heybob

1975

Includes
Guide to Hinchinbrook Is.
and
Notes on
New England Tableland.

$1.50



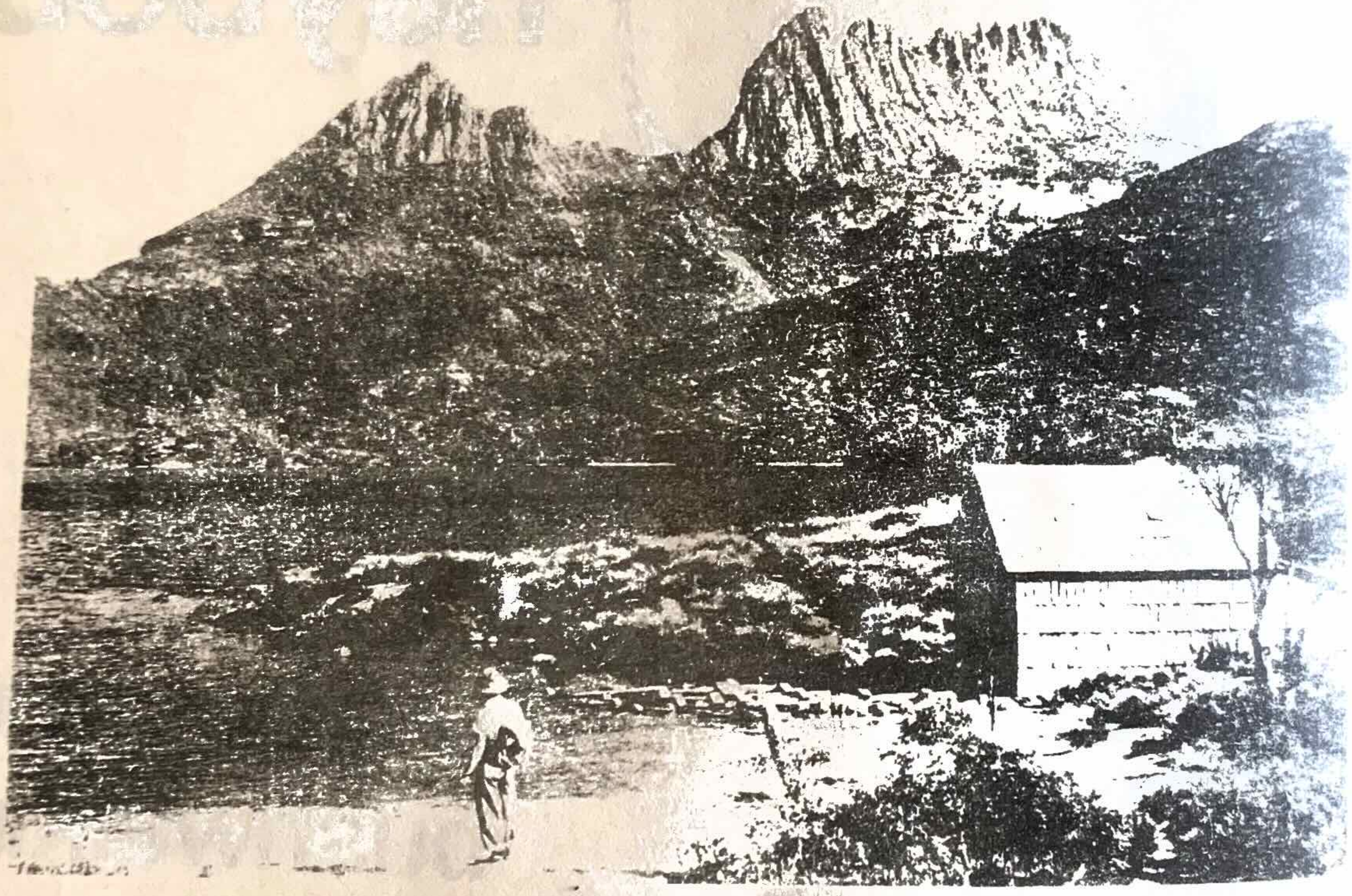
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university
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volume 17
1975

go walk about Tasmania...

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EDITORIAL

I began the task of producing "Heybob '75" in April. It is now August. In the interval, aside from a few odd jobs like finding articles, typists, printers, advertisers etc., I have spent quite some time and not a little paper in numerous attempts to write an inspiring editorial. I wanted it to be something which reflected the very souls of bushwalkers, something that we could all read, perhaps years from now, and say "Yes.....That's what it's all about; that's what you feel after you have climbed a couple of thousand feet to Lost World Plateau and you look down; that's what you feel when you're propped against a log beside the evening fire, your face 110°F and your backside 3°F; that's what you feel when one of your erstwhile friends drops a "meadow muffin" on you from great height". For once, however, the appropriate words just will not come. (This is particularly difficult to accept since the fact that I can usually produce more and larger words faster and louder than anybody else I know is probably the reason I was landed with this job in the first place.)

I realise no that the words won't come for many reasons. Not the least is that the feelings I wanted to capture are as many and varied as the places we visit and the people we go with. One would need to write a volume so large that even Richard Morwood would not want to carry it more than a few yards. But, more importantly, to put these sentiments into words could only produce a result so uncharacteristic of bushwalkers as I know them that it would have no place in their magazine. Places are always "good festering grounds", trips, "bloody good rorts" and people "stroppy" or otherwise. That is not to say that bushwalkers have no souls, or that their spirits are not moved by magnificent views, peaceful surroundings and the friendly companionship of kindred spirits - far from it! Why else would any normal human being beat his way through veritable forests of lantana, swim across freezing creeks in the dead of winter, trudge miles with a 40lb pack on his back or sweat his way up mountains? But "touri" make trite remarks about the beauty of nature and even a Minister

for Mines could speak in glowing terms of some beauty spot or other, or the joy of "boiling the billy and cooking a steak in the Great Outdoors".

Sincerity breeds the sort of silence bushwalkers keep about such things. If you really love it, you simply soak it up. In "Heybob", some of us give a very small part of it back.

LYNN ROBINSON

"And if you would know God, be not therefore
a solver of riddles.
Rather look about you and you shall see Him
playing with your children.
And look into space; you shall see Him walking
in the cloud, outstretching His arms in the
lightning and descending in the rain.
You shall see Him smiling in flowers, then
rising and waving His hands in trees."

Kahil Gibran

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge, with thanks, the contributions made towards this publication by many people. A hearty thankyou to all these people who spent their time and talent writing articles and drawing maps to go with them for this edition of "Heybob". I would also like to thank those people who supported this magazine by advertising herein and without whom the cost of production would be prohibitive. At this point, I must thank also the Queensland Council of Social Service who did most of the printing at more than reasonable rates.

The list of individuals whose help was invaluable is long - Richard Morwood who designed and drew the fizzy ad. and whose shoulder was more than once wet with my tears, Mandy Greaves whose artistry produced the beautiful pen and ink sketch on the cover, Liz Bourne and Q.C.C. who introduced me to the printer and provided the Fraser Island map, Bob Brodribb who did the photos, Mary Carruthers who typed the lot without a word of complaint about the strange vocabulary, and many other good friends and willing helpers who proof-read, collated and bound "Heybob '75".

LYNN ROBINSON

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HINCHINBROOK ISLAND - A GUIDE

BARRY BAKER

Friday, 8th June, 1770

> ....The land near the Shore in the bottom of the bay is very low and Woody; but a little way back in the Country is a continued ridge of high land, which appear'd to be barren and rocky ....
>
> Captain Cook's Journal 1768-71

Only after much reading and not a little trouble is it possible for the prospective "tropo" to appreciate the problem. Info is very very thin on the ground - plenty of waffle of which way they went and not a little on green ants and scrub, but hard facts no. The Water Guide by Ruth Stephenson (1972) is a shining light in the darkness, and heaven knows this could be improved considerably. So here goes for a more definitive guide.

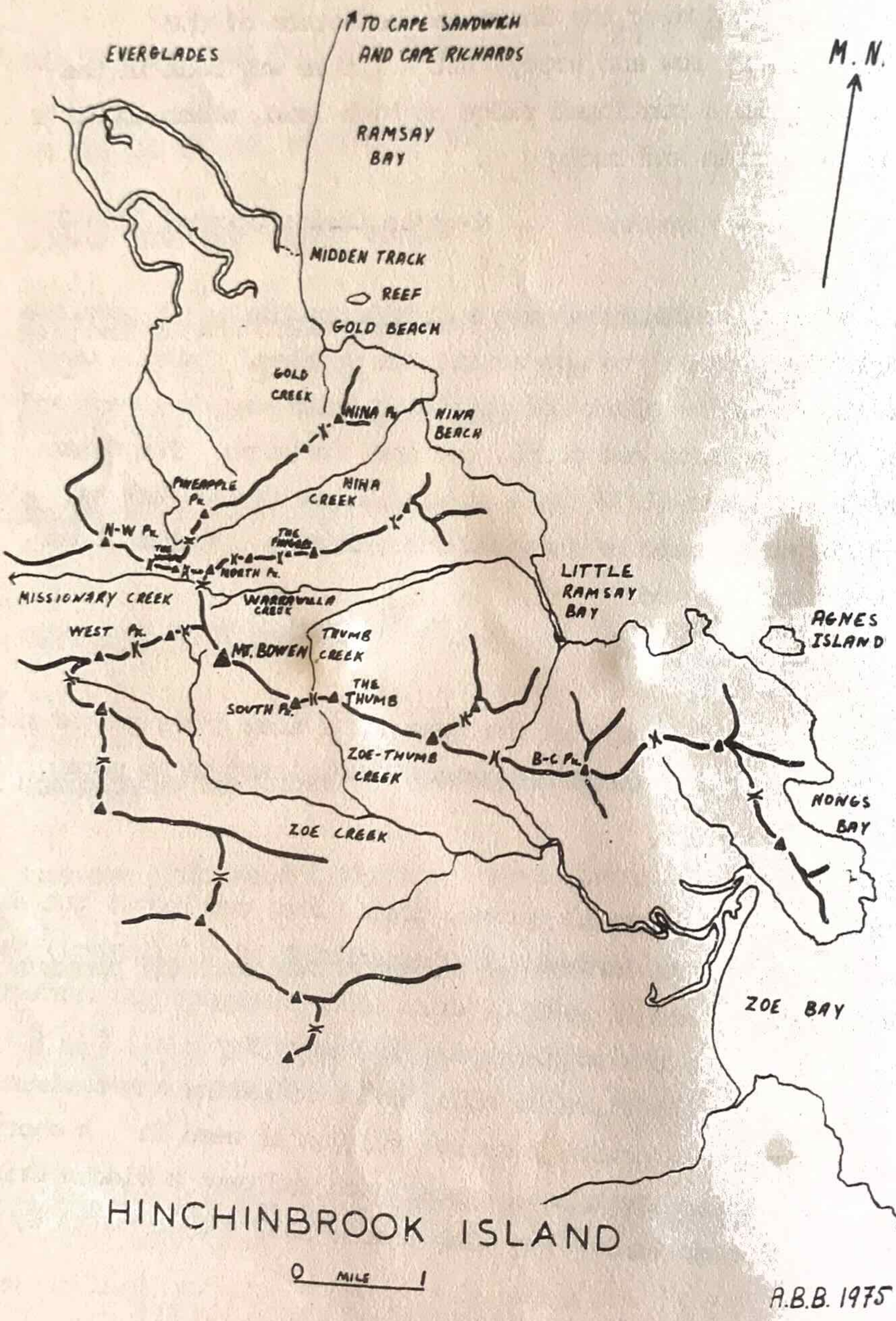
Time

Best in winter and now that the Semester system gives a good mid-year break the tropical sweat of December/January need be no more.

Transport

As you please to Cardwell (plane, train, bus, car, boat!) but don't leave from Lucinda. From Cardwell to Hinchinbrook by the Cardwell Water Taxi (O'Keefe, Tel. Cardwell 668531) which will transport you through the mangroves almost to the southern end of Ramsay Bay - all for $15 total cost one way irrespective of bods, short of having a battalion. From here on its you own power, conserve it, you'll need it. A short walk (100 yards) via an aboriginal oyster path and past a midden brings friend "tropo" out onto Ramsay Bay with almost half a mile to go to the southern end.

HINCHINBROOK ISLAND - A GUIDE



Also there is a water service to the resort at Cape Richards so it is possible to either go or return via this haven of things cold. .

FOOD

What you will but make it light and do take at least something that doesn't require water to rehydrate it, because chances are you'll have a dry meal or two.

ROUTES, CAMPS AND WATER

The map has been carefully amended to give as accurate an interpretation as possible - both the army 1" to the mile (1944) and the Topographic Survey 1:100,000 (1971) are inaccurate in many places. The various routes are marked and will be discussed in order from personal experience and hearsay. Not all routes have been personally troden - a chap has to work sometime you know!

Firstly, the fastest and most convenient (because least scrub) way to travel around the coast is around the coast! That is via the rocks and if necessary the sea cliffs. Possible (because I did) to travel from south end of Ramsay Bay to Cape Richards resort in one day (11 hours) but it is one hell of a strop with not a lot of water - one has to scour the cliffs for soaks and the odd spring. Exceptions to this rule may be when spring tides are coinciding with cyclones etc. One of the early club trips did contend with this problem - they lost. However, spring tides by themselves are not impossible (personal experience of that 11 hours). Short cuts via low saddles, etc. are most likely to lead to bad temper and scratches directly proportional to how much of the stuff you have previously bashed through in the preceding days.

Base Camp

Many choices - Zoe Bay, Agnes Bay, Little Ramsay Bay, Nina Beach (cocoonuts) and Gold Beach - all have excellent camp sites with fresh water nearby. However, all except Gold Beach have the "added attraction" of salt water crocodiles (man eating) in the mangroves which just might

dampen your ardour. No bushwalker has yet been lost to a croc - somebody's turn must be coming up soon!

Gold Beach is also the best starting point for a northern assault on Mt. Bowen.

Nina Peak

Relatively easy from south east or north east. Gives good views of Bowen-Thumb if fine, otherwise best missed as you drop down about 800' before climbing again.

Pineapple Ridge

The easy way up Bowen and now becoming the tourist route (10 parties per month try to climb Bowen from Cardwell - about 10% success rate we gathered!). Starting from Gold Beach follow up the creek to Nina Peak - Pineapple Ridge saddle, then follow the ridge up and down the bumps. Water needs to be carried on this section once out of the creek. Pineapple Peak is ascended up the ridge and then transferring through a rock cave to the north east side to a vegetative verandah sloping up to a high platform on the side of the peak. From here the top may easily be scaled. The conventional route then lies on the ridge south from the peak and will probably have a well defined track. The ridge is followed chopping from side to side of the ridge line and includes a rather narrow crevice (about 10 feet high) with a large drop on the left, which may prove difficult without packs handling. The last part of the ridge to the saddle is taken right on the ridge line verging minutely to the west (right hand side).

The saddle is a fantastic camp site (wind-sheltered and spacious). Water can be found 5 - 10 minutes away down the east side of the saddle and 10 - 15 minutes down the west side of the saddle (easier slope). This whole ridge can be done in 7 - 8 hours by a strong (not necessarily stroppy) party.

Nina Creek

This route is apparently a route which no-one has used and unfortunately we didn't either. The top part looks (from the top) as if there might be a fall or two but that it should be possible. However, if it wasn't it would be difficult to climb onto either Pineapple Ridge or North East Ridge. Water should be plentiful.

Pineapple - Wart Saddle to North-Wart Saddle (1 - 2 hours)

Straight up the ridge contouring east and south around the Wart to the saddle, probably on the track again. North-Wart Saddle is another good camp site (not quite as sheltered and not quite as spacious). Water 15 - 30 minutes north or 30 minutes south and then west (see below). This camp site has served previous U.Q.B.W.C. parties as a base camp for climbing exploits on the North-East Ridge, North Peak (ascent from the south-west via vegetation) and Bowen.

North-East Ridge

Never been ascended as far as is known though it has been descended (Scott 1960). Said to be some areas of "easy" rock climbing. This ridge includes the rock formations known as the Fingers which are unclimbed, North Peak which is relatively easily climbed from the North-Wart Saddle and the Prophet (also called The Idol, The Buddah and The Monk). It is a massive balancing rock structure consisting of three main rock blocks about 50 - 60 feet high and separated from North Peak by about 10 feet, and readily visible from the north and Missionary Bay. The Prophet is unclimbed.

North-Wart Saddle to Bowen

Passes firstly to the North-Bowen Saddle, once again used as a camp site, which is passable though not extensive, but good water only 5 - 10 minutes to west of saddle. Then the track continues on

along the main Bowen Ridge for 2 - 3 hours to the main peak. If in cloud the main peak is a half mile further than two fairly close false summits and it is cairned and contains very tatty log books. Someone could readily do a service by carrying up a water-tight container, a good new log book and a supply of pencils.

Wirrawilla Creek

The route used for the first U.Q.B.W.C. ascent of Mt. Bowen (Comino 1959, Broadbent 1964) and other early parties from the U.Q.B.W.C. - relatively easy ascent to North-Bowen Saddle and plenty of water available. Possible to reach saddle in one day.

North-West Ridge

It was partly along this ridge that the first ascent of Mt. Bowen was made by Roy Pearson (Ingham Cane Farmer) in the early 1930's (Stephenson 1953). Apparently this route is used occasionally now and a recent party of scouts is reported to have taken 11 days to ascend via this ridge! Unfortunately, not much is known about this ridge by the author.

Missionary Creek

Unused as far as is known but should be an easy way to the North-Bowen Saddle with water laid on almost to the saddle.

West Ridge

It was from Gayundah Creek and West Peak that Romeo Lahey made the second ascent of Mt. Bowen, again in the early 1930's (Stephenson 1953). Both these early ascents were solo and within a very short time of one another - fantastic considering the circumstances and that the next successful ascent was in December 1952 (using the North-West Ridge). West Peak is easily climbed from the North-Bowen Saddle or North-Wart Saddle. Water should not be a problem on this route.

Bowen to South Peak (2 hours)

The track stops just past the main peak and the scunge bash starts. However, there is an obvious ridge and this is followed. There is a passable camp site (small) on the first exposed area on the ridge - no water. South Peak is a moderate climb (packs left behind) but the view south, if lucky, is fantastic.

