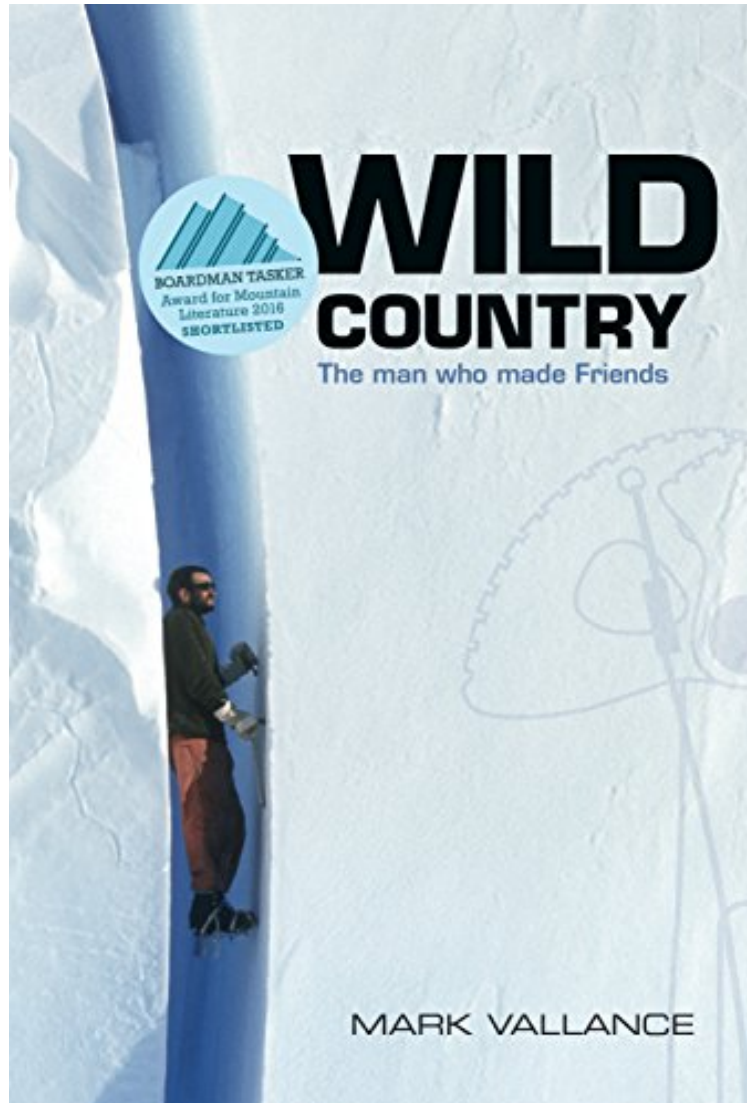


(Ebook free) Wild Country: The man who made Friends

Wild Country: The man who made Friends

Mark Vallance

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Mark Vallance : Wild Country: The man who made Friends before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wild Country: The man who made Friends:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is an outstanding book, by an outstanding personality. By Dennis Gray Wild Country by Mark Vallance Vertebrate Publishing pound;14.95 Few outdoor enthusiasts can have led such an active life as Mark Vallance, and this autobiography is a record of a life lived at high octane. Schoolboy rock climber, traveller, teacher, a Base Leader in Antarctica, equipment designer- manufacturer and retailer, fell runner, Alpinist, Himalayan climber, climbing wall developer, environmentalist, and long distance bike rider. A meeting in Yosemite with Ray Jardine the originator of the first successful camming device, Friends led on to a new career for

Mark, manufacturing these in the UK, and the setting up of a company 'Wild Country'; which also went on to manufacture tents, karabiners, and Rocks. Perhaps the most successful nut for climbing protection ever so far devised, the brain child of the author. The change required by Vallance from being an officer in the Peak National Park in the UK, to an international businessman, and the machinations around such as detailed in his book are the stuff of TV dramas. Impressively creative, Vallance was also responsible for a new style outdoor retailer in the UK, 'Outsiders'; in Hathersage and even more significant, in 1990 he was a key figure in the setting up of the first modern indoor climbing centre in the country, 'The Foundry'; in Sheffield. This has spawned dozens of imitators the length and breadth of Britain. Somehow despite the exigencies of running a business Vallance kept active in the hills, but then getting himself ready for early retirement, by divesting himself of his business interests and planning years ahead for travelling and climbing, he received the shattering personal diagnosis of an early onset of Parkinson's disease at the age of 54. This did not stop him keeping active for many years afterwards, whilst handling the slow decline in his physical abilities, for he took on the Presidency of the BMC, and travelled several times to climb in the Himalaya, and even summited an 8046m peak, Shishapangma, plus a long distance charity bike ride to raise funds for Parkinson's research. Few can have put up such a determined fight against such a debilitating, presently incurable disease. This is an outstanding book, by an outstanding personality.

Shortlisted: 2016 Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature 'Wild Country' chronicles not just the mountains [Mark] has climbed, but the part he played in bringing to market a little piece of sporting equipment that revolutionised mountaineering and saved countless lives. — Sarah Freeman, Yorkshire Post In early 1978, an extraordinary new invention for rock climbers was featured on the BBC television science show 'Tomorrow's World'. It was called the 'Friends', and it not only made the sport safer, it helped push the limits of the possible. The company that made them was called Wild Country, the brainchild of Mark Vallance. Within six months, Vallance was selling Friends in sixteen countries. Wild Country would go on to develop much of the gear that transformed climbing in the 1980s. Mark Vallance's influence on the outdoor world extends far beyond the company he founded. He owned and opened the influential retailer Outside in the Peak District and was part of the team that built The Foundry, Sheffield's premier climbing wall — the first modern climbing gym in Britain. He worked for the Peak District National Park and served on its board. He even found time to climb 8,000-metre peaks and the Nose on El Capitan. Diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in his mid fifties and robbed of his plans for retirement, Vallance found a new sense of purpose as a reforming president of the British Mountaineering Council. In 'Wild Country', Vallance traces his story, from childhood influences like Robin Hodgkin and Sir Jack Longland, to two years in Antarctica, where he was base commander of the UK's largest and most southerly scientific station at Halley Bay, before his fateful meeting with Ray Jardine, the man who invented Friends, in Yosemite. Trenchant, provocative and challenging, 'Wild Country' is a remarkable personal story and a fresh perspective on the role of the outdoors in British life and the development of climbing in its most revolutionary phase.

About the Author Mark Vallance was born in Cheshire. After watching the film of the 1953 ascent of Everest, he developed an obsession for climbing and exploration. Educated at Abbotsholme School and Goldsmiths, University of London, he spent two years in Halley Bay working for the British Antarctic Survey. In 1977, he formed Wild Country to manufacture Ray Jardine's revolutionary climbing protection device, called Friends, launching one of the most influential outdoor brands in British history. In 1987 he built and opened Outside, a new kind of outdoor retailer in the UK. Having sold his businesses, Vallance planned a long and action-packed retirement, but was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease aged only fifty-four. He has since served as president of the British Mountaineering Council. He lives in Sheffield with his wife Jan.