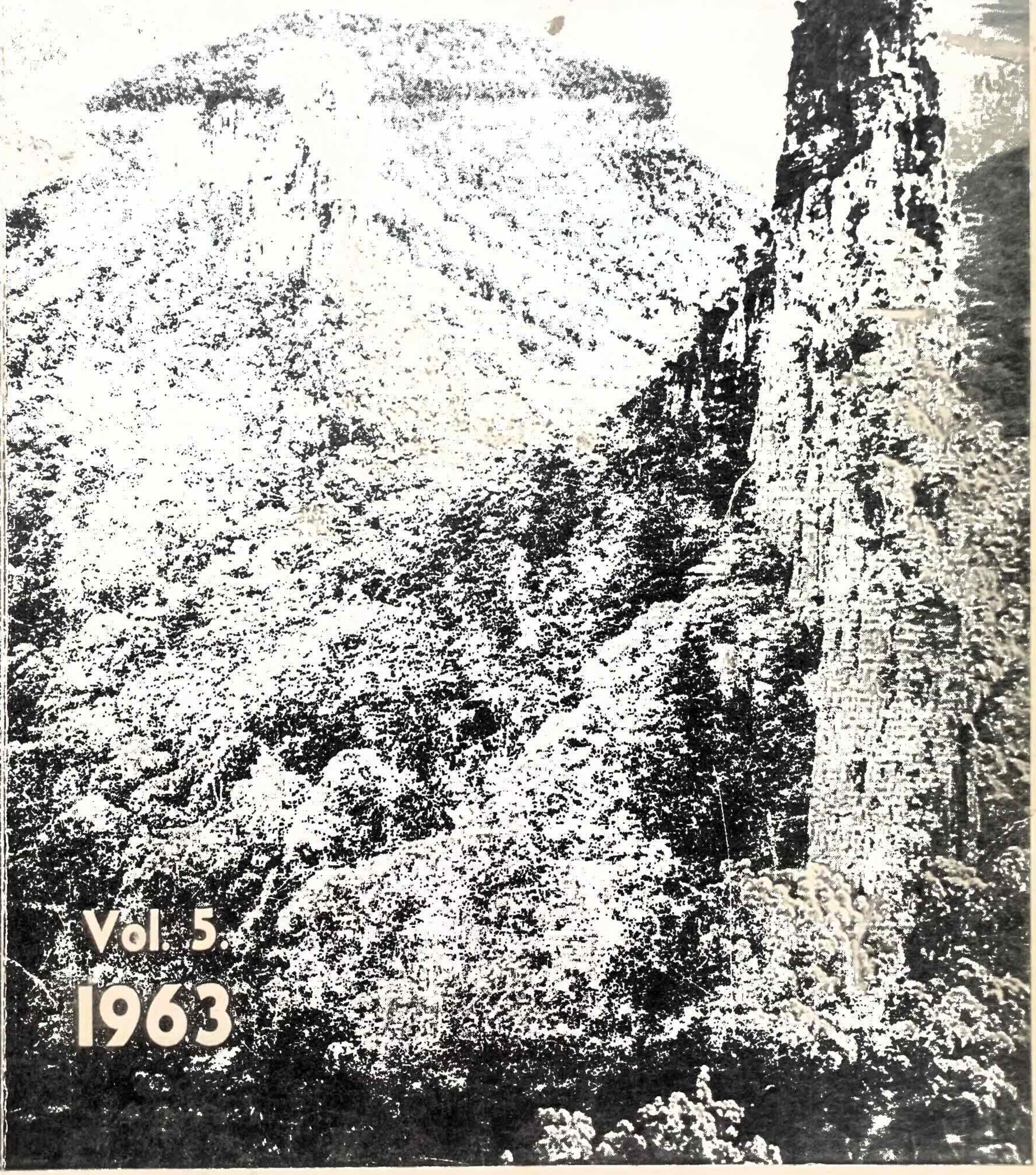
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Vol. 5.
1963

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UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

BUSHWALKING CLUB

MAGAZINE

VOLUME 5

1963

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Cover Photograph: The Steamer Formation, Main Range, S.E. Qld.
Photograph and cover design by John Comino.

Club Members are urged to patronize the Firms who have advertised in this magazine. By doing so, they will help the magazine and the Club.

E D I T O R I A L

SYBIL CURTIS

Unlike most Bushwalking Clubs, the University Club each year sees an influx of new members who are seeking some form of recreation away from their studies. Walking may have appealed to them since it provides, as well as exercise and adventure, an opportunity to learn, understand and grow to love the countryside. Another advantage to be gained is that of free discussion and companionable argument enjoyed around the camp fire at night.

Some freshers may have pounded along graded tracks at tourist resorts or rambled for an afternoon in the country, but few have had experience with the type of walking the Club provides: the introductory talks at meetings concerning basic ideals and equipment are ineffective without practical application. On actual walks they gain knowledge by observing older members, by asking questions and by learning from their own experience. During the first year it is easy enough to follow faithfully behind the leader trusting to his navigation - but little is learnt from this kind of walking. Those who take an active interest and use their initiative to obtain and study maps prior to a trip, find a greater enjoyment in walking. To them walking becomes not merely a relaxation, but an integral part of their lives.

Some people consider the Club a good introduction to walking, but, after sufficient confidence is gained, they prefer to arrange small private parties. This should not be discouraged, provided they keep in contact with the Club in order to pass on their knowledge. This year the Club trips have been well attended while private trips have been virtually non-existent. This would seem to indicate we have a number of walkers but few leaders.