Bowen Ridge to Thumb-Bowen (½ hour)

Leave ridge a little bit before start of climb to South Peak and contour east to a very good lookout overlooking saddle. The route to the Saddle is then the first gully to the North of the lookout. This is a very steep scungy gully but does actually lead to the bottom - all other gullies both to the north and south end up on vertical cliffs - they have all been personally checked. The appropriate gully does not initially appear as a gully and may be missed by taking the next one north, so be very careful. A large rock separates these two gullies at their top end. From the bottom end of the gully contour south around to the saddle. Water may be obtained from a good soak (not necessarily running) on the steep slopes (i.e. before descent) just to the north 20 yards from the second gully mentioned above. This may be hidden by dense undergrowth and a search may be required.

Thumb-Bowen Saddle

A good camp site for 6 (a squeeze for 12), wood up the hill to the west and water either dripping from the cliffs of the Thumb north-east of the Saddle, or 10 - 15 minutes down Thumb Creek to the north, or 20 - 30 minutes down Zoe - Thumb Creek to the south.

South-West Ridge

First ascended by a U.Q.B.W.C. party in 1953 which included the first ascent of the Thumb by Stephenson, Comino and Broadbent (Comino 1959, Broadbent 1964). Difficult buttress at about 2000 feet requiring

careful rock climbing and pack hauling. The south-east face of the Thumb is avoided by contouring to the Thumb-Bowen Saddle and thence up a vegetative verandah to the summit - an easy climb. This route is often taken as a down route with 3 - 4 abseils of 100 - 150 feet - can usually be managed in a day. Saddle at 550 feet is usually taken as the jumping off point with water available near here to the south. This is usually done because the next minor bump east (B - C Peak) is very, very scrubby with matted casuarina and broken rock faces (we tired ourselves out on this bit and now realise why others don't bother!) The creek north from this saddle to Little Ramsay Bay is very scungy and appears deceptively close to the beach for at least one hour, but has many deep pools and picturesque waterfalls.

Thumb Creek

This route has never been used for ascent or descent. We investigated down from the saddle for 500 feet at which point there was an overhang of 80 feet to abseil over. We did not possess ascendeurs nor were we sure of the next 2000 feet so called off the enterprise. A better equipped party might consider this as a route - if feasible it would be one of the most spectacular ones on the island.

Zoe-Thumb Creek

Often used for descent but could be used for ascent - very slippery moss covered rocks for most of the way. A waterfall of 100 feet - 500 feet from the saddle may be negotiated to the east but this may not be the best way and certainly an early return to the creek is desirable. About 1500 feet lower there is a spectacular 100 feet cascade which may easily be negotiated to the east. The main Zoe Creek is joined at an island on which a suitable camp site exists. From the saddle to this point took 8 hours in vile weather, everything was a skating rink - probably easier if in drought but beware of mists and cloud.

Zoe Creek

Delightful creek full of excellent swimming pools and spotted perch. Easy rock hopping and clear going, it eventually spills out into a wide estuary and mangroves. Probably best to avoid the mangroves if possible as they are thought to contain salt water crocs.

Other Routes

There is a plaque on the summit of Bowen commemorating an ascent by the University of New England Bushies of the North Face of Bowen. I am uncertain of this route but it probably started either from Warrawilla Creek or Thumb Creek and involved complicated rock climbing. The Bowen-Diamantina Traverse has been done once by a U.Q.B.W.C. party. It is graphically described in the 1964 Heybob by Arthur Rosser.

GEAR

Stout equipment and boots are a necessity - loss could be quite disabling. A machette and scrub hook were taken by our party of two - this was undoubtedly overdoing it, but was handy for clearing campsites etc. The scrub can be penetrated with persistance and probably is best attacked this way, but it is definitely thick with banksia, baurea, leptospernum, matted young casuarina and vines, particularly lawyer vine. Gloves are a must if you value your hands - we didn't take any and it took about 6 weeks for our hands to return to normal. A fairly comprehensive first aid kit should be carried - a broken femur at the Thumb-Bowen Saddle would probably take about 10 days to get out (5 days for the team to get out and back to the patient). Packs tend to be heavy depending upon how many luxury items (e.g. cameras) are carried - our two man team carried a 30kg. pack and a 20kg. pack.

NASTIES

Salt Water Crocs (Crocodilus porosus) grow to 34 feet but have never been seen this big on Hinchinbrook. Regularly seen by the Australian Institute of Marine Science boys who work on the Island at 16 - 20 feet. They do like the odd human meal and they terrified me!

Tiapans and others

Plentiful, but usually hear you coming and clear out. However, the really big ones 6 - 8 feet do seem to be a little possessive of their areas, so don't stand on your dignity.

Pythons

Apparently grow to 20 - 30 feet (I really don't know whether they were pulling my leg!!) but dwell in the tree tops so seldom seen - we didn't see even one.

Sharks, Stone Fish, Rays and Razor Shells

Things in the sea so beware. The long beaches seem free of stone fish and razor shells which are more likely in the rocky sheltered areas.

Green Tree Ants

Look ferocious but scarcely hurt at all.

Sand Flies and Mosquitoes

Attrocious at low levels particularly in the mangroves. Kokoda or DIMP totally useless. Nets are a very useful addition at sea level.

MAPS

Cardwell	1:63,360	1944 Army
Rockingham	1:63,360	1944 Army
Cardwell	1:100,000	1973 Topographic Survey

AIR PHOTOGRAPHS

Cardwell 11 & 111 Coast Tie, 10, Q2077

Cardwell 11 & 111 Run 11, 85, Q2082

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Very personal thanks to Alan Clague who suffered great hardships on his third bushwalk trying to keep up with a bush runner, and without whom this epistle would not have been written because Hinchinbrook would never have been visited.

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ON THE QUEENSLAND RAILWAY LINES

On The Queensland railway lines
There are stations where one dines;
Private individuals
Also run refreshment stalls.

Chorus

Bogan-Tungan, Rollingstone,
Mungar, Murgon, Marathon(e)
Guthalungra, Pinkenba,
Wanko, Yaamba — ha, ha, ha!

Pies and coffee, baths and showers
Are supplied at Charters Towers;
At Mackay the rule prevails
Of restricting showers to males.

Males and females, high and dry,
Hang around at Kurikai,
Boora-Mugga, Djarawong
Giligulgul, Wonglepong.

Iron Rations come in handy
On the way to Dirranbandi;
Passengers have died of hunger
During halts at Garradunga.

Let us toast, before we part,
Those who travel, stout of heart,
Drunk or sober, rain or shine,
On a Queensland railway line.

Queensland Centenary
Songbook

(Dedicated to all those people who go to Hinchinbrook, Cape Upstart and other areas requiring travel on the Queensland Railways.)

A TRIP WITH THE MONASH BUSHIES

BY JONATHON FEARNLEY

While in Victoria around Easter, I was asked by some friends if I'd like to join them on a day-trip with the Monash Bushwalkers Club. I did join them, and here's how it turned into a crash-hot day.

Cold hands and a loud voice stirred me at about 8.00 am, so I automatically withdrew another two feet into my bag, cursed, cursed again, and tried to return to blissful slumber. Of course the hands groped even deeper, and the voice grew much louder, so I decided that it was time to get up. Once out of bag, a few breaths of the fresh Melbourne morning air i.e. cold, thick, smoggy fog, decided for me that you should never get up in Melbourne. My two companions, my host and a friend, both already showered, dressed and breakfasted, threw my bag and some clothes into the back seat of the car, waited a few seconds for me to instinctively follow, and then drove us from the Dandenongs to Monash.

On arrival at Monash, we spotted a small assorted group of scruffy bedraggled individuals huddling to leeward of a furniture van (decided that they could only be bushwalkers), each paid our $2.00 to the trip leader, climbed aboard. The "bus" or more realistically, "transport" was an old furniture van, converted for passenger use by the addition of windows in the side walls and seats inside the back, and so accommodated about 40 rather cramped individuals. The "bus" was hired by the club and it seemed a good solution to the lack of transport syndrome, although it did prove rather slow. The Monash B.C., I found, differed from U.Q.B.W.C. in that it actively catered for a wider variety of interests, possibly a reflection of its larger membership (300- 400 I think), with sub-groups active in interests such as Bushwalking, Caving, Canoeing and Rock Climbing. Freshers' trips were put on for each of these activities in first semester, and this trip was to be a beginners day for rock climbing. We were heading for a recreation park, called "Hanging Rock", about 50 miles N.W. of Melbourne, a very popular spot containing a country race track/show grounds, extensive

picnic grounds, and of course, Hanging Rock. The trip out of Melbourne was really Al with general bushie talk, the occasional scroggin festa, and freshers being taught to tie the bowline and other assorted knots, with ropes passed down from the compartment above the cabin.

On our arrival at Hanging Rock, we all piled out of the "bus", and walked the quarter mile up to the top of the rock, and on a general concensus of opinion, lunch was called. Unfortunately, no fizzy was produced, and so the Queenslander's amazing powers of verbal recall were not heard. After lunch, a few "club hards" did a demonstration climb of about 30 feet showing the correct calls etc. for belaying, and including a few examples of the use of protection. On top of the Rock were a number of projecting boulders, each about 20 - 30 feet high, I think of basaltic origin, and just the perfect place for a beginner's climb. About 8 short climbs were set up, using a top belay, and freshers were invited to attempt them, using club ropes and helmets. These climbs were a fantastic experience with the rock being solid but affording plenty of good jugs etc., the climbs introducing you to straight climbing, chimneying, traversing, and even an overhang (which I didn't realise was an overhang until I reached it). I managed to climb about 6 of the 8 routes, while my slack friends did about 2 each. At about 3.00 pm these routes were left, and we walked down to the base of the main cliff face (150') where 3 more climbs were set up to the top. As some chimneys were also being set up around to one side, I decided that I'd give the main one a miss for a while and do a chimney instead, but then decided I'd just have to do it, if only to impress my two friends, who refused to budge from the bottom. Wow, a nice climb, not too hard, (only grade 9, I think), but I think that I've contracted hypertrophy of the adrenal gland because of it. Not bad, especially when the route lead up a thin pillar, away from the wall, which wobbled in the centre (was I sure worried!!).

But rain and bad light finally drove us back to the bus, which took us to a picnic ground for a bar-b-que tea (bring-your-own-steak). Unfortunately, Victorians seem to head for the country on the weekends, and so, as tea ensued, we watched the traffic grow to Gold Coast highway proportions. A few flaggons of wine were produced to wash down the steak, and later to stimulate some of the singers (who produced a few songbooks like the QIT songbook) during the crawl home. But I must have flaked about half way home, as most memories seem rather vague, except, that is, finding a very cold bag in the back seat of the car.

OUTDOOR CENTRE

Stores at: 132 Wickham St., Valley & 28 Carrara St., Mt. Gravatt. Brisbane.

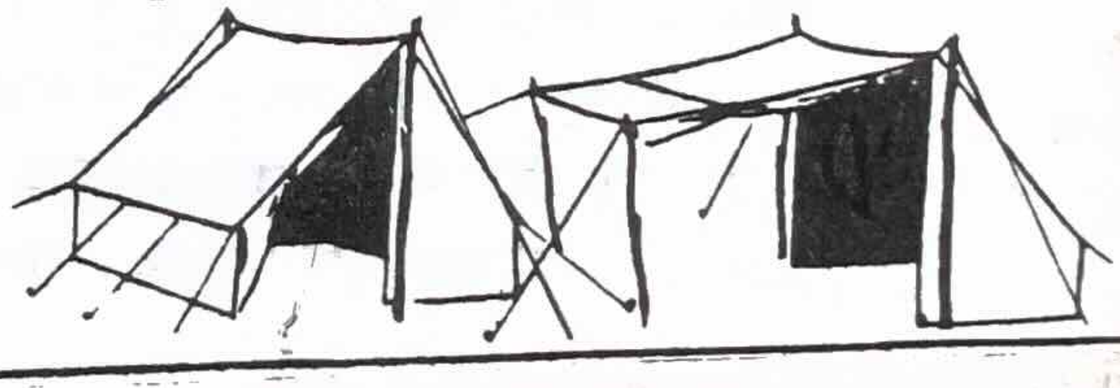


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SAND MINING AND CONSERVATION ON FRASER ISLAND

BY PETER CRITTALL (APRIL, 1975)

I want to make it clear that I am not totally opposed to sand mining and accept the definition of conservation as a wise use of resources and not a total "hands off" policy and complete preservation.

What, then, are the sand mining companies after? The principal minerals are rutile, zircon, ilminite, and monazite. Australia is the dominant Western World supplier of sand minerals. Australian beach sands provide 90% of the world's rutile, 60% of the zircon, 25% of the monazite and 10% of the ilminite. This was worth $58 million in 1970. Estimated reserves are 4 million tons of rutile and twenty-five years of profitable production.

To be fair, there are benefits from sand mining operations - including providing job opportunities, bringing considerable wealth to an area by the sale of minerals, and thus supporting other industries and making direct contributions towards the improvement of public reserves. However, I am dissatisfied with the cost to the environment of these profitable operations. Unfortunately, these companies are largely foreign owned and the Government only receives $0.90 per ton, with most of the profit going to the parent company outside Australia.

Fraser Island is currently under threat of destruction. About 12,000 hectares (8%) are subject to mining leases and there are applications for additional leases over a further 2,000 hectares. The mining leases cover almost the whole of the east coast, the area most vulnerable to wind and sea, stretching back to more than four kilometres from the shore. About 12,000 hectares are held by the Dillingham (U.S.) - Murphyores (Aust. Public Co.) consortium. This

consortium has completed a wet mill with an expected output of 65,000 tonnes of rutile and zircon per year. They are presently stockpiling pending Government inquiries into granting of export leases* and environmental impact studies. About 800 hectares are held by Queensland Titanium Mines (U.S.). This lease is for 32 kilometres and already the dredge has covered 9 kilometres.

Each company must post bonds with the Government before mining begins. The money is returned if the land is restored. However, the amounts are really just tokens and quite ludicrous when one considers the enormous profit margins. The bonds are $10,000 for Q.T.M. and $30,000 for each plant operated by D-M. If a conservative estimate of $1,000 per acre (0.4 hectare) is made for restoration, it will need $4.3 million for post-mining restoration of only 1% of the island - if indeed it is possible to restore mined high dunes!

What about the quality of restoration work being done at present by Q.T.M.? During mining, the dunes parallel to the foredune have been cleared and flattened to the monotonous regularity of a football field. The frontal dune is exposed and eroding. After two years of restoration, there is little sign of any re-establishment of the native flora but plenty of signs of raw sand, despite the removal and replacement of humus-bearing topsoil and the use of fertilizers. Reinstating dunes is no easy task. The dune vegetation is a delicately balanced ecology. Once the vegetation is stripped, the situation is hostile to plant growth. The heat, lack of surface moisture and the moving, cutting sand is an inhospitable environment to any plant. Surely it is easier to preserve the dunes as they are now.

Unlike the ecological disasters perpetrated by the sand miners on the Stradbroke Islands, where high dunes have been irreparably damaged, Fraser Island is still largely unspoiled and therefore prompt action is needed NOW. Hopefully, the National Park can be extended to include (1) the ocean beach - all of which is now under mining lease, (2) the incredible coloured sands which stretch for more than 40 kilometres,

(3) some of the rare perched freshwater dune lakes. With the proper legislation, the island would be available to the whole community in a more valuable form than the money value that is being realised at present from commercial and industrial exploitation.

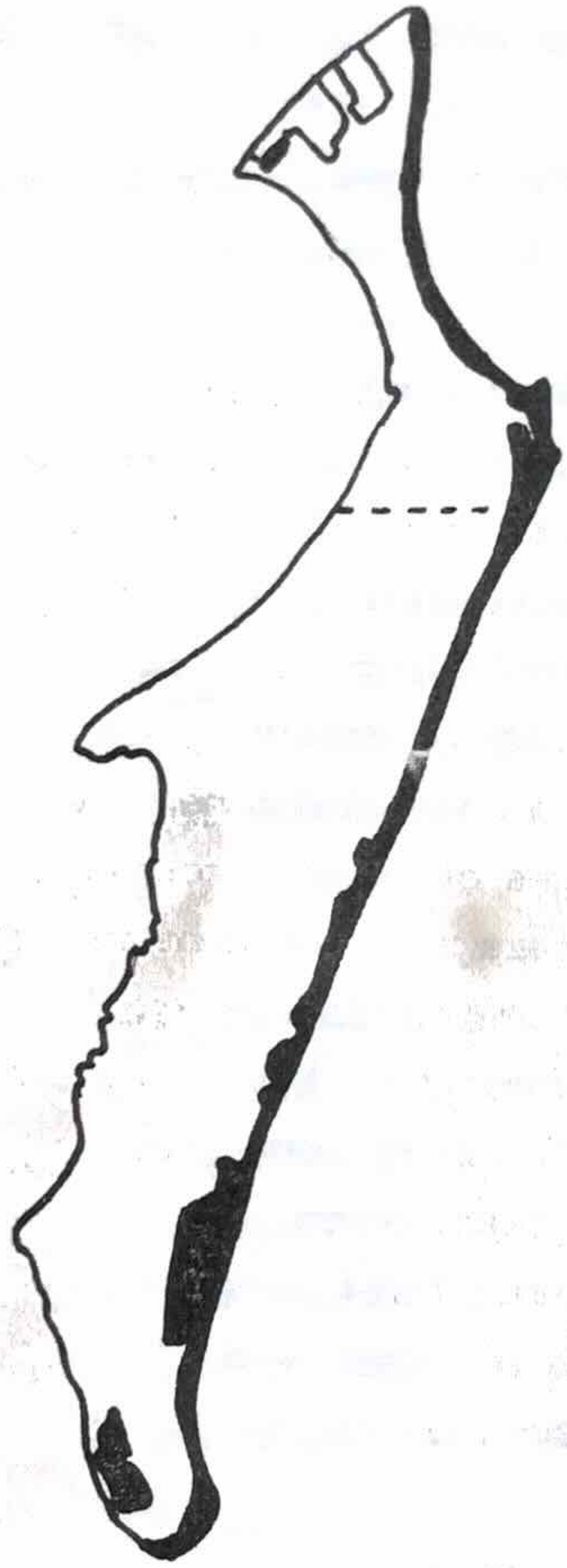
* (These export licenses have been granted since this article was written.) Ed.

