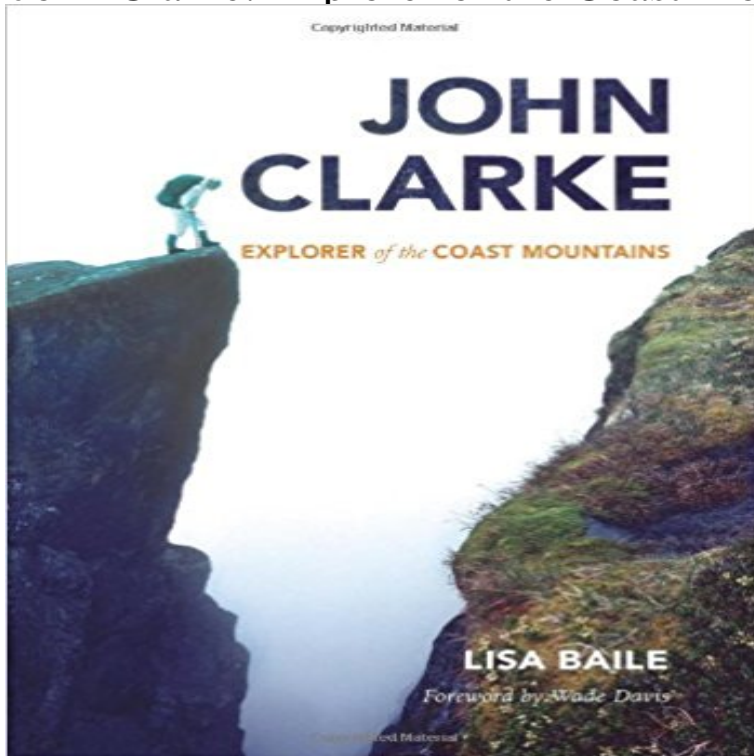


## John Clarke: Explorer of the Coast Mountains



Clarke had no interest in trophy climbs and never did ascend many of BC's highest peaks. On the other hand, he explored more virgin territory and racked up more first ascents than any other climber--perhaps more than any climber who ever lived. Although he came to be honoured far and wide and is one of the few mountaineers to be awarded the Order of Canada, he was a modest man who pursued his passion without fanfare, frequently embarking on gruelling expeditions into unknown territory by himself. His reputation spread and grew to legendary proportions, not just owing to the prodigious scale of his achievements, but because of the way he carried them out--he travelled light and scorned technology, wearing cotton long johns and eating homemade granola. He dedicated his life to exploring the numberless, nameless peaks of the Coast Range and worked at odd jobs just long enough to pay for the next seasons climbing. He was charismatic and famously attractive to women, but none were able to compete with his first love and he didn't marry until he was almost fifty. Always a popular lecturer, in his later years he devoted his considerable energies to the cause of environmental education. After he succumbed to cancer in 2003, the BC government named Mount John Clarke in his honour--fitting recognition for the man who had himself named many BC mountains. John Clarke: Explorer of the Coast Mountains covers this remarkable life from beginning to end, examining Clarke through his own words and pictures as well as through the words of his many friends. All agree it was an honour to have known him, and readers will find it equally inspiring to meet him through these pages.

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