This trend was most noticeable on the Easter Mt. Barney trip, wheretransport was provided and where it was assumed that small parties would arrange themselves and ascend by one of the easy routes accessible from the Upper Portals. Instead, one group attempted but failed to reach the hut, while the rest were content to sit in base camp. Probably all the people were physically capable of the effort but lacked the necessary initiative and independence to do so.

It should be remembered that those who follow today, will be tomorrow's leaders.

THE CLUB

The past year has seen a rapid change in members' preferences from predominantly throughwalking to basecamping; a change which I must view with some misgivings. It is not that I disapprove of basecamps - they will always be an essential part of Club activities, but this year two important weaknesses have appeared in the Club.

First, we have virtually no regular throughwalkers among our younger members. This means we are not maintaining a body of experienced walkers.

Secondly, there has been an almost complete lack of initiative and original thought. There have been relatively few private trips this year, most people being content to attend organised Club trips.

Further, there has been no attempt to modify Club trips to personal preferences. Indeed, when we went to Barney at Easter we encouraged people to plan their own trips - but not a single person did. The year before a similar number of people produced nine small, semi-private parties. Nothing new has been done, either walking or climbing.

Together, these two points simply mean that, in a year or two, the Club may find itself without persons suitable to be leaders. Leaders must be able to think clearly and constructively, and to take the initiative, making decisions whenever required. They are not born - a good leader is, at least in part, the result of a considerable and varied experience.

At times in the past, it has been said that throughwalking was so strong that there was no real place for basecampers in the Club - certainly a most undesirable state. However, the converse would be disastrous, for the Club could not then survive as a bushwalking club. To remain sound, the Club must achieve, maintain, and preserve a balance between the differing needs of throughwalking and basecamping. This can only be done by having a core of members with initiative, imagination, and a degree of independence.

DONALD POTTS

President, 1963

FIRST ASCENTS OF THE STEAMERS - 1950

J.R. WARING

During August and December, 1950, first ascents of the "Steamers" were made by members of the University Bushwalking Club, being an important contribution to the progress of Queensland rock-climbing.

These formations are situated about 12 miles south-west of Cunningham's Gap, and are reached by road through Warwick, travel over the last eleven miles being hindered by many creek crossings which may make a substantial hike necessary. So-called because of their resemblance to a ship's funnel and mast, they rise majestically from a long ridge covered in rain forest, which slopes down towards the Emu Creek sawmill. Further up the ridge can be seen the western cliffs of Mount Roberts, while a large box-like mass almost at the sawmill itself is known as the official Mt. Steamer. There is also another pair of smaller pinnacles, one of which would not be difficult to climb, along the crest; the other may provide a very interesting problem.

The Steamers themselves consist of two pinnacles between 450 and 500 feet high, which are rhyolitic residuals, and except for the actual route up the mast, present very smooth and solid rock faces wherever they are approached. The mast, or easterly steamer, is most pecullar in shape, being 150 yards in length with a width at the summit of between 3 and 15 feet, the narrowest part being near the centre, at a slight depression which can be seen from the valley. A small pinnacle lies to the east of the mast, separated from it by only a few feet, and as far as is known this has not been climbed. The funnel, which is the most severe of the two, is much wider than the other, and measures thirty yards across by about 130 yards long, trees of medium size being found on top. The remaining of the small pinnacles is to be found just to the west of the funnel, the buttress facing east appearing to slant at 45 degrees. This is also crowned by a peculiarly shaped rock.

The first attempt was made on the mast on August 24th, by Bob Waring and Jon Stephenson, and will be described first.

THE MAST - 24/8/50

Proceeding by motorcycle to within three miles of the climb on the previous day, the creek was followed further up and camp was made for the night in the lower of two huts belonging to the Emu Creek sawmill. On the Friday, the creek was followed down again to between the 19th and 20th crossing where it is left and a way forced, if not picked, through the dense rain forest for 600' upwards to the ridge between the steamers, which are about 250 yards apart. The southern side of each is densely surrounded by raspberry and other bush, while the north faces are flanked by clear temperate forest, which extends right down to the north branch of Emu Creek.

Walking along the base of the mast, a chimney was eventually picked near the western end about 30 yards along the southern side, and was hacked and scrambled up, leading on to an overgrown verandah about 80 feet from ground level. From here the western extremity rises in 400' of buttress, which are more exposed than they appear during the climb, and belays, although not used in this expedition, are necessary for safety.

On leaving the wide verandah two chimneys on the northern side of the lower buttress may be used, or the buttress itself may be climbed, although this is rendered difficult by the looseness of the rock. One of these chimneys is at an angle of 100°, and marks the termination of the most successful previous attempt - many years ago. A metal tin was found in a crevice in this chimney containing a note and good luck message, placed there by Birdie Salmon and a lady companion in 1939.

After the upper or wider, chimney, a large balancing rock was encountered at the foot of the next buttress, which may be avoided by a rather delicate traverse to the right. This traverse, which is 350' above base level, uses undercut holds and passes beneath an overhanging cave, terminating on a large detached flat slab. From this slab a journey up a steep loose section leads to the base of the remaining two buttresses. The alternative route from the balancing rock is a steep climb up the edge of the rock, which is exposed and frequented by portable handholds.

The top two buttresses were very sharp, and were climbed directly, we were then able to walk in single file along the top.