"I saw the beauty go,
The beauty that could not be tamed;
But before it went it looked at me
With the eyes of the maimed."

FROM "I Saw The Beauty Go"

BY Mary Gilmore

FRASER ISLAND



----- SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF NATIONAL PARK

■ LEASES

□ LEASE APPLICATIONS

"ROBINSON GORGE"

BY PETER YOUNG

Robinson Gorge is a National Park situated some 100 kilometres North-West of Taroom in Central Queensland. This place has been visited by U.Q.B.W.C. members on a number of occasions although it is now a fair time ago that the last Club trip took place. Considering this, together with the fact that R.G. is one of our lesser known National Parks, I think it appropriate to acquaint readers with a few features of this rather unique place.

The gorge is about 12 miles long in a straight line, however, on the ground the distance is much greater owing to the numerous twists and turns of the creek. The area of the National Park is about 22,000 acres.* The map most frequently used is in fact an aerial photograph, which for most practical purposes is quite adequate. To the best of my knowledge the map may be obtained from the Department of Forestry. The area consists of a deep sandstone main gorge cut by Robinson Creek and several side gorges of equal interest to the bushwalker. An aspect which immediately deters most would-be visitors is the lack of a good, reliable supply of fresh running water. With this in mind, adequate supplies should be provisioned for any excursion you might intend making to Robinson Gorge. Water can sometimes be obtained from soaks, particularly at the northern end of the gorge. Additionally, several pools exist in the southern region, but levels are not always reliable. In practical terms on a bush-walk, all this means is that if you are lucky, you won't have to dry camp, but you should go prepared for this eventuality.

This aside, the gorge offers a variety of attractions to the bush-walker which make it a place that you really should get to see. Campsites are plentiful and can be found virtually anywhere along the sandy creek bed or in some cases on grass covered banks. Firewood is in

---

* Department of Forestry Map 1965

good supply having been usually deposited by floods in the form of drift-wood stacked haphazardly against any available obstruction. Walking itself is very easy on the whole, and is mostly in sand which usually finds the average bush-walker shedding his/her footwear for the greater comfort of bare feet. However, exploration of the many side gorges inevitably means a reversion to adequate footwear as sharp, rocky outcrops, well worth investigating, are often encountered.

It pays to be quiet when exploring these areas as you may surprise a wallaby or even a fox as we did on one occasion. Other animals are also present. A great variety of lizards, for instance, can be seen scurrying about on the ground leaving innumerable footprints in an ever changing criss-crossing pattern.

A particularly striking item in the gorge is the angle at which trees near the creek bed grow with respect to the horizontal. Most point sharply downstream, whilst some lie nearly flat. All this looks out of place in the seemingly dry environment, but gives an idea of how the creek must rush in flood time.

Large parties of bush-walkers will find plenty of room to spread out should they so desire but, equally, there are many areas ideally suited to large scale rorting and festering. For instance, a large side gorge (to be found about three miles upstream from the southern entrance to the gorge), kept some fifteen of us amused for hours on a very memorable Easter trip in 1972. There were cliffs and outcrops to climb, caves to poke around in, droppings to drop on unsuspecting comrades below and, of course, the other side, useful for echo making when you felt the need.

When planning a trip to Robinson Gorge, it is advisable to contact Glenhaughton Homestead as this cattle station surrounds the

Gorge and you will be travelling on their roads for some distance, en route to the Gorge. They like to know if you are coming and when. Also, they will give advice on road conditions.

If you wish to explore from the southern end of the Gorge, then you must travel the main track through the Homestead, and turn left on to a rough bush track about five miles past the Homestead. This track can prove quite testing, particularly for ordinary people in ordinary cars, as it has patches of sand, frequent small detours through the scrub, and loose rocks and tree roots at sump smashing height. The track continues for about nine miles until an area known as the "Jump-Up" is reached. In the unlikely event that you have got this far in your conventional car, (having probably abandoned it at a particularly interesting sandy creek crossing some five miles back), then it would be a good idea to leave your vehicle here and walk the rest of the way.

From the "Jump-Up" (so called because the road is about 1 in 3 up a steep rocky slope for about 50 metres - actually it is downhill on the way in and jumps up on the way out of the Gorge), it is about a mile or so to the Shepherd's hut, which is an aged, decrepit structure unmistakable in the long grass beside the track to the right.

From the hut, considerable time is saved by the correct use of a compass. Walk directly WEST from the hut for a mile or so and your way will be barred by the Gorge. You will have to search around until you find a small cairn of rocks marking the way down. If your compass work has been good, then the cairn will be to your left within a couple of hundred yards.

A party of U.Q.B.W.C. managed to get three Mokes into the Shepherd's hut in 1972 and also out again without major mishap. It is a great help to have such a vehicle or a four-wheel drive or even a VW here, as packs

can be ferried for those less fortunate members who must make the long trudge from where they have left their cars. On this note, it should be made clear that the track into the Northern end of the Gorge is much smoother and better defined. Although care is needed at times, this route should not present any great hardship to average vehicles.

Should you elect to take this latter course it is necessary to go straight on where you would otherwise turn off to the Shepherd's Hut. This way to the Gorge is considerably longer and the risk of becoming lost is greater accordingly. If possible, you should try to obtain directions from someone at Glenhaughton. The map is useful, however, and by trial and error you should eventually find the old airfield. It is readily discernible by its flatness and the fact that the trees are mostly of uniform height. From the airfield, there is no particular way down to the gorge. However, some places are easier than others; the creeks in general providing the better entry points.

In summary, a trip to R.G. will be a long and involved one, but careful planning, an appropriate, reliable vehicle and most importantly, a good crowd of enthusiastic walkers, will mean an enjoyable and unforgettable experience.

A LETTER FROM THREE OF THE WORLD'S TOUGHEST WALKERS TO THEIR SLACK FRIENDS HOLIDAYING UP NORTH

(WRITTEN ON PINK PAPER IN THE HERSTON REFECTORY BEFORE STARTING A MICROBIOLOGY ASSIGNMENT)

Dear Slackers,

Please excuse the sooty marks, but it is difficult to keep one's hands clean while boiling a billy on the floor of the Herston Refec. We had to do this because we just can't take the sudden return to civilization after the toughest expedition in human history, the description of which follows:

DAY 1: We rose at 4.00 am and, after knocking the rooster and Tim's Grandmother out of bed, became "geographically embarrassed" before dawn on the way to Beaudesert. At 7.30 am, we beat down the door of the Lost World Youth Hostel and woke the recumbant caretaker (aged 50, bearded etc. etc.) and his nubile young wife and small daughter. The poor fellow obviously didn't understand English, so we grunted at each other for some while, fed the goats on our apple cores (in the absence of Sturgess) and set off!

The obvious route was far too easy, so we naturally avoided it and spent the morning beating the lantana into submission. We had morning tea, fizzy of course, at the start of the razor back. Since lantana wasn't tough enough to provide even the semblence of a challenge, we found a few large rocks to add to our packs and started up the razor back. In case the northern papers didn't feature the article about R.P. Morwood's demise, we regret to inform you that he has fallen victim to a vicious murder plot, reputedly perpetrated by three of his erstwhile friends to whom he had lied about the danger of the Lost World climb.

We are thinking of writing a Morwood-English Dictionary, e.g.

5 foot wide razor back = 18 inch wide razor back

grassy slope = BLOODY GREAT 700 FOOT CLIFF!

one, a, once = many, some, often (when referring to cliffs, dangerous

spots and long, hard climbs). Let it not be thought that we wanted to pike when confronted with the reality - NEVER!

At 1.45 pm we were 2,500 feet above the Albert River Valley and somewhat dehydrated after only sucking gum leaves for moisture for some hours. We had lunch beside a creek in the rainforest on top of Lost World Plateau. Being somewhat ahead of schedule, and not wishing to overwhelm you by being too tough, we decided to make camp where there was a good view over to O'Reilly's. In order to take advantage of this spot, we had to rip two bunyips apart and capture several battalions of huge 3 inch pink ants with macroscopic probosci! It was here that bush surgery was performed and stitches put in lantana wounds (no anaesthetic, of course).

DAY 2: We rose with the sun and ceremonially donated the site (and the ants) back to the twowounded bunyips and posterity. By this time we were, of course, well in stride and we stropped up to the highest point on Lost World in the twinkling of an eye. We found the trail blazed by other more feeble walkers, but rejected it in favour of making a new four-lane highway through the centre of the rainforest. (Pictures will eventually be available of the opening ceremony conducted by three world-famous walkers on 1st July, 1975.)

When geography refused to allow us to continue our favourite occupation (i.e. climbing), we thundered downhill towards the second razor back, reportedly "wide enough to camp on". With the aid of your Morwood-English Dictionary, you will be able to translate this accurately to become "two feet wide with 600 foot cliffs on either side". Only 3 inch ants could camp! Lunch was had at the lowest spot on this razor back, and a general conference decided that the morning hadn't been quite tough enough. To remedy this sad state of affairs, we decided to slide down the side of the razor back on our bottoms to reach the Albert River. Some time was then spent choosing the steepest slope before we set off.

One thousand feet lower, we threw away our pants (now useless) and relied on the corns on our bottoms. This new fun we have christened "bottom walking" and, thereafter, we chose all the routes which allowed us to practise this new skill of "bum stropping" - oops! sorry, "bottom walking". After reaching the Albert River, we were so heavy-laden with mud in the pants, ticks etc. that it was a choice between throwing away our ballast of rocks or having a bath in the river (temperature -32.3°C). Having carried the aforementioned rocks so far, we had formed a sentimental attachment to them - so we had a bath! By this stage, the rain was so heavy that we had to throw the tent away and sleep in the open, after eating raw Vesta for dinner - nobody is tough enough to take the smell of a hexamine stove!

DAY 3: Realizing that the creeks were rising fast and the YHA people would probably need to be rescued, we decided to head downstream on the start of the R.P. Morwood one-day rock hop back. Since R.P.M. had said this was at least one day, we decided not to leave until at least 10.00 am. This was particularly clever as by about 10.00 am the creek had risen so high that our packs were floating at shoulder level and therefore didn't need to be lifted on.

One hour after starting, we met a poor, half-crazed fellow who had been walking up the creek from the youth hostel for three days. Such was his state of mental deterioration that he wanted to go UP the cliff where we had invented "bottom walking". We took pity on the poor chap and tied him to Pete's pack to forcibly return him to civilization. His new address is Lowson House. We're going to visit him this afternoon, since we feel responsible for his nightmares about three twelve-foot monsters who walked out of the jungle and prevented him from taking his own life quietly. We also picked up a fine leather belt from a skeleton found wrapped around some debris in the creek bottom. This came in very handy to keep up our shorts after having lost about two stone.

Some time later, we met three more lost souls also raving about getting to Rat-a-Tat Hut in 4½ hours (R.P.M. 2 day trip). These were obviously beyond psychiatric help, so we left them to perish in the attempt. Only 3½ hours after breaking camp, we reached the youth hostel. There was even a trail for the last 4 to 5 miles, but of course we rejected it in favour of a lovely patch of lantana a few yards uphill. In fact, we felt this section was so lacking in toughness that we made a few huge holes and planted the R.P. Morwood Memorial Lantana Patch for the benefit of future travellers.

As expected, the Youth Hostel was feet under water so we spent ten minutes rescuing the inhabitants. Certain members of the party were particularly enthusiastic to rescue the nubile young wife while others preferred a particularly sexy goat, bearing a great resemblance to a good friend of ours with a taste for apple cores. Having reached herohood in three short days, we started for Beaudesert and the proverbial milkshake. The return to Brisbane was without surprises - needless to say, not a soul was seen because our reputation for toughness preceded us. Only one man dared cross paths with us and his car may be found, ripped open like a sardine can, just south of G.M.H.

Lantana Lynn
Precipice Pete and
!+$# Tim

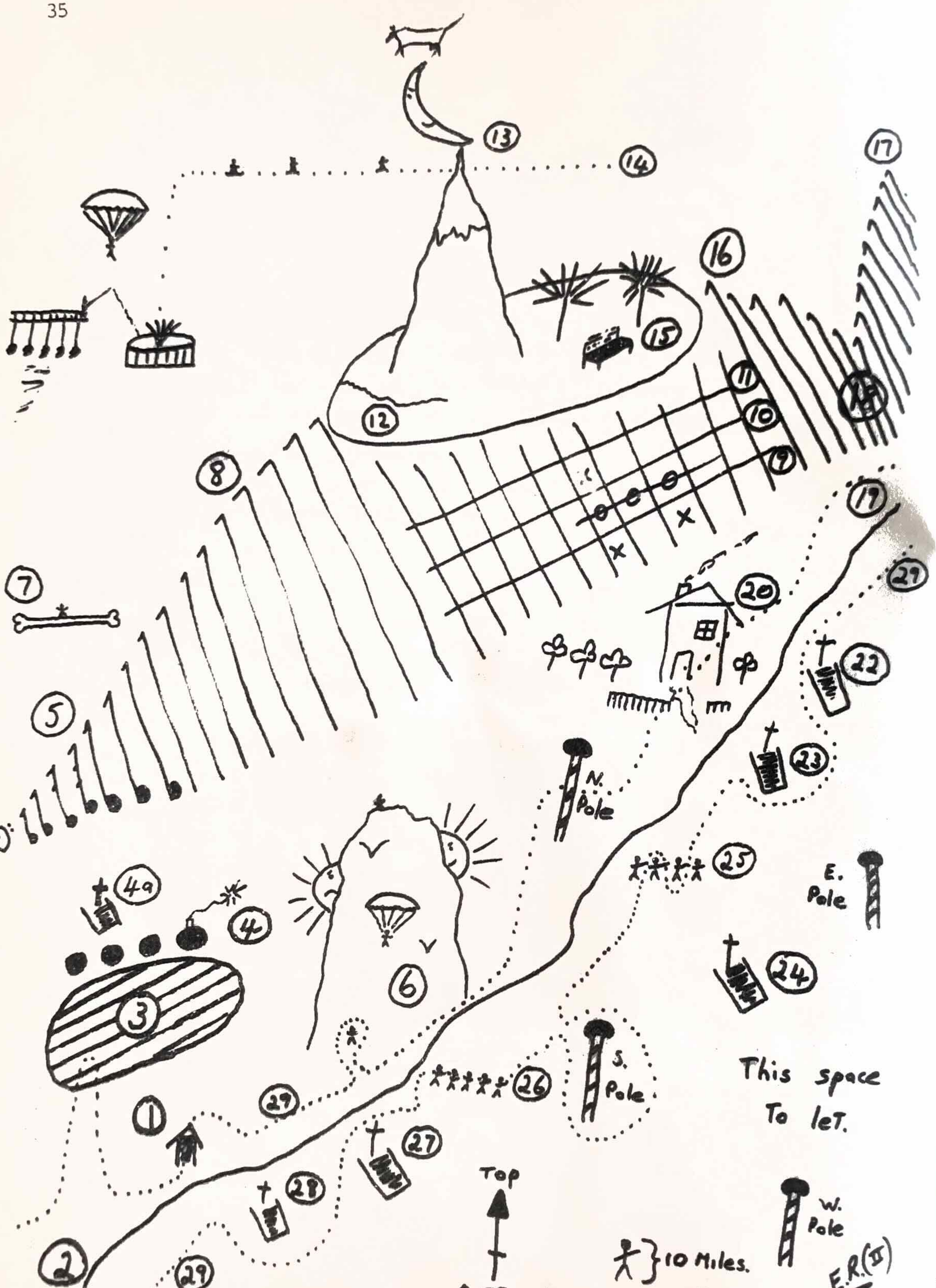
P.S. Please keep this missive as the editor of Heybob '75 deems it a literary masterpiece and it must be published.

P.P.S. No excuses are offered for the shocking pink paper -
WE DON'T HAVE TO PROVE A THING!

Code for Map

1. Youth Hostel
2. River
3. World's roughest, toughest, thickest and scratchiest lantana forest
4. Small boulders to balance weights of packs
4.a Point at which Bernard O'Reilly piked
5. World's second sharpest and second most dangerous razor back. Only climbed by mad men
6. Small cliff on which we amused ourselves during a break. (We found that frequent breaks involving vigorous exercise were essential as mere mountain climbing was insufficient to keep us warm.)
7. Point at which H_2O supplies ran out. Many bones of dreaded Lost World Rocky Mountain Camels seen. Survived by slashing each other's arms and drinking blood.
8. World's roughest territory
9. Cloud level
10. Aircraft level
11. Satellite level and height at which abominable snowmen asphyxiate
12. Creek and first camp - Fine view far down onto O'Reilly's roof
13. Highest point on Lost World
14. Level at which we almost made wrong turn onto lunar surface
15. World's thickest Rain Jungle. (Even we needed both hands to fight our way through.) Bunyips bad. -100°F day and night for weeks on end - part of our heritage
16. Yes - World's sharpest and most dangerous razor back (soles of boots severly sliced). Never climbed - even by mad men or R. Morwood

17. Pearly Gates and St. Pete's Place - Decided men with wings too closely resembled fairies for our liking so we decided to trot 3000' down side of precipitous razor back through world's second thickest rain jungle and thickest mud. (N.B. At this stage only 4" of rain had fallen.)
18. Site of invention of "Bottom Walking" - You are invited to unvieling of shrine 1-7-75 (Dinner Jackets/Evening Dress)
19. Location of 8th Wonder of World - a river of liquid ice
20. Camp 2. Rainfall to date 13". Tim had to stay awake all night (3.00 pm to 11.00 am) to keep the jungle at bay. Bunyips very bad
21. Scene of 3-fold breaking of the 4 minute rock hopping mile. Unfortunately Guiness Book of Records has disallowed it as they claim (a) we had assistance from the flood and (b) we are too tough - they don't wish to rewrite the entire book
22. Site of taming of Tom - homicidal Goodna escapee. (Strong! It took Lynn 28 seconds to throw him onto the rocks - the strain was beginning to tell.)
23. Site of partially decomposed corpse wearing fine leather belt.
24. Last known position of Scott Expedition to South Pole
25. 3 more loonies
26. 4 more
27. Lost Count - back to civilization
28. Government Grant used to establish R.P. Morwood Memorial Lantana Patch
29. Flood level and approximate site of Noah's demise - Hence abundance of wildlife


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CHILLAGOE CAVES NATIONAL PARK

BY PETER CRITTAL
AMANDA GREAVES
ALLAN STURGESS

This area, recently proclaimed a national park, is well worth a visit for anyone with a bushwalking mentality. The park is approximately 90 miles North-West of Cairns. A bitumen road of sorts leads to Dimbulah then follows 30 miles of rough dirt roads. We do not recommend taking any valued vehicles over this road, particularly at night. A rail service operates to Chillagoe, one weekly, arriving Wednesday night and departing Thursday morning. For those with limited vacation times, this stay of one week is probably too long. Three or four days is ample, therefore a car is advisable. When you arrive in town, avoid the dry, dusty caravan park like the plague. Drive on through the town and turn right past the general store. Follow this dirt road down to the creek and take your selection. The prestige spot is by the weir where a deep, clear pool is formed. This is probably the most efficient (and pleasant) method of cleaning oneself of the famed Chillagoe dust. In the late afternoon, the pool displays perfect reflections of the white gums and paper barks which ring the area. However, one must resist the temptation never to move from this campsite because the park has many other areas of interest.

