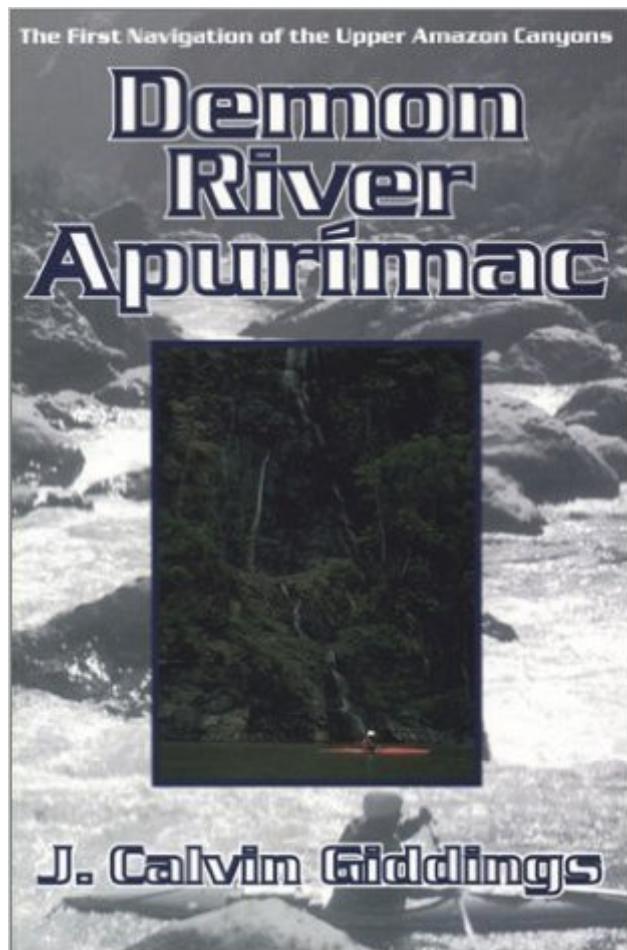


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Demon River Apurimac: The First Navigation Of Upper Canyons



Synopsis

Book by Giddings, J. Calvin

Book Information

Paperback: 290 pages

Publisher: Univ of Utah Pr (T); English Language edition (September 1996)

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Customer Reviews

This just the type of book I like to read at night before going to sleep. The exploits are of a kind I would never attempt, and just the contemplation of them makes me at once weary and exhilarated. In the early seventies the author resolved to kayak down one of the most forbidding rivers in the world: the Apurimac in Peru. In two trips, in 1974 and 1975, he did just that. The Apurimac is the longest tributary and hence considered the source of, the (River). It is forbidding due to the extreme ferocity of its cataracts, and also due to the fact that in many places along its course climbing out of its canyon or going back upstream would be impossible. Thus, the discovery by Giddings and his companions of a scenic forty or fifty foot waterfall on the unexplored sections could well have been a death sentence. While all the kayakers did make it out alive, things were not always hunky-dory between them. Giddings comments frequently on his team's lack of teamwork and his submerged tensions. Reading this a quarter century later, I felt he could be right or maybe wrong, but I had almost nothing by which to draw any conclusions. The author gives only the most cursory description of the other members of his party (5 besides himself), then launches into the chronicle. This information deficit is never cured. We are not told the age, the religion, the education, the job, the background, the biases--nothing of any of these five other men on the journey, which makes it impossible to become involved as a reader in the psycho-drama that seems to have played out on the river. One cannot even attempt some judgement based solely on

appearance because although the book has many photos, it lacks a portrait of the group, which one would think basic in a work of this kind.

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