

## Explanatory notes

In some chapters, I have included phrases and passages designed to explain mountaineering terms to the uninitiated. I have tried to keep such passages to a minimum, but feel that they are necessary at a few points.

I have used mixed units for height. Although metric units are now the only official units of height and distance used in the Himalaya, many Western mountaineers, particularly those from English-speaking countries, still use imperial units at some times. In fact, mountaineers quite happily swap from one set of units to the other, referring to a camp at 6800 metres in one breath and discussing tactics for a 5000-foot face in the next. I have retained this mixed usage, especially in the earlier climbs when imperial units tended to be used more frequently than now. In most cases when I have used imperial units, I have given the metric equivalent in parentheses. The conversion factor is roughly 3.3, so that to convert in one's head from metric to imperial, multiply by three and add another 10 per cent. For example, a 7000-metre mountain is  $3 \times 7000 = 21\ 000$  plus another 10 per cent of that, or about 23 000 feet.

This text is taken from *Himalayan Dreaming: Australian mountaineering in the great ranges of Asia, 1922–1990*, by Will Steffen, published 2017 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.