The caves are inspected with the aid of a National Park Ranger who is contacted at his home in Chillagoe, opposite the Post Office. Two sets of caves, the Royal Arch system and the Madonna Caves are open to all. Caving enthusiasts can obtain special permits to inspect many other systems and do exploring of their own. Wear shorts and bare feet for the tour; you will get enough exercise to keep you warm and the cave floor is quite smooth. Usually, the group is quite small, e.g. there were only 4 on our tour, so the visit is almost an individual affair. The Royal Arch caves are not lit, so we were all

given a carbide lamp. Care is advised with these fiendish devices for they have been designed to fry the hair off most of your arm then char the flesh before you can get your fingers out of the handle. The tour is quite different from the more popular Southern caves, possibly because of the small numbers of visitors. We were free to wander off by ourselves and examine the extent of the caves. With the aid of the carbide lamp to guide the way, the visitor discovers the real charm and atmosphere of limestone caves - as they were before flourescent lights and popping flash bulbs robbed them of mystery. Eerie shadows are created with every movement of the lamp. The guide will point out interesting pathways and tunnels down which one can crawl. Some of these are so small that one must push the light ahead of oneself as you crawl along on your stomach.

Though this freedom in the caves has it benefits, we could not help feeling that the guide could have enforced more rigid safeguards for preserving the natural beauty of the caves. Over the years, much damage has been done to the formations, mostly by the locals who held parties in the larger daylight caves. Much of the graffiti has been recently scrubbed from the walls by the Forestry Department. The earliest specimens dated from 1893. We felt the guide could have reminded visitors of elementory do's and don'ts in the caves. Knocking stalactites and stalacmites to see if they gave out pure sounds cannot be tolerated if we wish to see these beautiful and sometimes fragile structures kept forever in their best condition. The tour continues for 2½ hours by which time the guide begins to show signs of alcohol withdrawal. He then leads a cracking pace back to the entrance of the cave system. From here we advise visitors to head back to the creek for a few delightful hours of swimming and lazing in the sun.

When the cool of the afternoon comes, jump into the car and head out along the road to Normanton. Ten miles along the road take a track on your right where a forestry sign says Mungana Caves and Aboriginal Paintings. About 2 miles along this track, you reach The Archways. These resemble Gothic Cathedrals with a number of narrow

canyons linked by natural arches. Except at noon, when the overhead sun illuminates the canyons, they are in near darkness. Hours could be spent moving from one canyon to another through the natural interconnecting arches. Climbing the bluffs which from the sides of the canyons is also a fine way to enjoy oneself. Few sunsets can compare with those we saw when the bizarre weathered limestone formations were silhouetted against the dust haze which added the colour to the setting sun. Anyone who makes the effort to visit the Chillagoe National Park will consider it well worth the trip. The locals are friendly and easy to find - the Post Office Hotel is the only pub in town. This pub is a real country gem with worn bar stools, old racehorse pictures and blackened trophies. By itself, this pub is almost worth the dusty roads.



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NEW ENGLAND TABLELAND

BY BOB BRODRIBB

New England Tableland is an area especially suited to long weekend or extended trips. This article is not designed as a route guide, but merely to suggest and point out the main highlights of the area. Navigation, by and large, is very straightforward and a good map is usually all you require to plan a good trip. The "New England Guide" by the University of New England Mountaineering Society has plenty of detailed route guides if you want them.

There is tremendous variation in walking areas in New England. There are granite areas similar to Girraween National Park. There are tremendous rugged gorges and beautiful quiet rivers. On the eastern edge of the plateau where it drops sharply away to the lowlands , there are beautiful views and spectacular waterfalls.

Walking is very easy. There is very little scunge on the tops and good rock-hopping in the gorges. On the tops, there are plenty of good campsites, but in the gorges they are largely few and far between. A lilo is almost a prerequisite for any gorge trip for comfort and for saving wet feet.

Northern Area

To the north of Tenterfield, where the tableland merges with our Granite Belt, are some really beautiful rivers.

(a) Boonoo Boonoo River - Bookookoorara Creek

The Boonoo Boonoo rises in the hills of the N.S.W.-Queensland border and then drops sharply at Boonoo Boonoo Falls to start its initially hurried but soon languid way to meet the Maryland River and form the Clarence. From Boonoo Boonoo Falls, trips of varying length can be made by walking down the Boonoo Boonoo, or by staying on the plateau and dropping down any of the tributaries, such as Hells Hollow Creek, and then following the Boonoo Boonoo back upstream to the falls. Bookookoorara Creek is a beautiful tributary of the

Boonoo Boonoo, coming in some 14 km. downstream from the falls. It is an extremely rugged creek in its own steep-sided gorge. At the top of the gorge are Undercliff Falls. Although from Undercliff Falls down to the Boonoo Boonoo is only 8 km, up to 2 days may be required to do the trip. The creek is punctuated by spectacular waterfalls and vertical-sided pools taking up the whole floor of the gorge. Return to Undercliff Falls is easy via the ridge on the eastern side of the gorge.

Access Map Drake 1 : 100,000

Boonoo Boonoo Falls (185141): From Stanthorpe or Wallangara to the thriving metropolis of Boonoo Boonoo (one house) (123043) on the Mt. Lindsay Highway, following the track then for 14 km. to the falls. There are some rough creek crossings on the track, but not too bad.

Undercliffe Falls (191310): Again from Stanthorpe or Wallangara to Liston on the Mt. Lindsay Highway (205306) then follow the signs to Undercliff Rivertree. The falls are just off the road through a paddock about 10 km from Liston

(b) Cataract River

To the north of the Tenterfield-Casino Highway, this granite creek is extremely beautiful. A good three day trip here is to leave the cars on Boorook Creek (178090) and follow Boorook Creek with its own pretty waterfall, down to Cataract River where two days can be taken to potter down to the copper mines at (335010). The creek is marked by numberous cataracts and small falls, with a beautiful canyon requiring wet feet or a lilo. From the mines, a pleasant half-day or so can be taken to return to the cars via the ridges on the western side of the river.

Access Map Drake 1 : 100,000

From Tenterfield, follow the Bruxner Highway to "Sandy Hill". Turn left here (260004) and at about 8 km turn right. Leave the cars on the first creek which is Boorook Creek.

(c) Timbarra - Rocky River

To the south of the Bruxner Highway, between Tenterfield and Casino, is an extremely beautiful and interesting area. This area is a popular Easter spot for U.Q.B.W.C.ers. Timbarra Plateau and Surface Hill were the sites of numerous goldmines last century and there is plenty left to explore. One of the highlights of the area is Mt. Bloxsome (396955) with beautiful views all the way to Mt. Barney and Mt. Lindsay in the north. The ridge to the south of Bloxsome is cropped with large outcrops of granite boulders with crawlways and chimneys. Nilson Creek is a really beautiful bouldery creek. Rocky River in the area around Bloxsome is a beautiful, placid river with pretty, shady banks and fine sand bars. All the ridges are very open and navigation is quite simple. Around Surface Hill and the gold mines there are gullies of moist ferns where lyrebirds can be found.

Access: Map Tenterfield (1 : 63360)

From Tenterfield, the turnoff to Surface Hill is marked about 15 km out of town. Cars can be left at Surface Hill or, if you are going to Bloxsome, (344938).

(d) Bluff River

About 18 km south of Tenterfield, the New England Highway crosses this pretty little stream. Downstream from the bridge the creek forms its own steep-sided valley. A pleasant day can be spent wandering down the creek. It features long granite slabs and slides and is very pretty.

East of Glen Innes

To the east of Glen Innes are some very interesting areas. Many of the rivers are really beautiful and plenty of time can be spent at such places as the Sarah River and down along the old Gwydin Highway on the Boyd River.

(a) Gibralta Range National Park

This national park, about halfway between Glen Innes and Grafton on the new Gwydin Highway, is an extremely interesting area. Most of the park is similar to the Granite Belt, with granite tor outcrops and large monoliths such as the Old Man's Hat. In the east, the escarpment of the tableland drops sharply away, so that the creeks have spectacular waterfalls as they cut through and drop down onto the lowlands. Dandahra Falls is one of these very high and spectacular falls. Apart from some areas of rainforest, the country is very open and navigation is not problem at all. The area abounds in wildflowers and in the summer months, Christmas Bells array all the small bog swamps on top of the palteau. The area also abounds in wildlife, particularly birds, and the relatively rare atrichornis can be found. The creeks are populated with platypus for the early risers. The park lends itself to day trips from a superb central campsite at Mulligan's Hut.

Access

Park Headquarters are on the Gwydin Highway about 45 miles from Glen Innes. Roly Paine, the ranger, is a pretty friendly chap and will give plenty of good advice.

East of Armidale

In this area are some of the most spectacular gorges in the area. Wollomombi Gorge is an awe-inspiring place. Further to the east is the New England National Park, an extremely interesting place.

(a) Gara Gorge

This gorge, although not the most spectacular gorge in the area, is one of the prettiest. In its upper reaches, it consists of long pools connected by waterfalls in a steep-sided gorge. Further downstream, it opens out so that the sides are no longer cliffs and the creek itself, although still consisting of pools and now small cataracts, is now quieter and filled with masses of boulders which decrease in size as you go downstream. Its tributaries, such as Long Swamp Creek, are also very beautiful.

Access

One mile east of Armidale, turn off to Blue Pool. Following this road, you eventually come to Blue Pool - a good picnic area and swimming hole. Leaving the cars here, at the top of the gorge, you can travel down the gorge, up one of the tributaries, onto the plateau and back through the cleared grazing country to the cars.

(b) Baker's Creek

This area is very interesting for two reasons. One is the creek itself and the other is that the whole area is riddled with old mines, some of them very large. The creek itself is quite spectacular in the first mile or so downstream from the Baker's Creek Falls. Just below the falls, the gorge floor is filled with huge boulders. These give way after a few hundred yards to smaller boulders, and then the creek cuts its way through a small canyon where the safest and quickest way is to swim. Shortly after this canyon, the creek drops into another canyon where the only access is a rope on a traverse around on the eastern side, and then down treacherous grassy slopes. From here on the creek is flat and easy walking. An afternoon can be spent pottering around Baker's Creek mine. This is also a good spot to leave the gorge with a steep but constant climb up the old railwayline to Hillgrove on the eastern side. At the top there are further old mines to be visited.

Access

About 24 km east of Armidale on the Dorrigo-Grafton Highway, turn right to Hillgrove. This will take you past the head of the gorge and past a lookout where there is easy access to the gorge.

(c) Wollomombi Gorge

This is the most spectacular of the New England Gorges. It is incredibly rugged. As yet, a full traverse of the gorge has not been done and access into the gorge is only soft from a few spots. (See "New England Guide")

Access

Just off the main road about 38 km east of Armidale.

(d) New England National Park

This is one of the best areas to visit in New England. Its main feature is its great variety of habitats. The total altitude variation is 4000 feet, from 1000 feet down in Sunday Creek to Point Lookout, over 5000 feet. The vegetation varies from sub-tropical rainforest down in the creeks to snow gums and heath on the tops. The park hugs the eastern edge of the tableland and views to the east are very pretty. The escarpment is almost sheer in places and topped with many fine lookouts, such as Pt. Lookout, Darkies Point and Barren Mountain. The park is criss-crossed with fire trails which make for quick travelling but are not too frequently used by vehicles to ruin the park. Some of the most interesting areas are as follows:

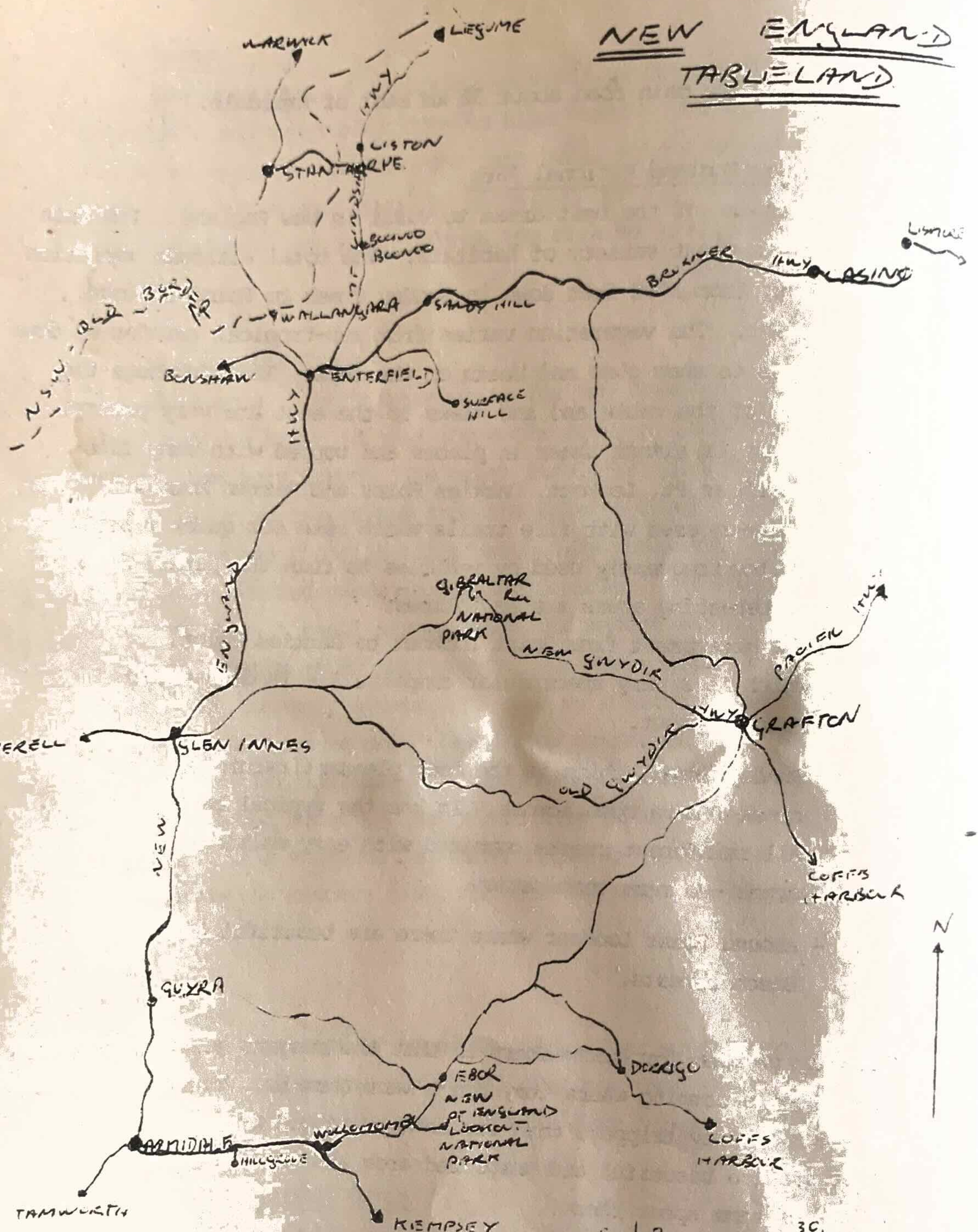
- the escarpment from Point Lookout to Darkies Point, which is a very spectacular campsite 1 - 1½ days from Point Lookout.
- Sunday Creek, which is the most pleasant rainforest creek I have come across. It has the typical beauty of all rainforest creeks combined with easy walking in the creek - a rare combination.
- around Point Lookout where there are beautiful Antartic Beech forests.

The only problem for bushwalkers is that the rangers get a bit stroppy about poeple camping where they don't want them to. They seem to cater more for the day-trippers than for more prolonged trippers. Anyway, it is still a beautiful and unspoiled area and well worth a decent length of time spent there.