A cairn was built and the eastern end visited, progress being most convenient along the edge of the north face owing to a growth of wattle scrub flourishing on the wider portion of the summit.

The descent was made without incident to the verandah, the same route being followed as for the ascent. On negotiating the bottom chimney the rottenness of the mountain was further illustrated by an avalanche of boulders, which cut one of the ropes into four pieces, and narrowly missed the other. Moral - do not walk on piles of jammed boulders in chimneys!

The climb of the mast took 20 minutes, without belaying, the use of which would have been an improvement from the scenic as well as the safety viewpoint, distractions being less disastrous.

The same afternoon the funnel was examined, and an attempt was made at the same place where the successful climb was carried out three months later. The attempt failed because of lack of equipment and time, and would not have been made if the magnitude of the task had been known.

We returned to camp on Friday night and made the journey to Brisbane the following day; one down, one to go!

THE FUNNEL - 2/12/50

The big attempt was planned for the 2nd of December, by Bob Waring and Kemp Fowler, the latter, although not a member of the University Bushwalking Club, being a member of the staff of the Physiology Department. On Friday the trip was made to the first ford, followed by an 11 mile walk in the rain, and the struggle upwards through the jungle to the top of the ridge. Camp was made as darkness fell, in a palatial cave set into the base of the cliff on the northern side near the western end, and only 75 yards from the scene of the morrow's attempt.

During the night the rain eased and dawn revealed fast moving clouds flying down the valley, with the pinnacles bare and apparently dry, the only reminder of the vanished storm being the incessant roar of the wind as it tore past the sharp eastern buttress, leaving the north face in a strange calm. Not risking time on breakfast while the weather lasted, we took advantage of the lull and started the climb at 6 a.m.

The ascent of the edge of an enormous flake of rock, which stands several feet apart from the main mass, led to a pointed platform which provided a perfect stance for the belay to the big ledge above. This ledge is 76' from the ground, and is reached by a short 25' pitch consisting of a lower section using sunken holds followed by a touchy traverse across a steep bare slab. The ledge was attained in less than half an hour's climbing, and is provided with a large boulder which was used as an anchor for the main climb, and for the descent. The ledge is surmounted by a ghastly overhang, which is cut to the left by a loose vertical gully, and further to the left by a bigger overhang. Two attempts were made to climb straight up from the ledge, but were both soon abandoned, the magnitude of the overhang being greatly underestimated.

The only possible method of attack from the ledge consists of an extremely severe traverse to the right, followed by the negotiation of a steep broken section, all of which abounds in small overhangs, and at the time of the climb was partly covered in dripping moss.

On leaving the ledge a descent of about 6 feet led to the base of a green bush, which was used in conjunction with friction holds to reach the top of the first of two small bare buttresses, about five feet above the level of the ledge and 20 feet to the right. From this buttress, which was slimy, it was necessary to step through space about 4' 6" to the second, which also sloped outwards at about 60°. After leaving the first buttress, but not before, a concealed cavity handhold about 2" square will be discovered above the second, and may be used while a mossy ledge is gained, several feet further up.

From here the route followed more broken rock vertically upwards, a prominent crack being useful for jammed fist holds towards its base, but widening further up. This crack contains loose stones, and in one place a knee hold is necessary, which can only be avoided by going further to the right. On leaving the crack higher up the end of the major rock climb is reached at a small gum tree, the belay for the second man being taken from a much larger tree which projects almost horizontally further to the left. Time taken for the traverse was an hour and a half, during which a hundred feet in height were gained.

Travelling up a steep overgrown slope a secondary cliff was revealed, which merged into the main face to the right and decreased in height to the left, as the eastern buttress was approached. Original plans to ascend this cliff directly were discouraged by the activities of a slab as large as a kitchen table (actually about 30" square and about 12' high), which decided it had been there long enough just when it was being climbed upon, and nearly terminated the expedition. The wall was followed to the left and surmounted with the assistance of a small tree at the extreme eastern end, and the flat summit area had now been gained. The western end was visited, and what was judged to be the highest point was marked by a cairn of 8 stones, the return trip was then made along the edge of the south face to avoid the almost impenetrable wattle scrub. It may be mentioned here that the south face, on which an alternative attempt had been considered in August, is quite impregnable. (Has no doubt been climbed since by a large number of small boys all wearing roller skates and carrying 60 pound packs!).

On descending to the lower edge of the sloping verandah we now found it necessary to locate the main ledge from above, which we managed at the third trial, and a sapling growing in a small gully was prepared as an anchor for the doubled rope. A sensational rappel over an overhang 60 feet in height and projecting 12 feet now landed us on the extreme edge of the ledge; for this manoeuvre 150 feet of rope being necessary. The boulder was provided with a sling and used as an anchor for the second rappel, which was also overhanging, and followed down on to the flake of rock used in the ascent and thence down on to the ground. We returned to Brisbane the same day.

For anyone desiring first class rock climbing in magnificent surroundings the Steamers cannot be over-recommended, the mast in particular being the most spectacular and awe-inspiring mountain one could hope to visit, while the funnel is more advisedly left to those who are equipped and capable of the attempt. The use of at least three pitons will be necessary in any repetition of the traverse from the ledge, if any semblance of rope protection is maintained.

It is hoped that the climbing activities of members of the club during 1950 will be followed by even greater successes in the future, as many fine ascents remain to be done.

Editor's Note: For an earlier comprehensive account of these climbs see P.J. Stephenson's article "The Steamer Formation" in Walkabout, April, 1953, p.17.

