeld devote a thoughtful chapter to the discovery, examining the clues found with Mallory and speculating on his experiences on that fateful day. As is to be expected, however, Breashears and Salkeld leave it to others (including Conrad Anker and Jochen Hemmleb) to make conclusions; their book is about much more than Mallory's disappearance. Last Climb is an affectionate biography of Mallory, his fellow climbers, and their three Everest expeditions. Diaries and letters written by expedition members bring their voices into the present, while the authors' considerable Everest expertise ensures historical accuracy. Dozens of vintage photographs taken by Mallory and the other expedition members illustrate the text, revealing a time when "gentlemen mountaineers climbed in leather boots and tweeds"--their gear better suited to a bright day in the Scottish

highlands than the slopes of Everest. The morbid-minded may be disappointed that the only photograph of Mallory's remains is of his hobnailed boot, but others may see this as a mark of respect for the great climber. Beautifully presented and carefully written, *Last Climb* is easily the classiest book on the Mallory mystery. --Sunny Delaney

Completing the trio of new books on George Mallory (see *Ghosts of Everest* and *Lost on Everest*, above), this breathtakingly illustrated volume unfolds as a vivid, engaging pictorial documentary, offering an incredible armchair adventure on the roof of the world. Spectacular color and black-and-white photographs from Mallory's expeditions and from the 1999 search distinguish this volume, capturing the grandeur and almost unearthly beauty of the Himalayan heights. When Mallory and Andrew Irvine vanished at the top of the world in 1924, team member Noel Odell, the last person to see the two men alive, reported that they were ascending the Second Step, an escarpment just 800 feet from the summit. Odell later suggested that the duo might have been on the much lower First Step, and historians have debated the question ever since. IMAX filmmaker and Everest veteran Breashears (*High Exposure*, *Forecasts*, Apr. 26) and mountaineering historian Salkeld (*Climbing Mount Everest*, etc.) believe it's unlikely that Mallory and Irvine reached the Second Step and concur with the authors of the other two books that the question of whether the duo reached the summit remains unresolved. The spectacular photographs are accompanied by a perceptive probe of Mallory the man, an Edwardian idealist who threw off the shackles of Victorian restraint yet remained torn between fatherly duty (he left his wife and three children for long periods) and his sense of mission as "a child of Empire... conscious of what England expected." Included also are a poignant introduction by John Mallory, the explorer's son, who pays tribute to the father he hardly knew, as well as a brief essay by George Mallory II (John's son), who reached Everest's summit in 1995, symbolically completing his grandfather's quest. BOMC selection. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

What a fantastic book. I have become an armchair mountaineer since reading many books about Everest climbs. In truth, I am queasy with heights so I don't ever see myself attempting a climb like this. I have enjoyed reading and watching David Breashears's books and documentaries and this one is one of my new favorites. The story of Mallory's climb accompanied by the spectacular photographs made Mallory's climb come alive for me. Given it was done in the 1920's, the fact that these brave climbers without their North Face gear or high quality climbing gear is absolutely amazing. David put together an amazing tribute to Mr. Mallory and this is a book I know I will return

to again.

Good introductory book about this infamous expedition, and the subsequent search for the lost climbers. Should be made into a movie.

My favorite true life story. This kept me engrossed from beginning to end!

Breashears has done for George Mallory what Shackleton's *Forgotten Men* did for Shackleton's support party - shine the light on them after the conquering heroes got all the glory. Excellent read.

This book got me interested in the History of Mountain Climbing, and led me to read approximately 50 books on the subject. Probably the best book I have read about Mallory.

I had some limited knowledge of the Mallory expeditions prior to reading this but not much. This book was a great read for me as a novice climber/historian due to my limited knowledge. Although someone who is very familiar with the subject matter may not appreciate the book, I found it to be an excellent source of information and extremely interesting to read. The photos are incredible and let you get a feel for what the author is talking about. If you are looking for the actual photos of Mallory's body clinging to the slope however, they are not here. Just what I found to be an honest, up front, and informative read regarding the whole Mallory and Irvine riddle.

I bought this book thinking that it was written to accompany the wonderful television programme I saw about a 1999 expedition to Everest to discover what became of Mallory and Irvine. It is not. The book is well presented book and nicely bound. The most attractive aspect of the book is the 1920's photographs; they are very evocative of a lost era when parts of the earth were distant and unexplored. However it is not particularly well written and the discussion of the mystery of Mallory and Irvine's fate is unclear and ineffective. It does not shed light on its subject, and I have had to look elsewhere for that. Poorly served by maps and diagrams it leaves the reader struggling to appreciate the terrain, routes and location of camps. It's weakest point is where the authors try to recreate the last climb by describing what was going through the head of Mallory; this is very unconvincing, not least because no attempt is made to take into account the character of men with English public school backgrounds (to my mind, a key factor). Thus the book fails at the point which is of most interest. In conclusion, a nice book to browse through thanks to the photographs (hence

the 3 stars) but otherwise unsatisfactory.

Although I purchased this book for my husband since I had little interest in reading about mountain climbers, I found this book to be quite captivating. This book offers a well-researched (authenticated by personal documents from the 1920s' participants), very interesting journey into what it took to climb Mt. Everest (or to attempt to climb it) in the 1920s. And the amazing photos gave the reader such powerful reinforcement as to what these journeys truly entail. While I wouldn't have wanted to read an exhaustive historical text on every detail of the journey, filled with scientific jargon, I thoroughly enjoyed the writing style used in this work. It felt like a combination of personal memoir and mystery and I read it in three nights because it was just so interesting, especially for someone previously completely uninterested in mountain climbing. I am grateful to the authors for their apparently exhaustive research and their story-telling skills. By the end, I was almost in tears, understanding the pain of loss for the families, as well as for all the climbers. I gained new perspective on the journey to the mountain. Whereas I once believed, especially in modern times, that the journey to climb large mountains was quite a selfish journey, without regard to those left to deal with subsequent loss (family members and spouses), this story offered a new perspective, especially for understanding the climbers of this historical period. This story changed the way I perceive these choices and helped me to honor the journeys of those who came before my generation. I would highly recommend this book to any non-climbers who wish to try to understand the journey of trying to climb to the top of the world. I really, really enjoyed this book. Thank you David Breashears and Audrey Salkeld for working so hard to give those of us who will never experience that world an opportunity to see it and understand it from those on the inside. This is a really wonderful book.

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