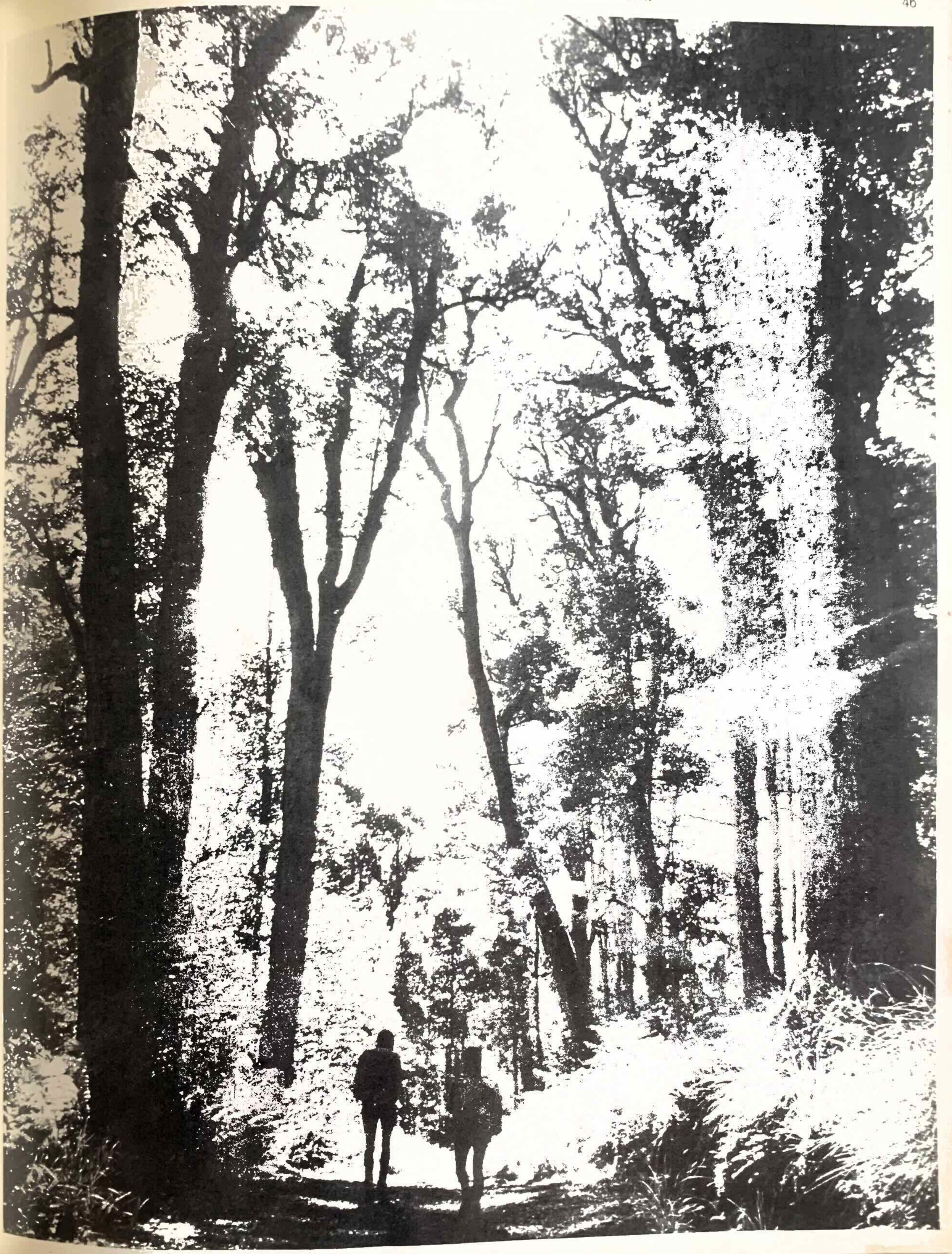
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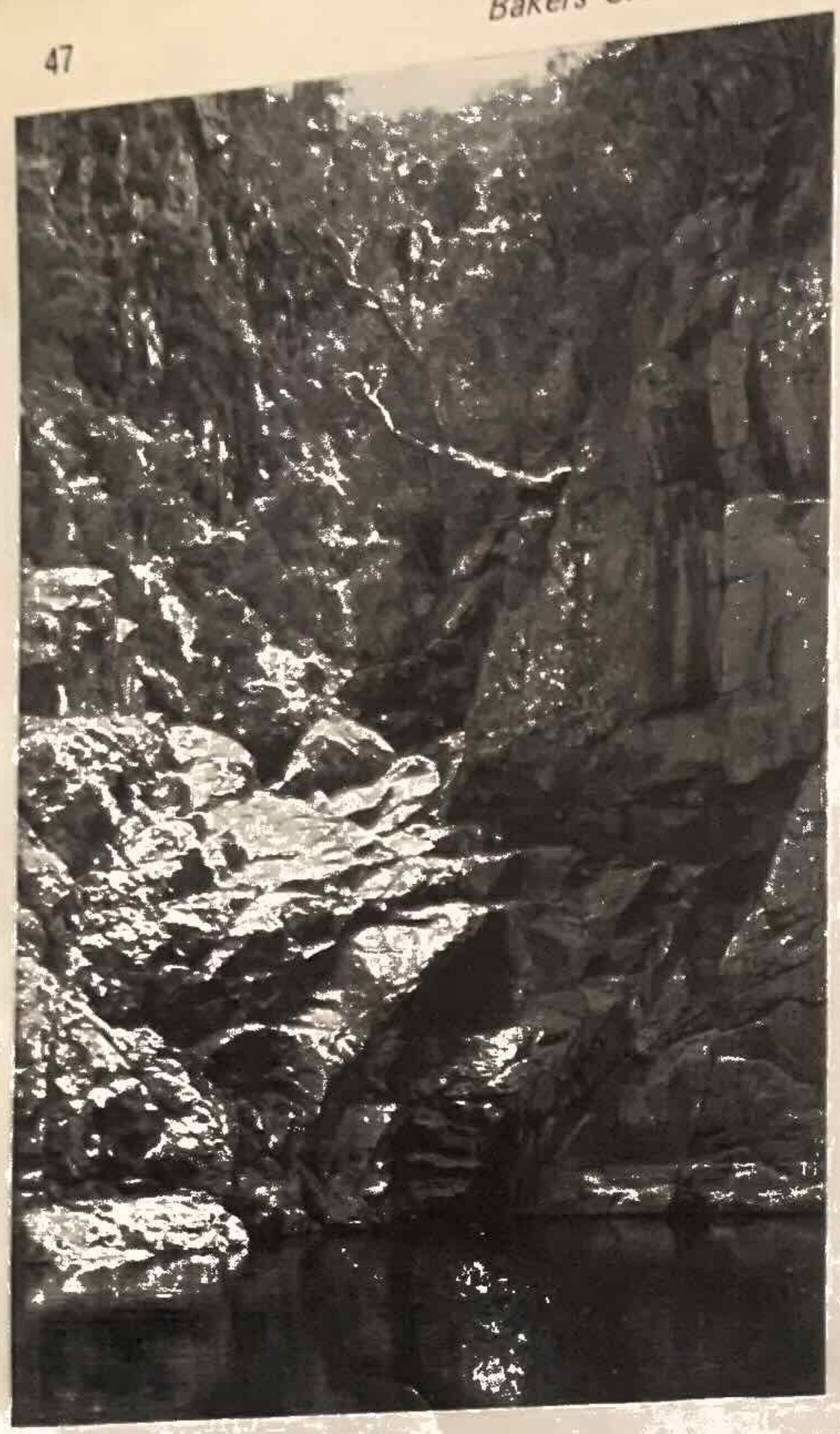
The turn-off to the park is about 75 km east of Armidale on the Grafton road. A good gravel road takes you about 11 km to Point Lookout and the centre of the park.

NEW ENGLAND TABLELAND



Antarctic Beech Forest, New England National Park.