This article also includes an account of the ascent of "The Pinnacle" by Bob Waring and John Comino in January 1952; this tower being situated to the east of the Mast.

THE MAIN RANGE

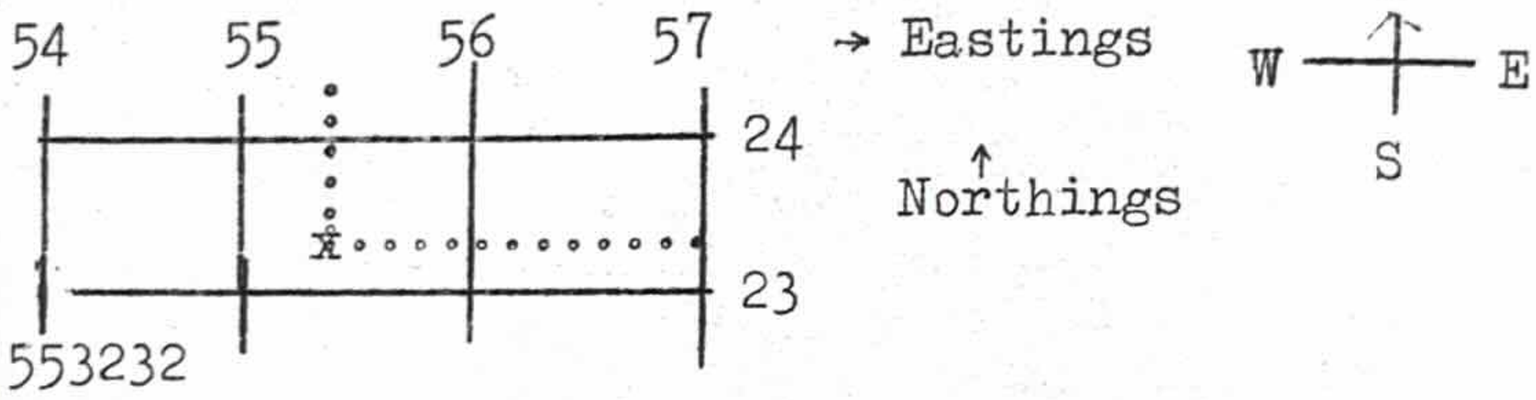
JIM HUTTON

Definition: For the purposes of this article, the Main Range is taken as the section of the Great Dividing Range from Lizard's Lookout to Cunningham's Gap.

This section makes an ideal four day trip giving a wide range of changing floras and faunas, and some of the best views in S.E. Queensland. Sections of this trip may also be selected for weekend trips, and, for this reason, this article will be kept in sections - travelling times, sites of likely water, etc. being given for each section. Water on the Main Range varies with the season, and 1/2 gallon water bottles should be carried and used where needed. Times given will probably be on the generous side.

Map references are taken from the Military Map "Warwick" No. 211 Zone 8.

How to take a Map Reference



Point x is 553232

Eastings are read first, i.e. 55.3
Northings are read second, i.e. 23.2

As a map reference they are combined - Eastings first, followed by northings, giving 553232.

APPROACHES TO THE MAIN RANGE

(1) Via Emu Creek

Take the road from Warwick to Emuvale, then continue on up Emu Creek, and the South Branch of Emu Creek. Cars can be left on the South branch past the sawmill which is situated at the junction of the South and Middle Branches.

Follow an old timber trail up the South Branch. Stick to the creek, passing under an old bridge before reaching a waterfall about 20 ft. high - this can be rounded on the N.W. side. Follow up the main creek, then, as it gets smaller, take the N.W. branch. If necessary, pick up water here, before striking up the ridge between Mt. Roberts and Lizard's Lookout.

Time: 3-4 hours from cars to Lizard's Lookout.

THE MAIN RANGE

(Mt. Cordeaux to Superbus)

(2) Via Glucose Ridge

Follow the main road west through Aratula. Turn off at Mt. Edwards, 4 miles past Aratula. Follow this road, which runs parallel to the main road towards Spicer's Gap for about 4 or 5 miles. Now turn left, following the road which goes round below Greville. After crossing Wild Cattle Creek, this joins another road below Mt. Alford. Turn right, taking the road up Reynold'd Creek past Mt. Moon, on the way to Croftby. Leave the cars where the road leaves Reynold's Creek opposite Mt. Neilson. Follow up Reynold's Creek for about an hour, and then, near the head of the creek, take a suitable ridge running N.W. on to Glucose Ridge which runs S.W. to Lizard's Lookout. Follow the ridge up until you strike the bluffs of Lizard's Lookout. Skirt along the north side of the cliffs for 2-300 yards until a route is seen up through the broken cliff. There are two 20 ft. steps that may require a rope. Now scramble through grass and scrub to the top of the ridge and head N.E. back along the top to Lizard's Lookout.

Time: 6 - 8 hours

(3) Wild Cattle Creek - Glucose Ridge

Access may also be gained from Wild Cattle Creek to Glucose Ridge. Any of the lower ridges look feasible, but aim to hit Glucose Ridge below the lower cliff line.

(4) From "The Head"

Take the road from Croftby to "The Head" - leave cars at the top house on "The Head" side. Follow the ridge to Superbus (566996), then head N.W. to Mt. Roberts (582018) and north to Lizard's Lookout. Careful navigation may be necessary.

