

## Lawrencefield of Arabia

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### UAE ROCK CLIMBING:

TOBY FOORD-KELCEY

red armada publishing

£22.95

climbing ex-pat reveals the mysterious routes of Dubai's Empty Quarter

You don't get many climbing guidebooks that have an introduction in Arabic but then again, there aren't that many guidebooks to climbing in Arabia. More specifically, UAE Climbing is a selective guidebook covering not just the United Arab Emirates but also parts of Oman that are accessible from the former country. Most of the rock climbs contained herein are of the outcrop – mostly single-pitch - variety, spanning a range of styles from sport climbing through

traditional, bouldering and deep water soloing. Scattered among this low-commitment cliffhanging are a few monstrous multi-pitch trad routes to whet the appetite of the adventurer – but you have to be really adventurous since much of the rock is prone to exfoliation and therefore loose thanks to the massive daily variation in temperature. (As the author points out: "For unfussy climbers there is infinite potential for onsite 'chossaneering' of new long multi-pitch traditional routes" – call for Ken Wilson immediately).

Despite this unappetising prospect, Foord-Kelcey makes an excellent job of presentation with clear, concise, good-humoured text, copious well composed and reproduced action photographs and photo topos and lots of useful logistical info and ideas. As a book, UAE Climbing easily holds its own in the company of similar publications from full-time 'professional' guidebook producers.

Nevertheless, unless you're an aficionado of particularly hot, arid sun-rock, it's unlikely that you'll be wanting to make a special journey to sample the desert outcrops catalogued within the pages of UAE ROCK Climbing, no matter how winningly they are promoted. The UAE has one of the highest traffic accident rates in the world, and when they're not baking hot the deserts are sometimes prone to flash-flooding sweeping everything and everyone in its path. To cap it all, some of the emirates ban alcohol. Not a very enticing holiday combo. But for the many professionals who find themselves working or living an expatriate life in the Dubai/Abu Dhabi region, this is likely to become an indispensable source book of ideas for weekends away from the hothouse atmosphere of the office, construction site – or tax exile's swimming pool.

Colin Wells

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### THE ROOF-CLIMBER'S GUIDE TO TRINITY

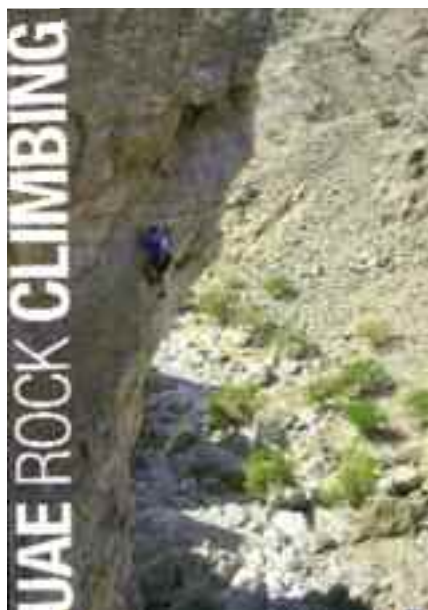
GEOFFREY WINTHROP-YOUNG

Oleander Press

£6.95

Pointless re-publication of prehistoric posh person's pretentious prattle

Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, vain, would-be romantic poet, gadfly closet homosexual of the Bloomsbury era, fine Edwardian alpinist and founder of the BMC, wrote a silly undergraduate guide to building around his Alma Mater, Trinity College, when he was a silly undergraduate there in the late 1890s. Published in 1900, it has thankfully lain fallow for nearly 110 years – until now, when niche Cambridge



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