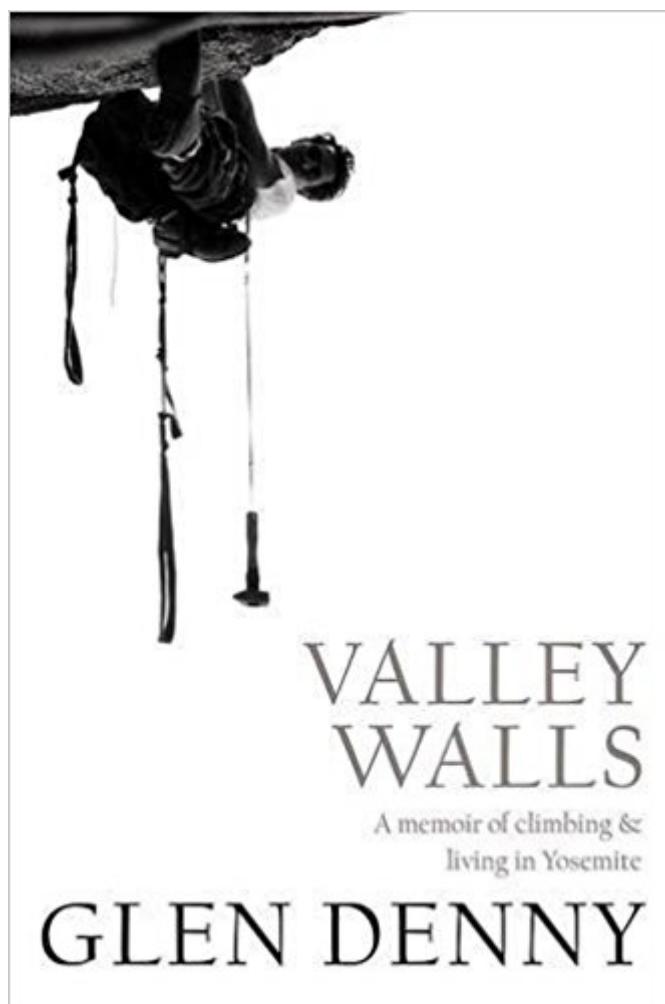


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# Valley Walls: A Memoir Of Climbing And Living In Yosemite



## Synopsis

Half a century ago a rag-tag group of innovators was building a foundation for modern American rock climbing from a makeshift home base in Yosemite. Photographer Glen Denny was a key figure in this golden age of climbing, capturing pioneering feats on camera while tackling challenging ascents himself. In entertaining short pieces enlivened by his iconic black-and-white images of Yosemite's big wall legends, Denny reveals a young man's coming of age and provides a vivid look at Yosemite's early climbing culture. He relates such precarious achievements as hauling water in glass gallon jugs up the east face of Washington Column, nailing the 750-foot Rostrum in a punishing heat wave, and dangling overnight on El Capitan's Dihedral Wall in a lightning storm. Each true tale captures the spirit of historic Camp 4, where Denny and others plan the next big climb while living on the cheap and dodging park rangers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL, August 2017: Every once in a while, a book poetically depicting the core essence of the climbing experience comes along—books carrying the reader to the grip of the moment, on a crux move on a demanding climb, say, while also painting an expansive awareness of the experience. Glen Denny's *Valley Walls* rings to the heart, offering a sharp and insightful translation of the oft-ephemeral big-wall experience to the written page. . . . The lifestyle, the ceaseless struggle between confidence and doubt, and the richness of experience of a pioneering Valley climber reward the reader of *Valley Walls*. Highly recommended. WALL STREET JOURNAL, September 2, 2016: "Oh, to have lived such riches! To have been a peer and partner of