Time: ? estimate 4 - 6 hours

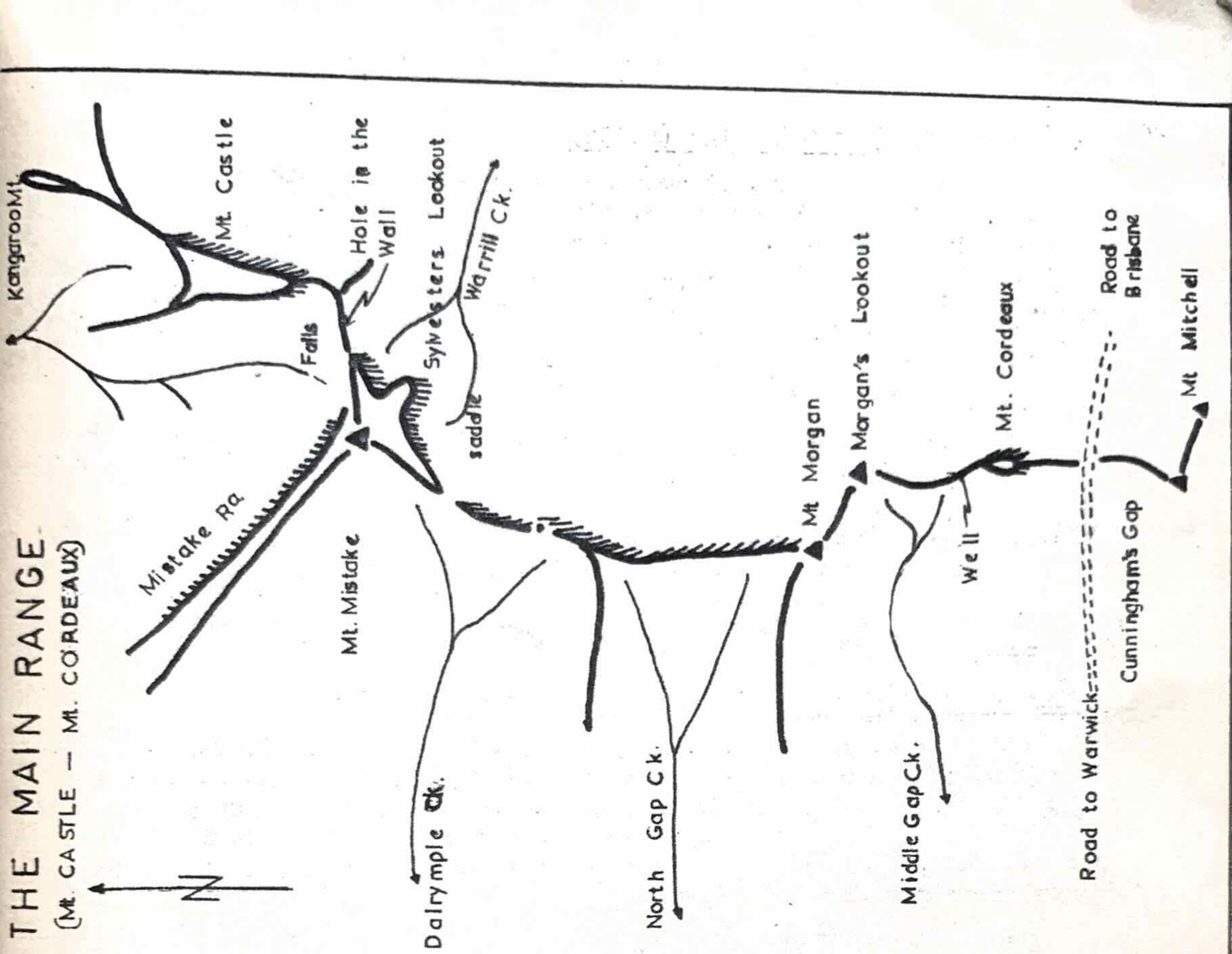
THE MAIN RANGE

Keep as much as possible to the top of the ridge.

Lizard's Lookout (582032) to Mt. Steamer (563027)

Follow the cliff edge or the ridge westwards. Before reaching Mt. Steamer there are two small cliffs. These are both climbed from the southern side. The second takes you to the top of Mt. Steamer.

Time: 1½ hours



WALKERS NOTE!

Order your Paddymade camping gear through your official club equipment-officer.

Remember, your club benefits from club sales of Paddymade gear obtained from your local Paddy Pallin Agent:

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Mt. Steamer to Panorama Point (546069)

From the top of Mt. Steamer do NOT follow the Steamer range which runs S.W. Drop steeply on the N. side and head N.N.W. to a low saddle on the main dividing range. Water may be found on the S.W. side of this saddle. Follow the ridge N.N.W. to 549048, then north, then climbing N.N.E. to 555065. The ridge running N.E. from here is a feasible route to Wild Cattle Creek. From here turn W.N.W. and head for Panorama Point. At the cliff line skirt round to the S.W. side to find the route to the to

Time: 3 - 4 hours

The ridge from here or from Asplenium to the Middle Branch of Emu Creek is quite feasible. Also, the Main Range may be gained by this route

Panorama Point to Asplenium (543074)

Follow the ridge north to a saddle, then into rain forest where a cairn (rock) marks the top of Asplenium.