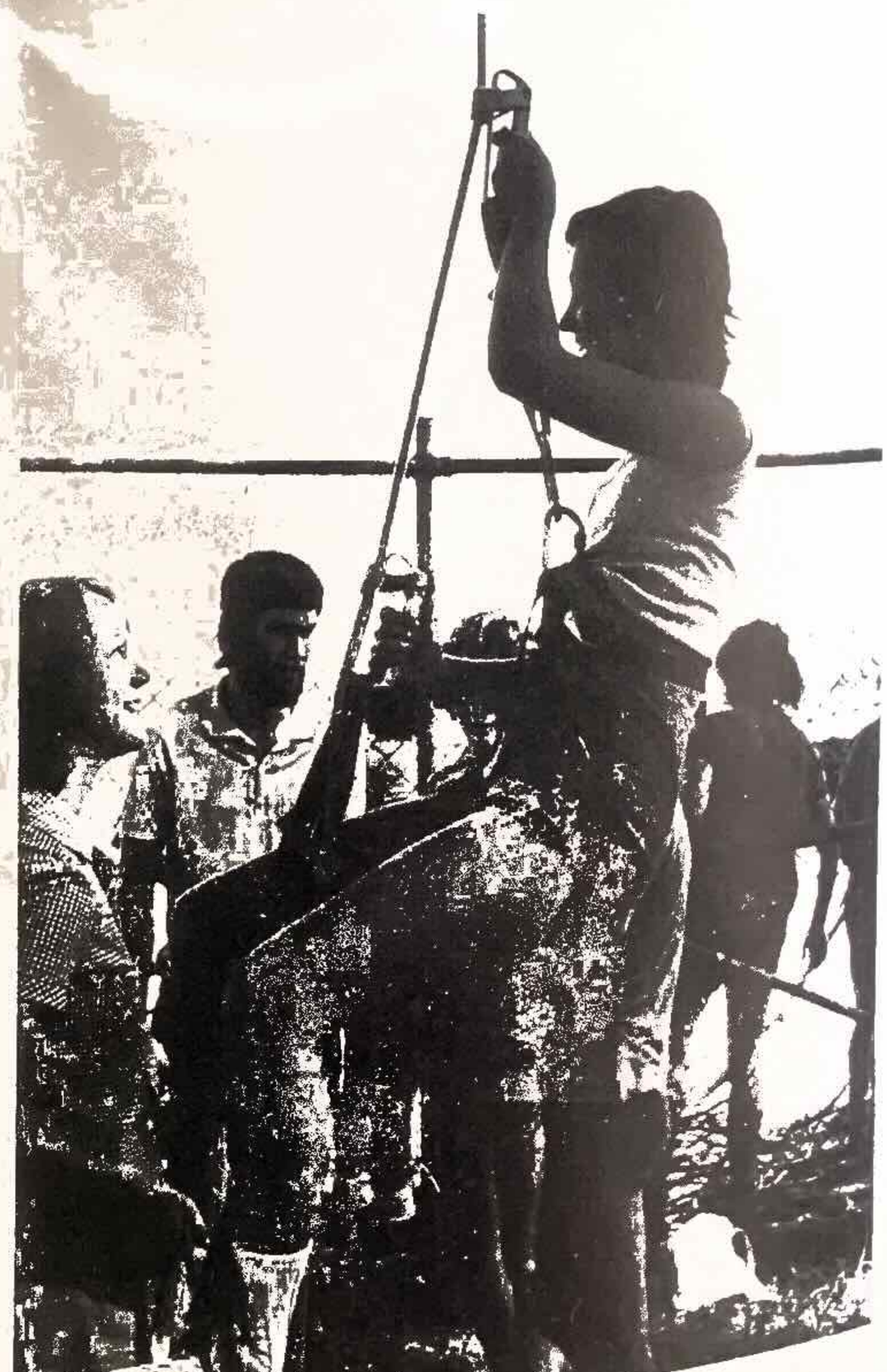


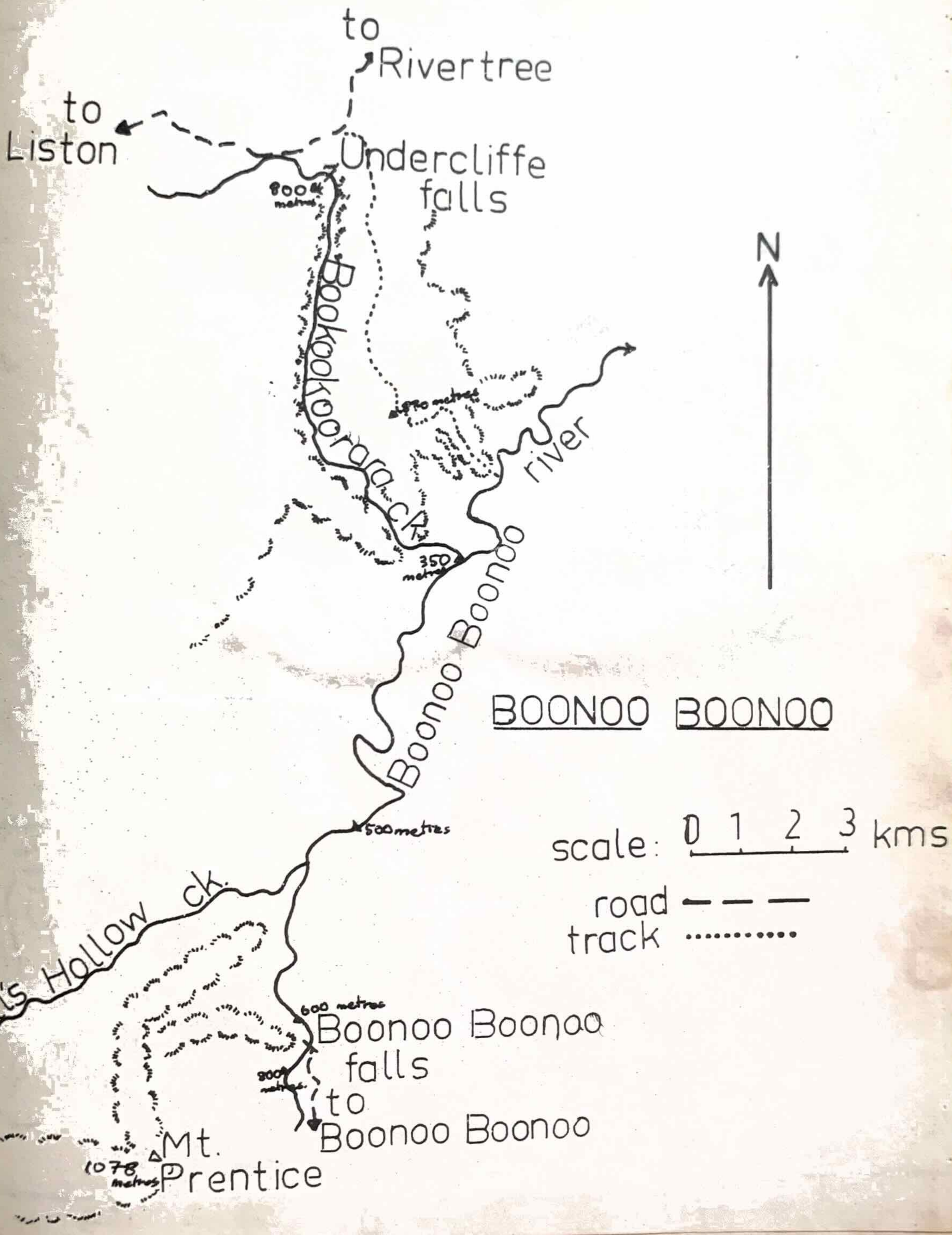
Wollomombi Gorge

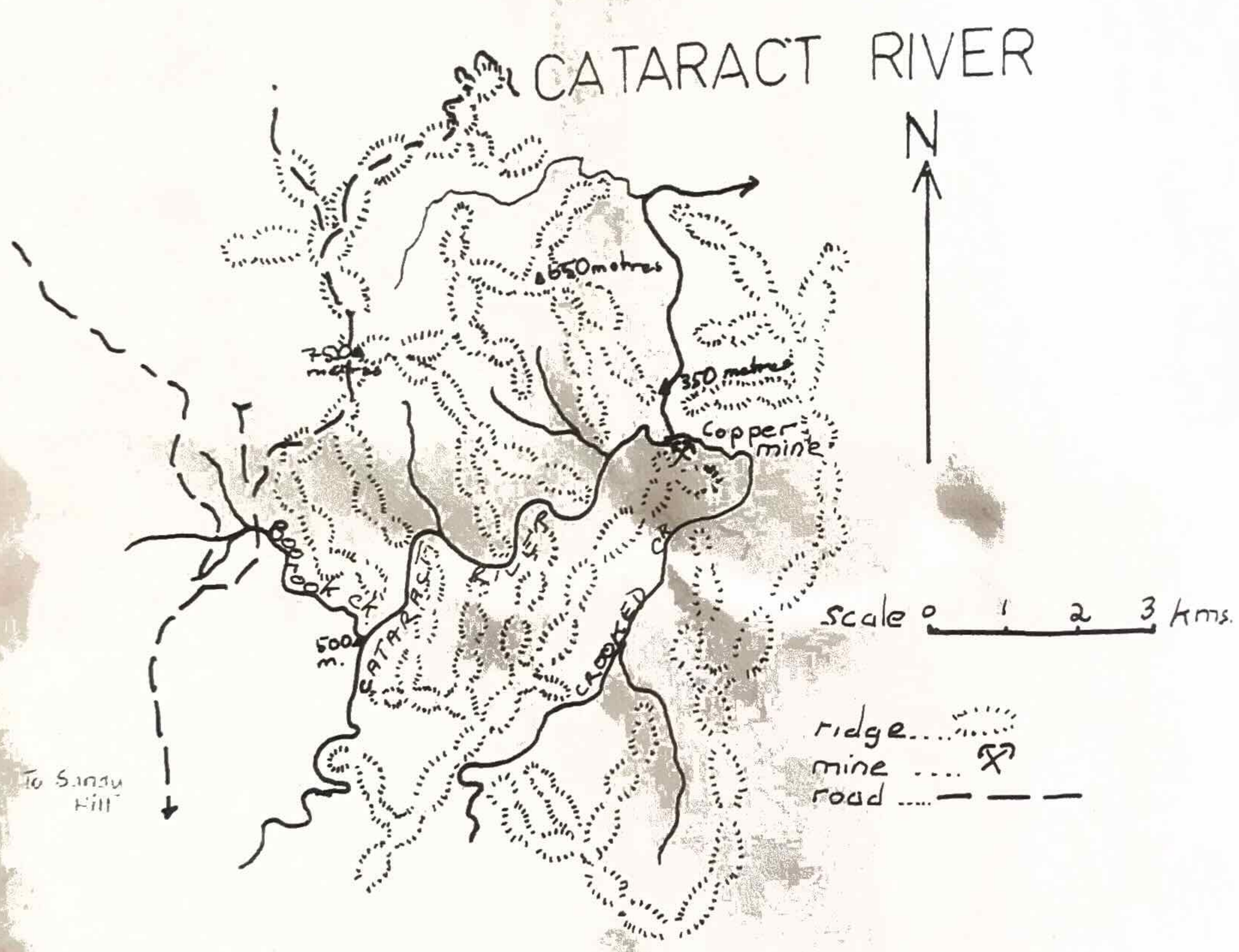


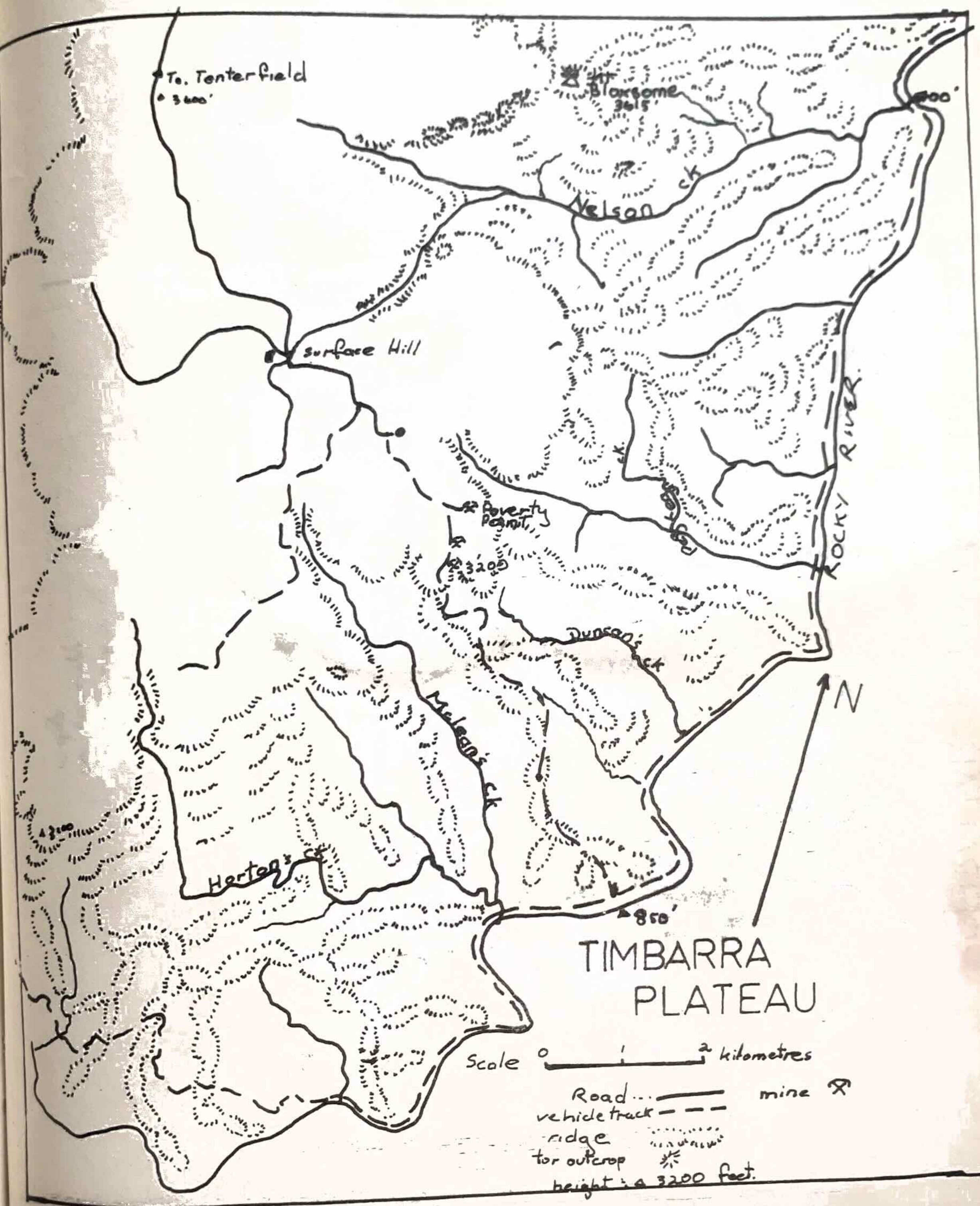
Training Day, Kangaroo Point



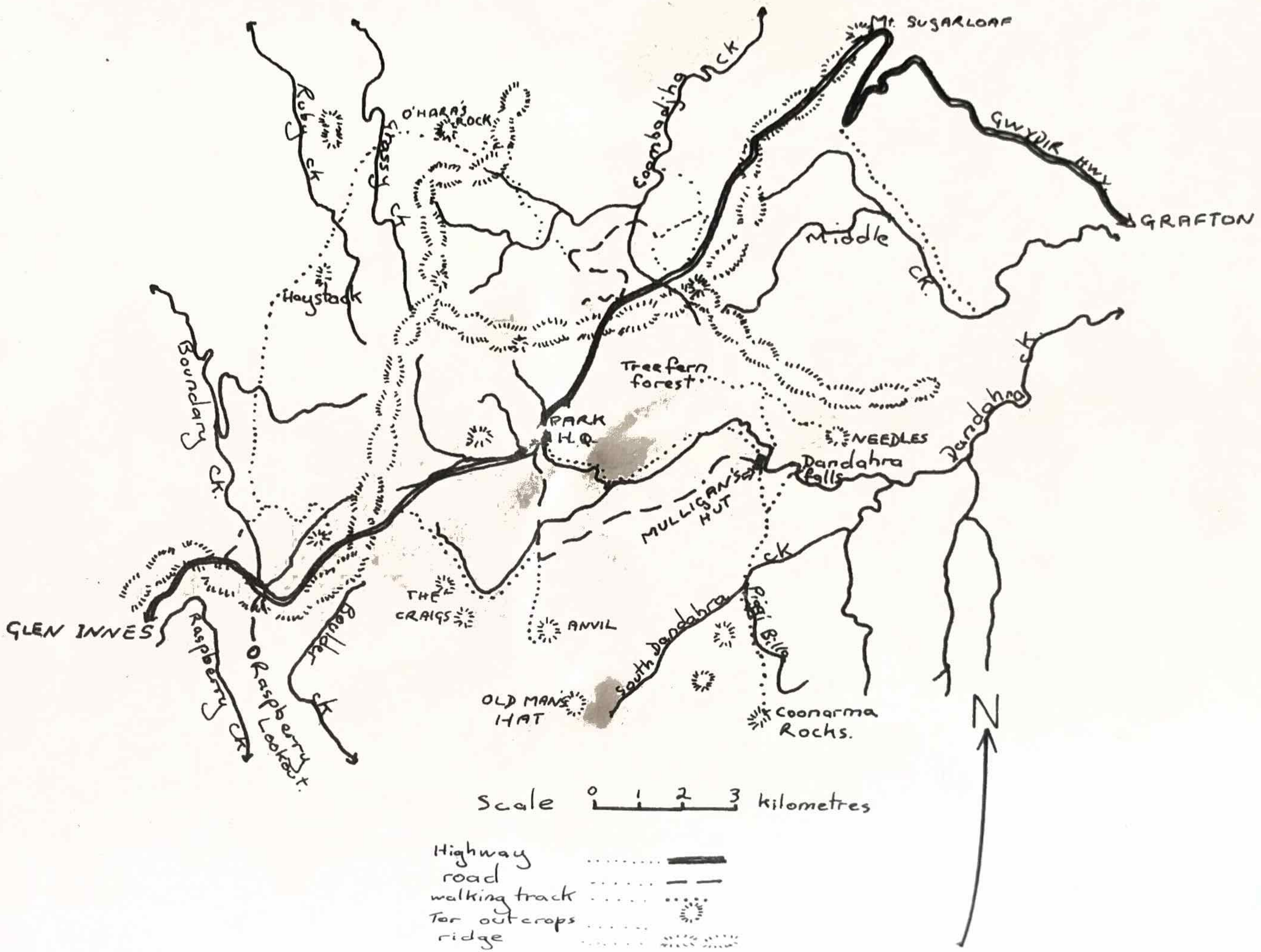


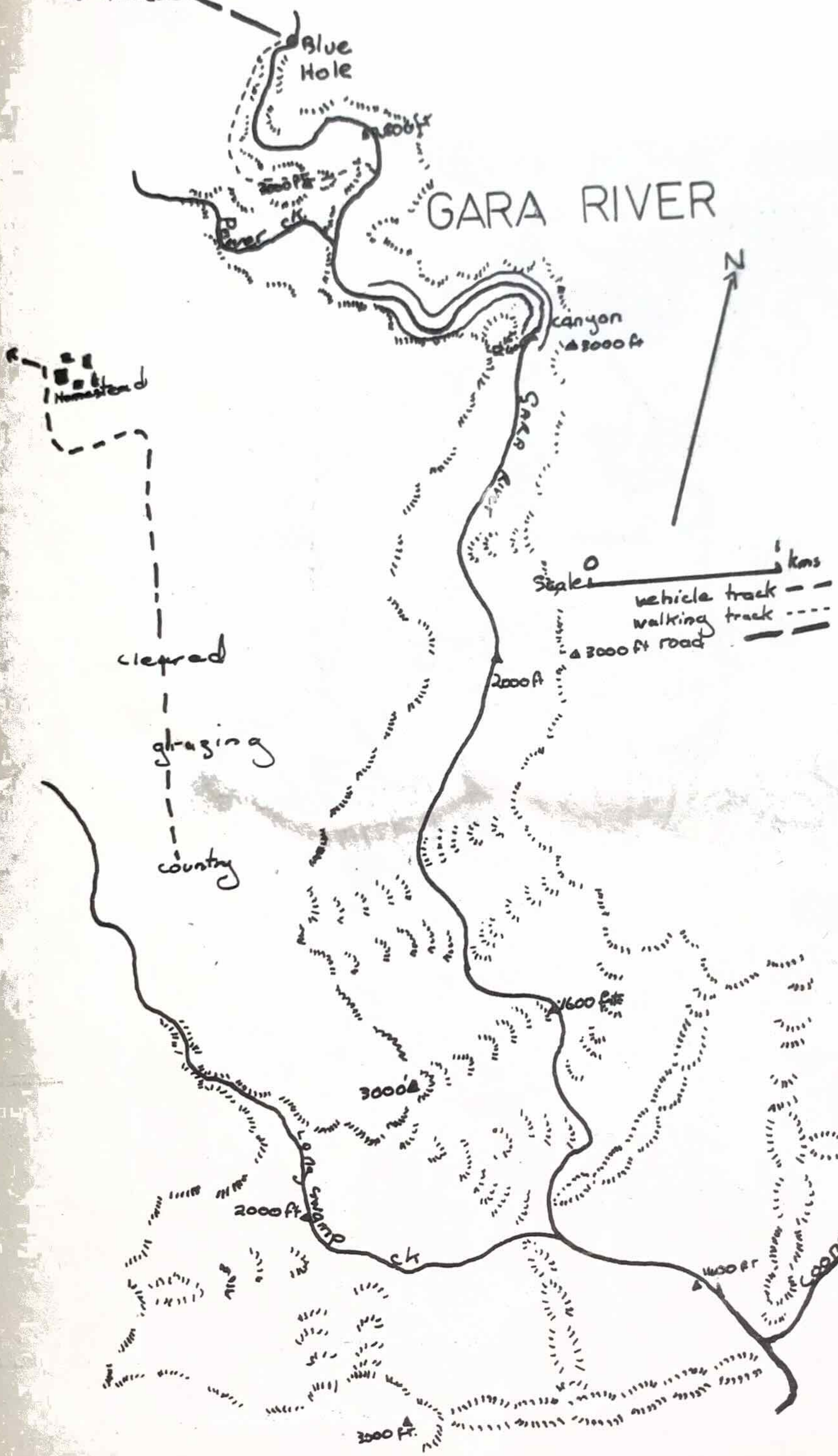

to
Rivertree
to
Liston
Undercliffe
falls
800 metres
Bookookoorara Ck
350 metres
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Boonoo Boonoo river
BOONOO BOONOO
500 metres
scale: 0 1 2 3 kms
road
track
Hells Hollow ck.
600 metres
Boonoo Boonoo
falls
800 metres
to
Boonoo Boonoo
Mt.
Prentice
1078 metres


CATARACT RIVER
N
650 metres
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To Sandy Hill
Scale 0 1 2 3 kms.
ridge
mine
road

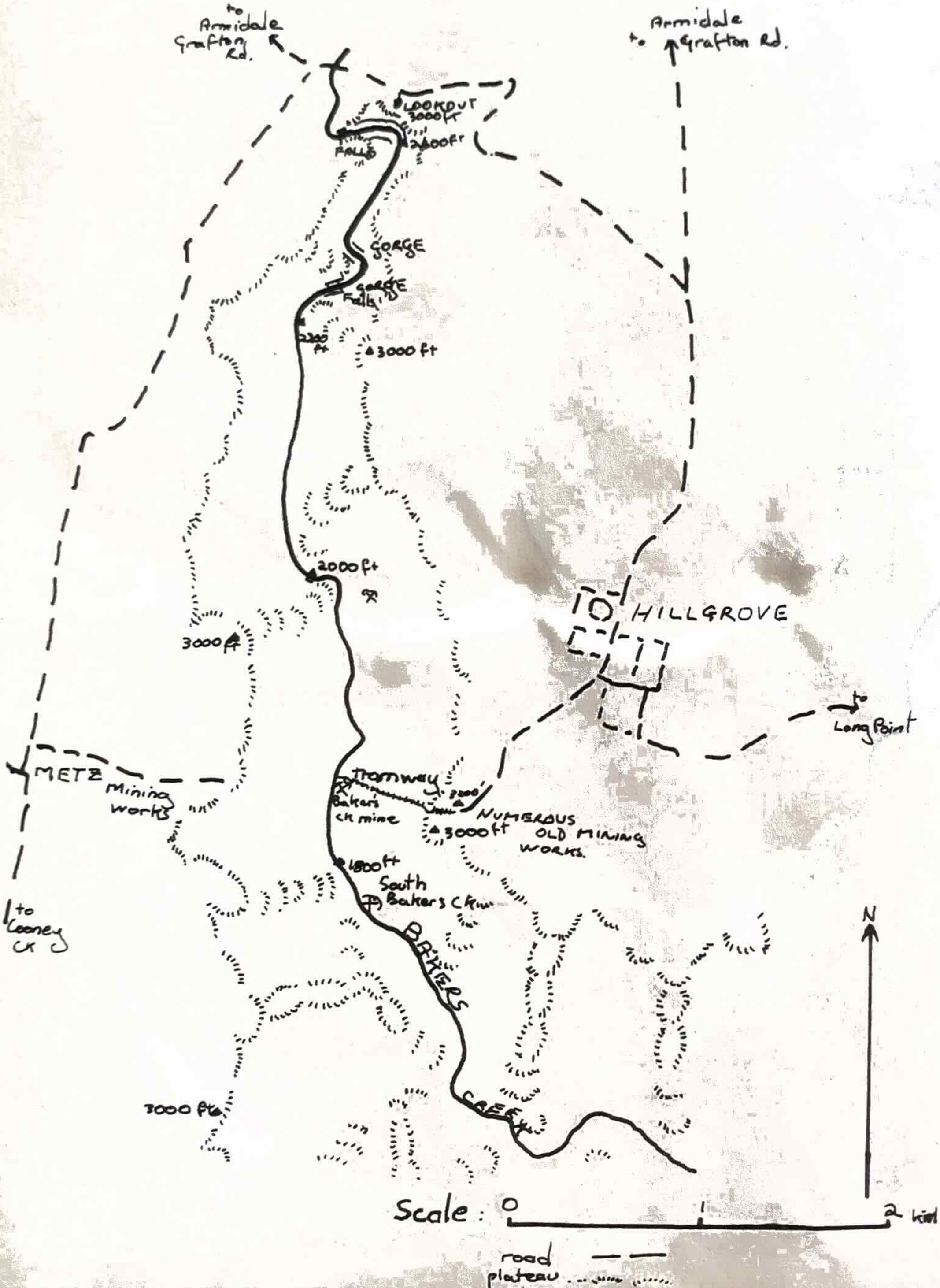

To. Tenterfield
3400'
Blaxsome
3615
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Surface Hill
Poverty Point
3205
Dumaresq ck
Rocky River
Mcleans ck
Herten's ck
3200
850'
N
TIMBARRA
PLATEAU
Scale 0 1 2 kilometres
Road
vehicle track
ridge
tor outcrop
mine
height : a 3200 feet.

GIBRALTAR RANGE NATIONAL PARK

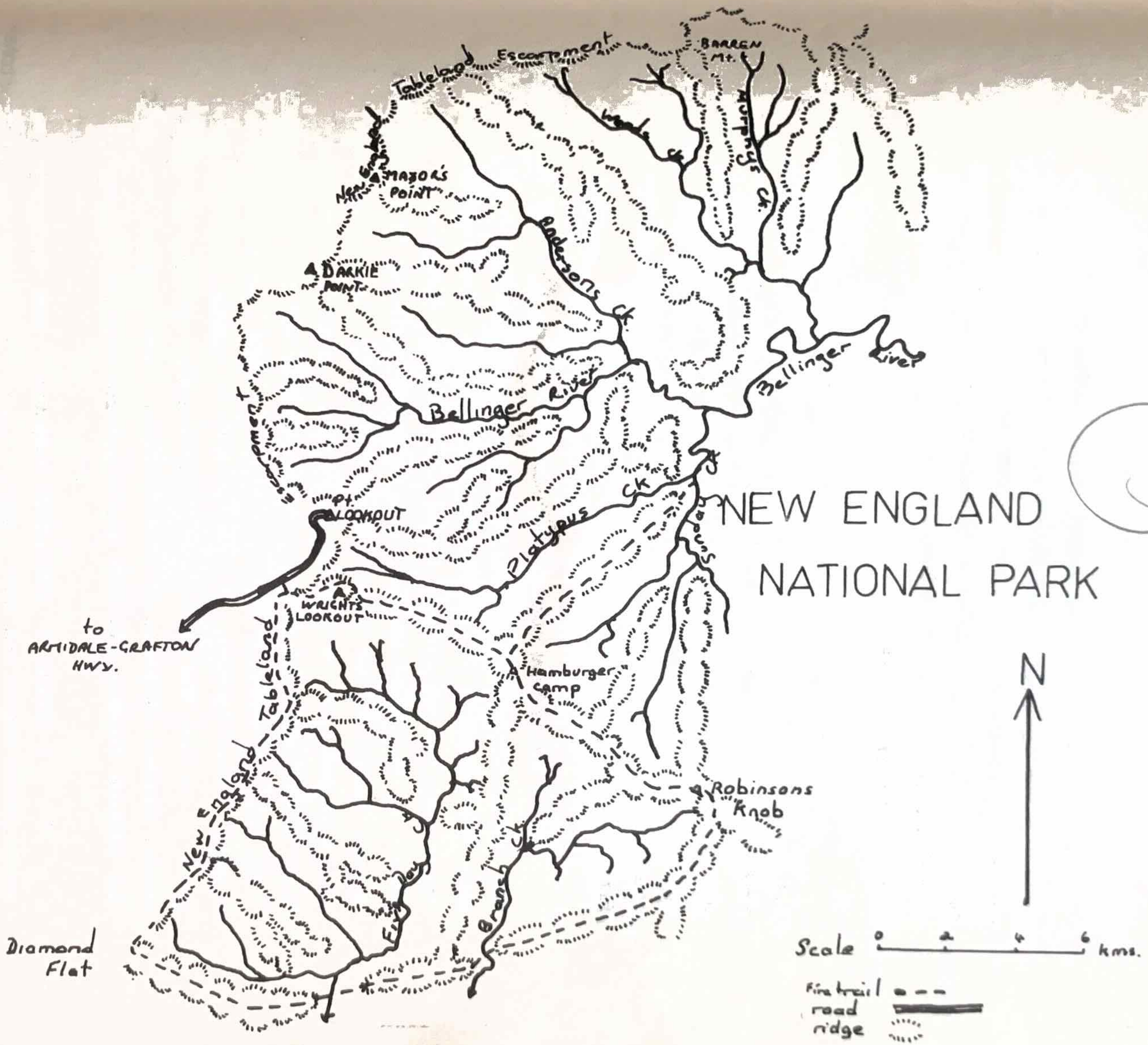



GARA RIVER
to Armidale
Blue Hole
canyon
▲3000 ft
Homestead
cleared
grazing
country
Stake
0
1 kms
vehicle track
walking track
road
▲3000 ft
2000 ft
1600 ft
3000 ft
2000 ft
1100 ft
3000 ft
Swamp Ck
Loone Ck

BAKERS CREEK GORGE



NEW ENGLAND NATIONAL PARK



HAVE YOU BEEN STUNG LATELY?