legends like Royal Robbins, Warren Harding, Tom Frost, Chuck Pratt, Steve Roper, Layton Kor and Yvon Chouinard! I cracked "Valley Walls" with dread, knowing that to settle in with Mr. Denny's stories would mean surrendering myself to searing envy: I'd rather have made the first ascent of one of the classic El Capitan routes than founded Microsoft. "Valley Walls" isn't a traditional narrative. Each of its 21 chapters tours an alcove of Mr. Denny's memory. Anecdotes of camp life drop between stories of wild vertical adventure, approximately in chronological order. . . . So perhaps it shouldn't come as a surprise that the stories in "Valley Walls" read more like literary snapshots than fully developed dramatic episodes. . . . But despite the lack of connective tissue in "Valley Walls," its anecdotes are vivid and emotionally poignant."ALPINIST, June 10, 2016:"The memoir richly describes the 1960s era of Yosemite big walls, crack climbs, and Camp 4 culture in twenty-one essays....Denny's tales humanize the climbing icons of the 1960s, portraying them as individuals with goals, dreams, disappointments, triumphs, deaths and sadness. It's a book to tote along on climbing trips, to read while resting in roadside pullouts at Indian Creek or snuggled in a mummy bag in Camp 4."Tommy Caldwell, professional rock climber:"Glen Denny's photos preserved and romanticized the era now referred to as the Golden Age of American rock climbing. His memoir, Valley Walls, brings those photos to life. A superbly written portrait of larger-than-life characters and go-for-broke ideals brings forth a sense of great envy for a time when purity came from the fact that we did not yet know if these walls could be climbed."Beth Rodden, professional rock climber:"Glen Denny was part of an age that is iconic to every generation of climbers and epitomizes Yosemite's spirit and soul. His photographs and stories are as famous as the time, and now his book gives us an even deeper glimpse into such an incredible era."Yvon Chouinard, co-founder, Patagonia, Inc.:Not many of us old guys are left who can remember the history of Yosemite climbing in the sixties. Thankfully, Glen Denny has put together these stories of the great days that were so important.LIBRARY JOURNAL, April 15, 2016:Denny (Glen Denny: Yosemite in the Sixties) is a well-known photographer who captured the golden age of rock climbing in Yosemite National Park, along with life in the park's Camp 4 campground, during the late 1950s through the 1960s. The author states that this memoir is "based on my notes and photographs and especially my vivid recollections." Essays illustrate daily life at the camp and the Yosemite Valley during this time period, relating Denny's experience being the first to ascend El Capitan's Dihedral Wall, among other routes. Climbing partners, coworkers, and others are remembered with fondness and joy as the author shares stories of various climbs (whether solo, "firsts," or partnered). During these years, Denny climbed with many partners including rock climbers Warren Harding and Royal Robbins. As plastic water bottles

hadn't come to market yet, Denny describes hauling water in glass jugs, repurposed bleach bottles, and heavy metal canteens. Readers will also learn climbing terminology such as open book, zipper, flake, and liebacking. VERDICT Climbing newcomers will benefit from the glossary, but the love Denny has for the climbs, climbers, and life during this era make this a must-have for outdoor enthusiasts. NATIONAL OUTDOOR BOOK AWARD 2016 Honorable mention in the History/Biography category of the 2016 National Outdoor Book Awards (NOBA)

Before the first free ascent of the Dawn Wall on El Capitan captivated the world, a rag-tag group of innovators built the sport of modern American rock climbing from a makeshift home base in Yosemite's Camp 4. Photographer Glen Denny was a key figure in that Golden Age of climbing, capturing pioneering feats on camera while tackling challenging ascents himself. Now, in prose both exhilarating and poignant, he gives us true tales of colorful characters and a legendary locale, of brotherhood and sky-high quests, and of living cheap and dodging park rangers. Denny learned the game with the mythic Warren Harding, hauled water in glass gallon jugs up the east face of Washington Column, dangled overnight on El Capitan's Dihedral Wall in a lightning storm, and felt the rock that had not been touched since it emerged from the ice a million years ago, clean and white. A young man comes of age in these pages, at the dawn of a new era.

I liked this book because it talked about all the walls he climbed and the adventure he had. It was interesting to compare climbing techniques then vs now. I hope you will like it just like I did. I am 9 years old. And I will climb the nose someday.

Reading this book will make you feel like you are right there in Camp 4 during the golden ages of climbing. I never got to experience this era of climbing for myself, however, this book allowed me to enjoy and appreciate it even more. A must read for any climber, and especially any Yosemite climber.

Great read about my favorite place!

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. He's a good storyteller and each chapter was a nice length. I really liked reading about Yosemite Valley in the 50's and 60's.

I really enjoyed the stories from the early days of Yosemite climbing. Glen is a good storyteller and

the pages just breeze by.

Inspired writing about incredible people pushing themselves to their limits. Hard to put down. I enjoyed every word of every adventure.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book even though I am a novice. This will be a wonderful gift got the climber in your circle.

This is a fantastic recount of early climbing days, climbers and experiences in Yosemite. Excellently written by Glen Denny. Good Job.

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