Time: 1 hour

Asplenium to Mt. Huntley (538091)

From the cairn take a compass bearing and head N.N.W. for 5-10 minutes until you reach the top of the cliffline. The best descent is about 200 yards west of the main ridge - move along the cliffline to find this spot, then descend through scrub in two stages to the base of the cliffs. Now follow the base of the cliffs back to the main ridge, then follow the ridge to Mt. Huntley.

Time: 3 - 4 hours

The saddle between Asplenium and Huntley is a reasonable campsite and water may be found to the west at the head of Barney Creek.

Descent of Cliffs of Mt. Huntley

Head north to top of cliffline. The best spot for descent is about 50 yards west of the Main range ridge. Here there is a 20 ft. drop in a gully with a grass tree at the top. A rope belay is advisable here and is essential for any inexperienced person.

Time depends on the size of the party.

From here you may drop to the head of Swan Creek for water or to camp.

The main dividing ridge is easily followed to Double Top (517127) which is ascended directly along the ridge to the top.

Time: 4 hours

Double Top to Hell Hole Creek Campsite (approx. 505129)

At the northern end of Double Top, descend through the cliffs on the N.W. side. Skirt N.E. under the cliffs to the main ridge then drop N.W. into rain forest at the head of Hell Hole Creek. Follow the creek down to a suitable campsite.

Time: 1 hour

Hell Hole Creek to Spicer's Peak (515144)

From the campsite head N.W. and later N. to hit the Spicer mass about the centre (507144). You may have to go along, and up, a small cliffline to this point. From here head east to Spicer's Lookout.

Time: 2 - 3 hours

Spicer's Peak to Mt. Mitchell (505188)

Come back westwards along the top of the Spicer mass to a clear area just before a saddle. Drop down through the open gums and grass trees on the north side. Either follow the creek down, or head N.W. over rolling country until you meet the main creek going west with a track or road on its south side.

Follow the road west until you can see the main ridge running up to the west peak of Mt. Mitchell. Head for this ridge.

(N.B. Spicer's Gap affords many beautiful camp spots½.

Follow the ridge N.E. to Mt. Mitchell (west peak) until you hit a tourist track near the top. Follow this to the top of the east peak of Mt. Mitchell..

Time: 5 hours

Mt. Mitchell to Cunningham's Gap

Follow the track back down to the road in Cunningham's Gap.

Time: 1 hour

This area may also be approached by a road going directly to Mt. Huntley via Swan Creek, giving ready access to the Huntley-Double Top area. I think Mt. Huntley may also be approached from the head of Wild Cattle Creek (right branch), by a ridge to the Main Range ridge just north of Huntley.

I have been requested to add a few notes on the northern part of the Great Dividing Range from Cunningham's Gap to Mt. Castle.

Cunningham's Gap to Mt. Cordeaux

Follow the graded tourist track to Mt. Cordeaux. It zigzags up to the cliffline, then goes round the S.W. side below the cliffs to the northern saddle (497216), which gives good views to east and west.

Time: 1½ hours

Mt. Cordeaux is ascended by climbing to the cliffline on the N.W. side. Skirt round to the south to find the wire used to aid scaling the cliffs, thereby making the top accessible. There is a well about 50 yards along the track north of the saddle, on the N.E. side of the track.

Mt. Cordeaux to Morgan's Lookout and Mt. Morgan

The track heads north past the well. In parts it may be overgrown but you should be able to follow it with little difficulty to Morgan's Lookout.

Time: 1 hour

This point gives a good view of the rest of the range to Mt. Mistake and Mt. Castle, and of the cliffs forming the eastern border of the range.

From here the track deteriorates into a series of blazes N.W. through rain forest to an open rock area which is Mt. Morgan.

Time: 1/2 hour

Mt. Morgan to Mt. Mistake

Descend from the northern side of Mt. Morgan and head northwards along the range, taking care not to get on to the high ridge running off to the west. A creek running to the west is crossed near its source (about 1 hour from Mt. Morgan). Climb north out of the creek on to the ridge which mainly follows the cliffline, crossing the head of another small creek. Finally the head of Dalrymple Creek is crossed in the deep saddle before Mt. Mistake. Water may be obtained here before climbing on to the Mistake Range.

A track leads up to the S.E. point of the Mistake Range (at about 494295), and then eastwards to Sylvester's Lookout (502289). From here an excellent parorama is seen to the east.

Time: Mt. Morgan to Mt. Mistake - about 5 hours

Sylvester's Lookout to "Hole in the Wall"

The track from Sylvester's Lookout first heads N.W. towards Mistake, but it soon veers north, then N.E., following the ridge out to Mt. Castle. Soon after emerging from the rain forest on this ridge, the track drops down into the head of Laidley Creek. Following this creek down for 10 to 15 minutes brings you to the Laidley Falls.

Time: 2 hours

Descend about 20 yards to the west of the falls, then come back eastwards under the falls - taking a shower, if required. (10-15 minutes). Skirting along the base of the cliffs brings you to the "Hole in the Wall".

"Hole in the Wall" to Tarome

This route to the east is the quickest way back to civilization, via the Upper Warril Creek. Follow the ridge towards Mt. Castle for 10-15 minutes, until a high point is reached with a convenient ridge running down to the east. From the bottom follow the low ridges, or the Creek, to Tarome or the nearest farm house.

Time: 1 hour to creek plus 3/4 hour to road

"Hole in the Wall" to Mt. Castle

Follow the ridge N.E. then north as far as possible, then pass under the cliffs on the west side for several hundred yards until the cliffs break up. Climb to the top, then double back to the south end to see the wonderful view.