BY RUSS O'MALLEY

Are you suffering from small, often confluent, red spots forming a swollen area on the skin surrounded by a flare zone; or perhaps an intense pain of a rather complex nature, composed of a background of tingling on which is superimposed an intermittent stabbing pain, with sharp radiations passing in all directions..... it must be a gympie tree.

Laportea Morodes and its softwood relatives are distributed from the New England Tableland to the highlands of New Guinea being confined to the dense rainforest areas. Unlike its towering, but less potent relative, Laportea gigas (izoft), the gympie grows only to about ten feet. Members of the stinging tree family have intruded themselves unpleasantly into human experience as early as the very first bushwalker.

Its effects have occupied workers for a long time and it appears that they have learnt little since the initial experiments which truly show the dedication of a scientist to the cause. Their methods are interesting but surprisingly crude. One botanist downgrading the potency of the gympie to that of a common European nettle which, when grasped firmly, do not sting, was soon sorry for his presumption. Not to be deterred, he (Petrie), collected a herbarium specimem kept between paper for 46 years, again grasped the leaf firmily and again suffered severely for it - not even a dead Gympie is a good Gympie. After recovery, he tried in vain to decrease the painful sting by boiling the leaves for twenty minutes, storing for three weeks, various solutions of acid and alkali baths, heating to 110^{o}C for fifteen minutes, all with a very painful negative response.

The elucidation of the active component, once through to be concentrated formic and acetic acids, has not proceeded past the acetone-methanol extract yielding equal amounts of ether and water soluable

compounds, heat stable and with a molecular weight exceeding 1000.

The cunjevon (Alocasia macromhya) growing at the base of the Gympie, often recommended as an immediate topical antidote for the pain does not appear to have one supporter amongst those who have used it.

Even the effects of crushing leaves and breaking branches gives initially sneezing and finally swelling with irritation to the nasal membranes.

Recently, conditions for experimenting with this violent tree, have been instituted to prevent its undesirable effects - a gas mask, long, thick rubber gloves and a thick gown are worn with experimenting taking place with a negative pressure hood - the outcome only mildly successful with some stinging still occuring. The Queensland Forestry Department issues its men working amongst the rainforest with gloves, respirators, and anti-histamine tablets - so next time you are wandering through some quiet section of rainforest, admiring the colour and patterns of those outsize, light green leaves, do not be surprised if you meet somebody dressed in a heavy gown, respirator, goggles, thick rubber gloves and munching on anti-histamine tablets - it's just me.

"I am not yet born, provide me
With water to dandle me, grass to grow for me, trees to talk
to me, sky to sing to me, birds and a white light
in the back of my mind to guide me."

FROM "Prayer Before Birth"
BY Louis Macniece

MOSSMAN GORGE NATIONAL PARK

BY PETER CRITTALL

LOCATION:

Mossman lies to the north of Cairns (70 km) along the Captain Cook Highway. After passing through the town's outskirts, there is a sign on the left directing to the gorge (6 km). This makes an excellent day trip from Cairns and some beautiful country is seen as the road skirts the sea shores.

Parking facilites and a barbecue area is available but overnight camping is prohibited.

ATTRACTIONS:

A short walk along a graded track leads to this magnificent swimming area. Large boulders and thick rainforest form a spectacular backdrop to the Mossman River which winds its way down the gorge. In fact, the Mossman River Gorge is a National Park of over 50,000 hectares. Fortunately, most of this region is in its natural state and shows little sign of man's interference. For the more experienced bushwalker, there is ample opportunity for rainforest-bashing, but the vegetation is lush, dense and tropical.

For the lilo enthusiast, this river provides a particular challenge and can be compared with the rapids of Barney Creek (S.E.Q'ld.), although somewhat more hazardous, due to the faster flowing stream.

It is recommended that this area be visited during the winter months to avoid the threat of heavy rain and a muggy climate. There is an added bonus in that the cane milling season is in full swing. This region should be a must for the northern traveller.

FRASER ISLAND - THERE AND BACK

OR - OLD ROVERS NEVER DIE : THEY JUST LOOK THAT WAY

BY TONY WHITE AND MIKE WEBB

"Hell! What's that?" came the shocked remark.

I turned round and gave him a dirty look.

So started an expedition of courage, bravery and madness into the deep depths of Fraser Island. As well as myself (who's that?), other maniacs included (from left to right, back to front, but in no fixed order), Mike Webb, Dave Winkle, Fiona and Jenny Reath, Louise Gardiner and Helen Moses.

The mighty machine that would carry seven people stood under the old shed covered in dirt, fertilizer, molasses, the odd spot of cow dung, and a smell (no further expansion on this point).

Technical details on this vehicle are as follows:

Land Rover, L.W.B. Series 1

Age - 20 years

Engine - Yes (of sorts)

No. of wheels - 4 (most of the time)

Suspension - semi collapsed elliptical leaf

Except for minor mechanical points (e.g. busted spark leads, broken exhaust pipe, collapsed left rear spring, lights and windscreen wipers didn't work etc., etc.), it was in top condition.

Therefore with full confidence in our transport, the six of us started to pack (the seventh was to meet us up there). A frame was placed over the back, and a fully non weatherproof cover placed over it. An ingenious network (?) of ropes was placed on top of the frame to use as a roof rack which held most of our packs. Non-essential items such as petrol, oil, towrope and of course fooooood....d were stacked in the back.

While checking the food, I noticed a certain item was missing.

Then I quietly asked the question - "Mike, I hope you brought plenty of fizzy?"

"Aahh! Fizzy!", he gulped.

"Ughh", I groaned. (Fortunately, the shop at Rainbow Beach had some, at rip-off prices.)

Thus having packed the rover, we slept a peaceful night knowing we would have to get up in the morning at !.00 am - with no alarum clock.

Heard in the dark -

"What time is it?"

"It's only mid-night"

Later on -

"Is it time yet?"

"No! Go back to sleep"

Still later on -

"It's time to get up" - scramble scramble

"Hell, it's only 3 - groan"

You're probably expecting us to have risen late - foiled, we got up on time, after a good night slee--ee--p .....zzzzz

Our present position was Cooroy (20 miles north of Nambour) where we had to pick up the rover. The barge was doing only 1 trip at 8.00 am (being Wednesday). We eventually left at 6.00 am with 90 miles to go.

You might well argue - no worries - in a 1956 fully loaded rover - you've got to be kidding. We stopped at Rainbow Beach for 10 minutes and got to the barge at approximately 8.20 am. (work that one out!) Fortunately, the barge could do an extra run - only an extra $5 - groan.

At last we were on the island, an old experience for some, a new experience for others. Total all round good feeling - as others having been to Fraser will appreciate.

Our first stop was at Second Creek, just to have a look around and have a general rort. A sport to be recommended is sliding down sandhills on your stomach. However, make sure you brake in sufficient time to avoid entering the creek.(it's wet!)

First camp was set up at the entrance to the track to Lake Wabby and our best sport of fishing was done that afternoon (some five bream were caught - belch!). Unfortunately, it rained that night and as we did not anticipate rain, our tents were not very satisfactory. Result: one wet night with much tramping in the wet and dark as tents were reassembled and deposits of water were removed from the edges of the tent and saturated glute-maximi.

We didn't get up the next morning - it was still raining. Due to the bad weather, we decided to leave the trip into Wabby until on the way back and so we cruised on to our next spot, the Maheno wreck about 6 miles north of Happy Valley.

A short note on Happy Valley:

This is a friendly spot to buy petrol and food. Huts are there, privately owned and are available for rent for slackers. (Not necessarily the last place to rent as other places are available.) Although it is a rip-off, they do it with a smile. This is compared with Eurong, approximately 20 miles north of south tip, which should be avoided if at all possible as it is still a rip-off but with unfriendly people. If necessary, food, petrol and accommodation are available.

Before reaching the Maheno (2 miles south of it, and in fact 4 miles north of Happy Valley, for the keen mathematician), is an absolutely and completely Al, bonzer, ripper spot i.e. Ely Creek. These crystal clear waters (until we arrived), flow approximately 5 miles from the inland and by the time they reach the coast, form a beautiful, deep, fast flowing creek. Several hundred metres up the creek is an ideal swimming spot where several pounds of accumulated grot were ridded. (For the conservation minded any soap suds were quickly washed out to the sea, or into the campers' water down the stream.

Despite warnings of unexploded bombs in the area (the signs themselves had almost deteriorated), we braved the rotted timbers of the wreck to do a spot of fishing - how couth! While we were catching dinner (?), some experienced fishermen were also catching some bait for further fishing. Negotiations to swap our dinner for their bait unfortunately failed. Later in the second evening there, after having caught what we thought to be a reasonable catch, these other fishermen hauled in a 20lb Jew - (jealousy). After that, our ½lb bream never felt the same.

Next port of call was Indian Head to pick up the remaining nut coming on this trip (Helen Moses). She had come up with the Uni Fishing Club who were staying in a hut. (Incidently, rates there are $100 a week for fridges, freezer, electricity and, wait for it - flushing toilet. We spent hours watching this invention with amazement. Also, anyone wishing to go on good subsidized holidays at the union's expense, join the fishing club.) As the club had only just arrived, the freezer was as yet empty. The two fridges were however, full-slurp!

A climb to the top of the head yielded excellent views all round. Gasps and gads were heard all round as we stared down at the eroded cliff face. Fantastic views extended along the beaches in both directions and Middle Head and Waddy Point could be seen (a beauty!).

From thence, we roved to Waddy Point for our next site. When I say roved, I mean pushed, shoveled, grunted etc..... as we carried on relentlessly over the sandhills at Middle Head. Actually, this was the only spot where we had trouble (boast, boast).

An exhilirating aspect of any trip to any scunge is the freedom of expression allowable in bowel habits. Ah! what it is to arise in the coolth of the morning, or as you like it - the warmth of the midday sun, gulp down a fizzy, belch, and loudly exclaim,

"Gad, I could do with a bog about now!" You grab your shovel or other digging implement, curse the forever-wet A.P., and home in lazily upon a bogging spot which combines not only the native charm of the Fraser scenery, but also the commanding view from the sand cliffs, the philosophically and morally uplifting music of the breeze in the treeze. Then you find the bloddy ground's full of roots or too hard, and you are by this time desperate, so you go out and dig a hole on the beach and hope to God no Rover full of touri happens upon you.

Your bog completed, you go in for a pog, breakfast made with lashings of honey - genuine nectar...!

You fight over who is to do the washing up from last night's Bacchanalian revels, find it's you and curse again. While you are cleaning the greasy grot from your fingers, you sigh and think "If only Man could live together..." and that sort of crap then you turn around and find a wave has washed your cups and plates two hundred yards up the beach, and you'll never see your cutlery again for that has been irretrievably buried by sand by the incoming wave.

I have been giving a picture of a typical Fraser morning (or noon) but now we go back to our somewhat boring narrative.

The vehicle, which some inebriate lad christened "A Landrover named Desire" appeared majestically at the top of the sandblow behind Waddy. It only appeared there mind you, it actually wasn't; it was half a mile away down the beach. Let's not rush things!

We unloaded all the unnecessary claptrap - such as passengers and the magnificent metal leviathan slowly ground its way through the gears. We had seen too many forced stops and had expended too much energy pushing to believe that the metal monster could negotiate the dune; but, no, our threats must have hit home and there was the Rover and Tone at Waddy and there we were still half a mile away trudging up the dune. Well after that, the rain came down and down, until we started

collecting pairs of everything we could find and loading them onto the Rover.

Just as we were about tearing each other to bits, the rain stopped, and real Fraser weather set in. Ah, the balmy tropical breeze, the balmy tropical bushies dancing in the sun, sacrificing vestal virgins in it's honour.....

But the fish were not impressed with the weather and we caught bugger all. Luckily, we met some friendly freaks who swapped some of their fish for some of our plentiful supply of lemons.

By the way, if you're running out of food at Waddy, as we were (this is no slight on the food planners, because when it rained, we had nothing better to do than eat) bread is available at Orchid Beach from a delightful American lad who will sell it to you on a price scale based upon your looks. It cost me 45c a loaf and Dave 35c and I'm not sure what else.....

So after bludging a time at Waddy Point we set off in search of new bludging places.

We decided at a clandestine meeting that Tone needed a bath. We told him so. He did not concur, so we gave him one in Eli Creek. We were not in his good books, so Dave and I decided that in view of the wavering smypathies of the female members of our party, we would also indulge in some adequate ablutions.

After travelling down the beach in air conditioned comfort (I was sitting on the roof), we arrived at a camping site which would suit us admirably (in the words of that other famous bushie, Robinson Crusoe.

From there, we went to Lake Boeminjen. Tone was sitting in

the front with Helen and Fiona, and Dave and Louise and Jenny and I were in the back. I don't know how that coup was planned but Tone certainly got the most comfy ride.

Jenny was sitting on the side of the Rover with no springs. She couldn't walk very well for a few days after that trip.

Beomingen's a bonzer lake which just happens to be full of water of all things! I'd say it's easily half a mile across and has the most incredible sand around its shores. It's pure white and has a consistency like talcum powder.

The next day, we found the track to Wabby Lake. Last year, we tried to find it and got miserably lost in the swamp and then had to fight our way through miles and miles of Lantana to get back to the beach.

This time - no worries! The swamp doesn't extend very far in and from then on your feet stay dry. You walk through a pine forest and then onto some huge dunes that just open up around you. It's quite a sight. Over about 5 dunes is the lake. One side is completely bare of any vegetation - completely sand, while the opposite side is heavily forested.

From then on, we wound slowly down to the barge and malted milk at Rainbow Beach.

I'd like to tell you a bit about the mining on Fraser.

When we were there, the mining had reached to within a few miles of fourth creek. They have leases for the whole ocean side including Wabby Lake and Indian Head.

Their reaforestation attempt is quite pathetic, consisting of an absolutely level stretch of one foot high dead or dead-looking brush.

So, I guess if you haven't seen it already, you'd better hurry or, in the time honoured way, it'll be all gone.....

BUNYIPS, BONES AND OTHER SUCH STUFF

BY RICHARD MORWOOD

If you've been crashing through the depths of the dark rainforest, splashing in deep waterholes or sleeping in the bush lately, I hope you've been taking precautions against Bunyip and his lithe water spirits who lurk in the gloom and waterholes by day and roam the earth by night.

According to the "Kabi" tribe who lived in the Obi Obi Gorge and North into the Mary River Catchment, Bunyip was banished from his tribe for disobeying the rules laid down by the Rainbow Serpent by eating his tribe's own totem animal. Being banished from the tribe stirred Bunyip with deep anger; he vowed to use his now evil influence to bring unhappiness to the tribes. The "Kabi" were split up into several sections or small tribes roaming as far as Gympie. The average height of their men was about five feet six inches, and of the women, five feet. Both sexes were exceedingly agile, and very strong in proportion to their weight. Their clothing, mainly for winter use, consisted of possum skins and even the soft bark of the ti-tree which was used as a rug. Climbing trees was made easy through the use of a rough barked piece of vine about ten or twelve feet long with a thickness of about 3/4 of an inch. A small loop was made at one end and held in the left hand while the other end, having been slipped around the tree was allowed to pass behind the climber, who, with his right hand, grasped the vine allowing his body to form an angle of about 45° with the tree. In this manner an expert could ascend a tree at a brisk walk and take paces as long as if walking on the ground.

There was hardly any animal, from a human being to a giant fly, that was not considered wholesome and lawful food to the men of the tribe. That the Kabi people were cannibals was certain. The victims who fell in war seem to have been invariably eaten and

any flesh on the bones of those who died from natural causes did not go to waste. Of course, the major part of their diet consisted of small marsupials, birds, reptiles, bunya nuts and honey.

Kabi marriage customs allowed a male to marry just about any female except his mother-in-law. In fact, the mother-in-law couldn't look upon her son-in-law at any time; they believed that if she did he would go mad, and would go and live in the bush like a wild man. Betrothols at a very early age were customary and bigamy and elopements were common. Any quarrels were usually settled by the arbitrament of the Kuthar or club.

