



Wildest Dream: The Biology of George Mallory

Peter Gillman, Leni Gillman

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* Chronicles all three of Mallory's Everest expeditions

* Illuminates how Mallory reconciled his ambitions on Everest with his unquestioned love for his wife and family

Since the discovery in 1999 of George Mallory's body on Everest, controversy has raged over whether Mallory and Andrew Irvine could have summited the mountain. Every detail of the climb has been dissected and Mallory's skill as a mountaineer has been hotly debated. Observing the debate, Peter and Leni Gillman felt that the essence of who Mallory was as an individual had been lost. In *The Wildest Dream* they offer the most comprehensive biography ever written about one of the 20th century's most intriguing personalities.

Exploring Mallory's early years, the Gillmans take the reader to Cambridge and Bloomsbury where Mallory consorted with some of the most colorful literary and artistic figures of Edwardian England: Rupert Brooke, James and Lytton Strachey, Maynard and Geoffrey Keynes, and Duncan Grant, among others. *The Wildest Dream* moves on to examine exactly what Mallory accomplished as a climber, evaluating the quality of his routes and skills within the context of climbing in the early 1900s.

At the heart of this biography, and of Mallory's life, is his wife, Ruth. The letters they exchanged during the many separations caused by World War I and three Everest expeditions reveal the depth of their commitment to each other and the unwavering support and strength Ruth offered George. The Everest expeditions are also insightfully rendered, offering perspective on criticisms levied at Mallory after the 1921 and 1922 attempts. The authors examine how Mallory, a dedicated husband and father, arrived at his fateful decision to participate in the doomed 1924 expedition and why he continued to press for a summit attempt when the odds seemed stacked against him. As Mallory once declared, a climber was what he was, and this is what climbers did; this was how they fulfilled their wildest dreams.

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