Time: About 1½ hours

Mt. Castle to Laidley Creek

Follow the top of Mt. Castle northwards to 507312 and descend steeply down the most prominent ridge which runs N.N.W. down into Laidley Creek, then follow the creek out to the road.

Time: 2 - 3 hours

The map for this area is the Military Map, Sheet 201, "Liverpool Range".

SNOW CAVE

P.J. STEPHENSON

In the early afternoon we reached the main snow plateau of the volcano, "Big Ben", on Heard Island. With the summit only 1500 feet higher and a string of provision depots below us we seemed to be in a very strong position to complete the climb and conclude all the scientific work on the volcano and its glaciers. But thick clouds came in suddenly, obscuring everything and there was nothing for us to do but find a sheltered site and camp quickly. We would have to wait for better weather to complete the final climb up crevassed slopes to the summit.

Ten days before the three of us had been landed from "Nella Dan", by pontoon through erratic surf with a heavy undertow. Since then we had spent the time steadily relaying depots up the glacier route chosen for the attempt on the mpuntain. Very severe weather is typical of Heard Island and in the course of our climb we had already experienced some violent storms, one of which had threatened our tent and forced us to dig a snow cave overnight for shelter.

Grahame Budd, a physiologist at Sydney University, was the leader of the expedition. He spent a year on Heard Island 8 years before and had also been on expeditions to the Himalayas and the Antarctic mainland. Warwick Deacock, an experienced mountaineer, had taken part on numerous climbing expeditions in Alaska, Lapland, the Himalayas and Africa. He had just completed 3 years establishing the first Outward Bound school in Australia. As the third member of the expedition mountain party I had gained my earlier expedition experience in Antarctica and in the Himalayas and would return to my position at the University College. The expedition was organised under the auspices of Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions, and included another 3 men who had been landed at the old station Atlas Cove on the other side of the island.

On the plateau of Big Ben we spent the next 5 days in the vicinity of our tent at 7500 feet pinned down by snow, heavy drift, strong winds and uncomfortable temperatures (between $8^{o}F$ and $33^{o}F$). Most of this time we were forced to stay inside the tent and in an astonishingly short time drifting snow completely buried it. We attempted to build an igloo for more convenient shelter but warm temperatures rendered the snow blocks sugary and unstable and with wet drift continually obscuring snow goggles we were apprehensive lest prolonged work outside without them under whiteout conditions give us snow blindness. We built a tunnel from our tent entrance, sealing the tunnel with a snow-block trapdoor. Life in

HEARD ISLAND

0 1 2 3 4 5
MILES

SOME ROUTES OF THE 1963 EXPEDITION

73°30

LAURENS PENINSULA

ATLAS COVE

OLD ANARE STATION

PLATEAU

MAWSON PEAK 9005

SNOW CAVE

PASS 4000

SOUTH BARRIER

SPIT BAY

HUT

WINSTON LAGOON

53°10

53°10

LONG BEACH

73°30

the buried tent was uncomfortable and gloomy, for the weight of the overlying snow reduced its size, ventilation was difficult and our warmth together with that of the primus made our existence distinctly damp! We ate lightly (we established the camp with 4 full days' food and ample fuel) and talked. What a lot one can talk about! At times too we read aloud extracts from the books we had brought - Budd's copy of "Doctor Zhivago", Deacock's "The Art of Living" and my "War and Peace".

Bad weather on Big Ben in February is particularly awkward. It may be either cold or as warm as freezing point, and winds may reach 100 miles an hour carrying blinding drift snow. Under warmer conditions a great deal of hoar condenses from the driving clouds and this with the drift penetrates clothing, buries tents and forms bobs of ice on route flags. Our route flags were mounted on fibre glass wands and after a short time these would bend double, the flags becoming almost invisible! Our clothing included an alternative of camouflage wind-proofs (which quickly smothered in snow and became wet) or yellow water-proofs which inevitably caused condensation inside them and also allowed drift to penetrate.

On the second and fourth days we attempted to go down from the tent to bring up the food depot at 6000 feet, but poor visibility in cloud and drift prevented our travelling further than only a few hundred yards. Under these conditions an attempt on the summit would have been unwarranted for although we could certainly have reached the top it is doubtful if we would have found the buried tent on our return.

The fifth day on the plateau gave intermittent snatches of visibility and after carefully sealing the trapdoor of our tunnel we set off a third time to bring up more food to secure our wait for better summit weather. As usual we took emergency gear with us - down suits, some food, a snow saw and small shovel, in case we could not regain the tent. At first conditions were not good and we marked the trail, rope length by rope length, with cairns built of snow blocks in which we fastened strips of fluorescent orange cloth, which shone behind us in the whiteout like road lamps. After 3 hours the weather improved considerably but with very strong gusty winds and the roar of the wind screaming over the icy crest of the ridge 1000 feet above us sounded like a train.

On reaching the site of the depot we were dismayed to find a broad featureless snow ridge - presumably the depot was completely buried, and probing with our ice axes we guessed at least a foot of new snow was covering it. Our compass fixed its site within 10 yards and we spent the next 80 minutes searching fruitlessly for the food. The weather was deteriorating, the wind further increasing and now blowing down from the plateau. To attempt to return to the tent in the late afternoon would be hazardous and pointless, since there was little more than a day's food there.