Specially shaped pebbles of semi-transparent quartz were held in great estimation. In these pebbles were the means of life and death. The opinion was that they were carried internally about the region of the stomach, and a Kabi person's vitality and influence was proportional to the number he possessed. To be"Kundir Bongan" (many-pebbled) was to possess a charmed life, and to be able to inflict grievous harm upon enemies. When a person took suddenly ill it was supposed that a pebble had been launched at him. Many of the Kabi tribe's beliefs have parallels in surrounding tribes, particularly those to their east.

The coast between Brisbane and Gympie was occupied by the Mooloola tribe thought to have numbered about 300 persons. They had similar customs to the Kabi in that the girls became wives early, the usual avoidance of mother-in-law and son-in-law existed and the names of the dead were never mentioned. Mothers used to bind round, at the second joint, the little fingers of the left hands of their daughters when about ten years old with coarse spider's webs so as to stop circulation and cause the two joints to drop off. They had a belief in or more accurately, an apprehension of ghosts, generally to be seen at night peering through branches or from behind trees. Unlike other tribes, they did not seem to believe that the personality of the deceased was continued in the ghost but thought that death annihilated personality.

The northern part of Stradbroke Island was owned by the "Noonuhul" tribe, the southern part by the "Goenpul" tribe while the "Ulogee" tribe occupied Moreton Island. Like the aboriginals on Fraser Island, spears were thrown by hand and nothing was known of the woomera (throwing stick). Particular sorts of food were forbidden to the males at certain ages, other to pregnant women and other to women in general. Fish, honey and snakes were amongst the principal articles of food, as well as the fern root (bungwal) which was beaten into a pulp between two stones, and then baked like a damper in the ashes or cooked on the coals. Males were scarred for ornament on the chest, back and arms; females on the arms and legs. Prepatory to burial, the corpse was made into the shape of a ball. As in most other tribes, consumption was the general cause of death.

Fraser Island, the aboriginal name of which is Theorgine was occupied by about 19 tribes amounting to about 1500 souls which reduced to about 400 at the occupation by the whites. Polygamy prevailed, girls became wives at about twelve years of age and mothers at thirteen. As usual, these tribes had doctors who claimed to make rain and perform the other usual feats of conjurers. The canoes were constructed of sheets of bark, stripped from the iron-bark trees, and tied at the ends. Unlike some mainland tribes who stripped the bodies of the dead and hung their bones in bundles in trees, they buried their dead in the ground.

It was reported that soon after the occupation by the whites, these people became great smokers - men, women and children. A little girl or boy about two or three years old could be seen with a pipe in its mouth smoking tobacco - sometimes the mother would even take her breast out of a child's mouth and put a pipe in. If a schooner was passing the Mission about sunset, the natives would sometimes throw sand up into the air, and blow with their mouths towards the sun, in order to make the sun go under quickly, thus compelling the schooner to anchor for the night and enable them to get on board tobacco, biscuits etc.

The Samington area was inhabited by several tribes, a large portion of whom were killed off by smallpox. As deaths were generally attributed to the malevolence of enemies in another tribe, the desire for vengence sometimes led to a battle. The results of a battle appear to have been very indecisive - a man or two killed on either side and two or three wounded. There was no retreating, no pursuing and subsequent slaughtering, owing doubtless to there being nothing to win or lose. Apparently the lawyer vine, which proliferates around Samington, was originally a happ child (Tia-Gam) who loved to tease. One day Tia-Gam wandered into the dark, damp, forbidden rainforest. Now Bunyip lived in the rainforest and was worried because Sun was getting through the branches of the tall trees in his rainforest and bringing light into it.

When Bunyip saw what a good climber Tia-Gam was, he cast a spell upon him to draw the branches together. So next time you're snagged in about a dozen lawyer vines uttering mild language, think of poor Tia-Gam - he's only up to his old mischievous ways.

".....Oh! When I have hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill-sustained, and almost, as it seemed
Suspended by the blast which blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag; Oh! at that time,
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ears! the sky seemed not a sky
Of earth, and with what motion moved the clouds!"

William Wordsworth

BEFORE SALVITAL

OH! OH!

GASP!

TIRED GLEEP!

LATER: WORSE GLEEP

UGH!

SMART GLEEP GETS OUT FIZZY, WATER AND CUP

THE SUN

H_2O



AFTER SALVITAL

NO WORRIES!

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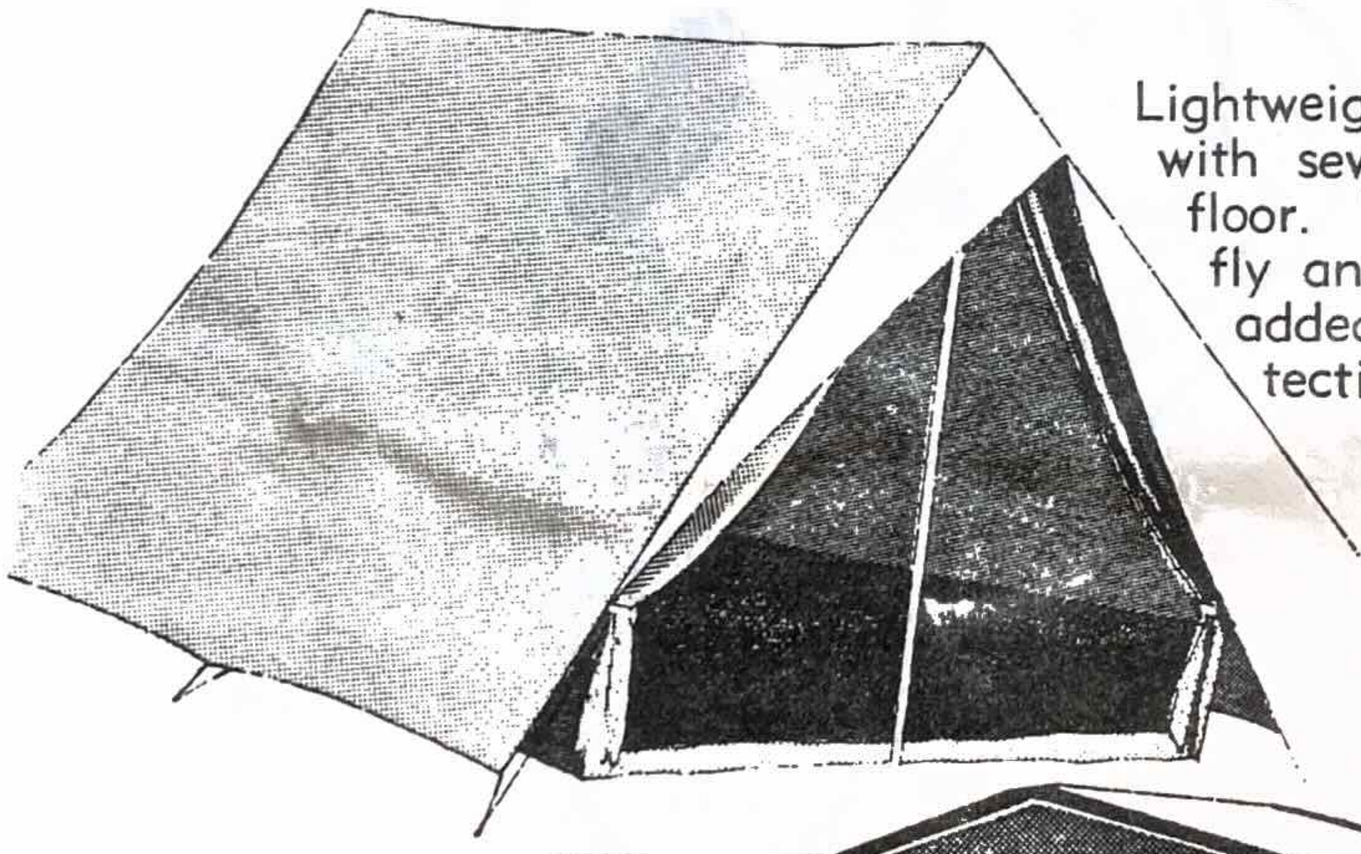


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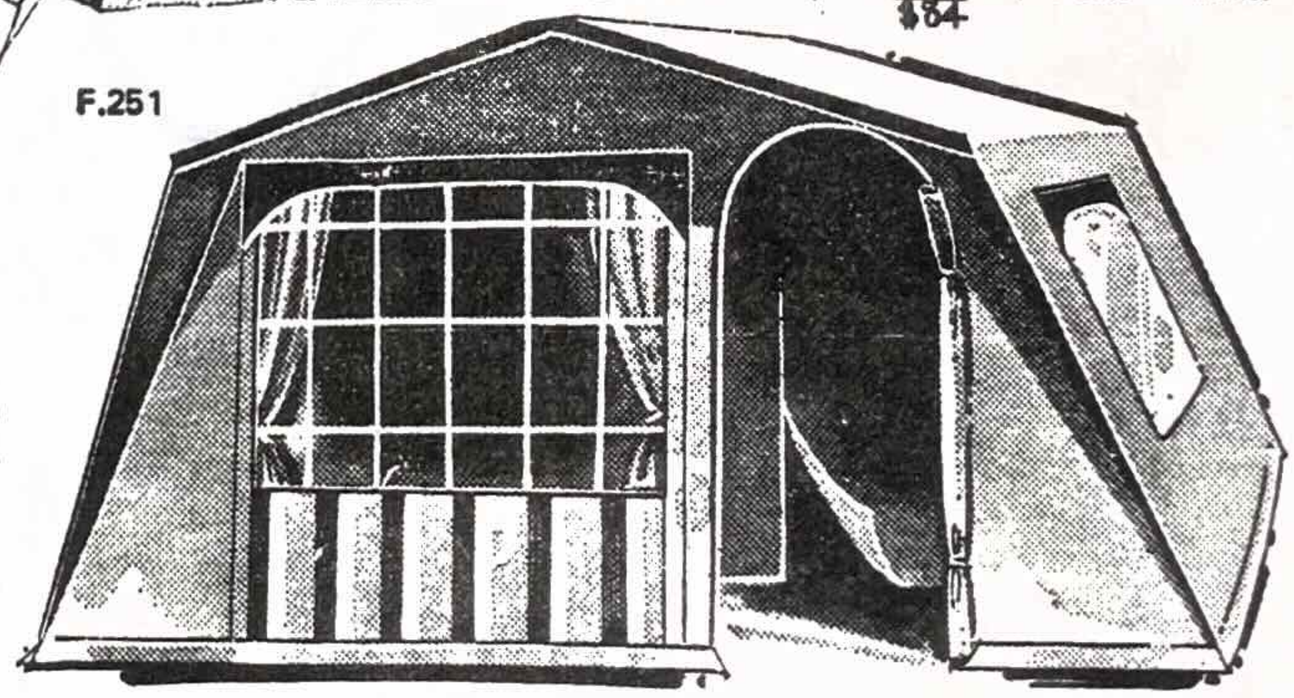
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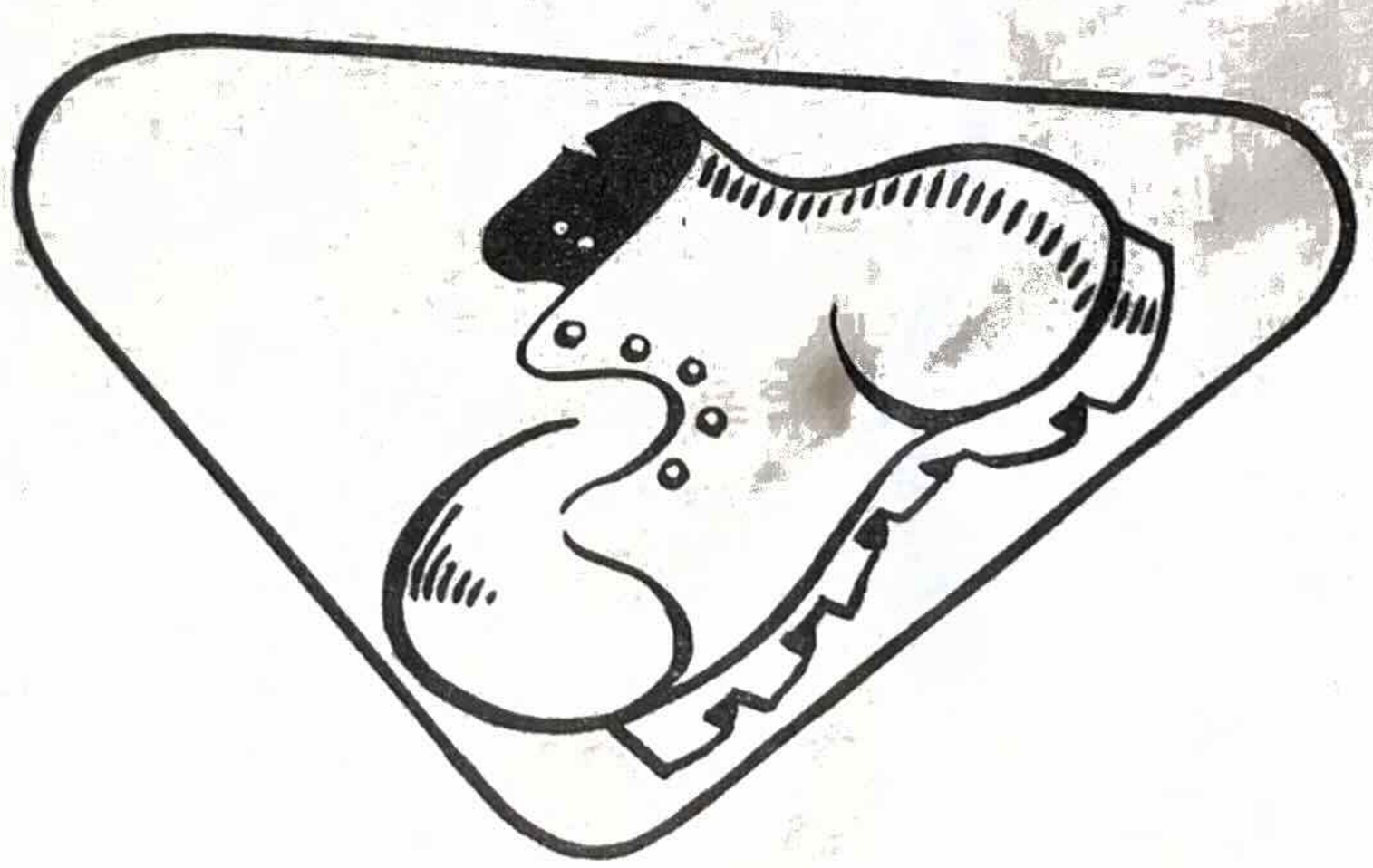
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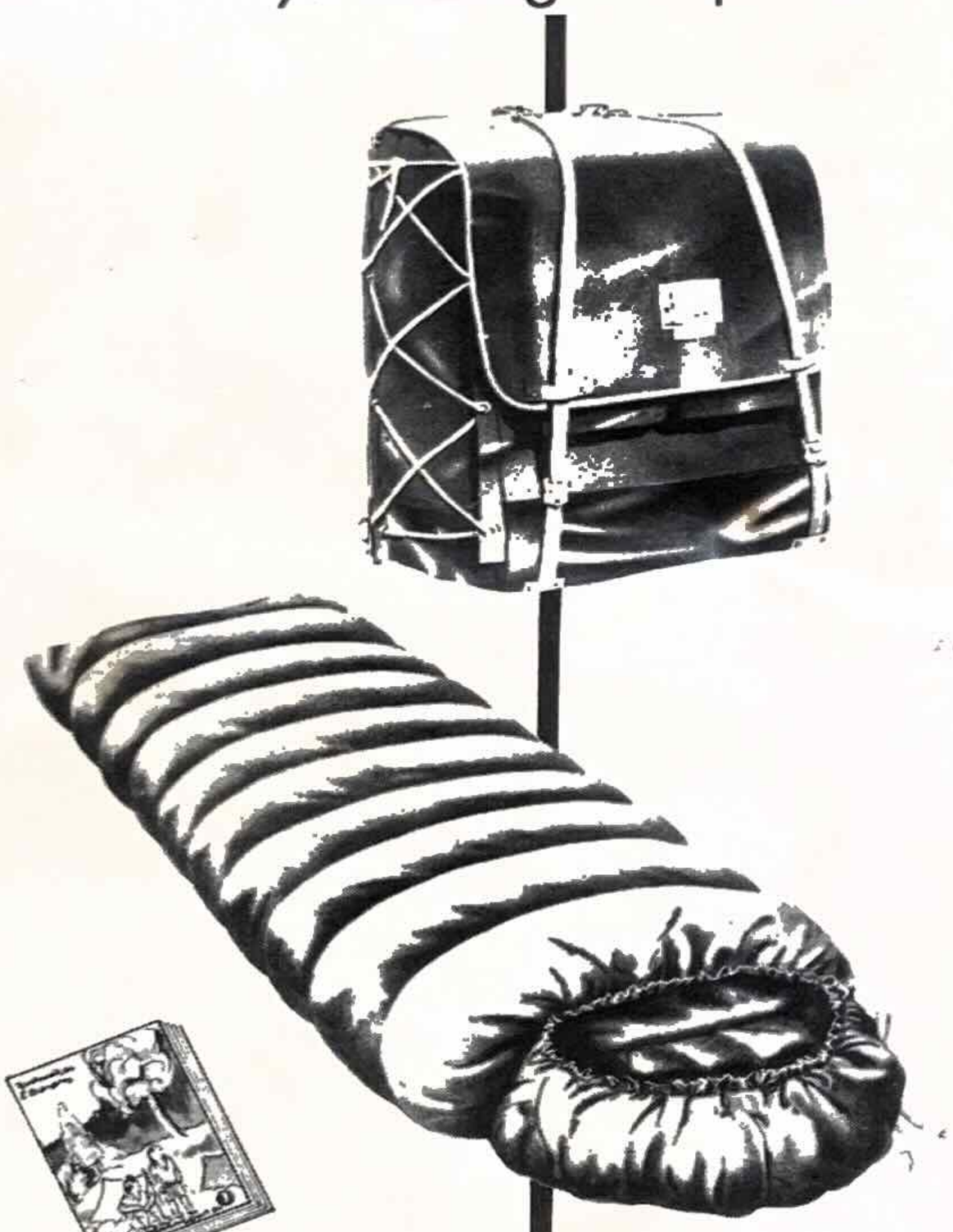


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