As the next food depot was 2000 feet below us, we decided to descend to the pass at 4000 feet which the route up had negotiated. We could bivouac in the snow cave we had made there, recover food from the depot and return to the plateau,we hoped,next day. So we went on down, making our way carefully in thick cloud. At 5000 feet it became warm and the drifting snow changed to rain driven forcibly by the wind!

When we reached the pass, the scene was as wild as any I have ever seen. The scream of wind through the narrow gap was especially impressive, and the rain flung against the rock pinnacles of the ridge ran down in short waterfalls before disappearing in spray again before the wind. From time to time rocks were torn from the ridge and violent eddies in excess of 100 miles an hour intermittently sucked noisily about the windscoop near the snow cave (I saw one of these lift Deacock from his stance). The sun had come out, and with an eerie electric blue light on the distant cliffs of South Barrier, we witnessed the bizarre spectacle of a bright rainbow! My God, what a place!

The snow cave entrance was smothered but we soon dug our way in, out of the wind. We settled into our down suits to make our bivouac as comfortable as possible, and Deacock produced some solid fuel (primus starting fuel) and using a milk tin, the shovel and some pitons driven into the wall of the cave, prepared a hot drink. The snow cave was low, and we could barely sit up. The temperature outside remained warm and soon our own warmth caused steady drips from the roof; within an hour, try as we did to shelter beneath our waterproofs, our entire clothing was soaked!

It was most uncomfortable and the night dragged on, giving us only snatches of sleep. At 5.30 next morning we prepared to move, putting on outdoor clothing. The entrance was smothered and so we cut a new one in the cave roof and emerged in the grey light of dawn. It had turned cold and in the persisting wind our wet garments froze at once like armour. The weather was now worse and it was clear we could not negotiate the pass in safety to recover food from the dump below it. Not only was it very hard to stand near the crest of the pass in the high gusts, but there was also high risk of frostbite. The only thing we could do was return to the snow cave for shelter in the hope that conditions would improve, and this we did promptly resealing the entrance behind us.

We nibbled blocks of pemmican, some sodden biscuits, butter, chocolate and some raw bacon (excellent but for me indigestible) and gathered drips for drinking. Wringing and re-wringing water from our clothes, huddling for warmth, exercising from time to time, we tried to gain snatches of sleep. The morning wore past and the afternoon came. We had the barometer and thermometer with us and watched these closely - not that fluctuations on other days had ever predicted the weather! Inside the cave air temperature remained just above freezing point and it was hard to tell what the weather was like

outside. So at regular intervals we reopened the entrance to check. At about 2 in the afternoon we became aware of a change and found the wind had abated somewhat and that thick snow was now falling. Very limited visibility prevented any idea of moving. By this time it was quite clear that we must abandon the plateau camp and retreat to the coast in the hope of returning later.

Time crept past. Later in the afternoon it became strangely quieter, and the cave distinctly warmer. During short snathces of sleep I began to experience nightmares in which snow fell endlessly, burying, burying, and I would start awake with the horror of a possible descent in deep soft snow.

Perhaps we were becoming numbed and lulled by the cold? During the afternoon we had periodically checked the weather by opening a small hole in the roof, but the snow which tumbled in each time in a stream made it harder and harder to do this. So we talked of better things, recalled situations which we had been through on other expeditions which had been equally painful, and waited for the next day; at 7.30 Budd and I lit our last cigarettes. What a blessing that we did!

Very soon we were acutely aware that something was very wrong. Deacock, a non-smoker, crystallised our inactivity when the smoke haze accumulated more and more oppressively - why! He demanded more air and moved to free the entrance again. He dug a foot, another, and another - and still had not broken out - we were snowed in! Deacock worked hard with the shovel for the next 20 minutes cutting up into the roof. It can be slow work, up into new snow he had only been able to penetrate to the surface with the very end of the shovel. There was at least 5 feet of snow covering the cave!

I gave Deacock a spell and found digging quite frightening, there was so much sugar-like snow packed above us. And one's shoulders are always much wider than the hole. At long last I emerged into the darkness and driving snow and wind. The edge of the windscoop next our cave had chosen to build up in the course of the afternoon, smothering the cave.

I dug a trench to facilitate entry to and exit from the cave. Our position was precarious for clearly we could not attempt to descend at night in this weather, nor effectively reseal the cave and try to leave it early next day. We chose to leave the entrance open and keep the trench to it clear by shovelling. At first light we would attempt the descent.

We had to dig continuously and worked in shifts at first 30 minutes each but later 15, shovelling for our lives! After our exposure to cold in the cave without adequate food I marvelled that each of us could yet find strength to work - but could we keep it up? By 2 in the morning we were barely keeping pace with the creeping advance of snow and it had begun to trickle back into the cave. Thirty minutes later we had no choice, but to get ready for evacuation of our shelter as it was quickly filling up inside!

Groping in the dark we marshalled our things - pack frames and socks, misshapen water-logged clothing and the tangled ropes we had been lying on. In a crazy scramble we got these out and after a long struggle the last man, Deacock, reached the surface fighting to get through the almost-filled entrance. Standing beside the entrance we got ourselves together and roped up. We were minus our ice-axes (buried beneath feet of drift at the old cave entrance) and our clothing and gloves froze solid in the cold wind. The prospect of fingering crampon straps was so frightful that we decided to attempt to negotiate the pass corner without them, and set off. The corner proved impossible, for Budd went skating off down the ice on the other side before the wind and was held by Deacock on the rope.

So we <u>had</u> to put our crampons on! I recall starting on this task, removing my gloves to play with the frozen leather straps, quite convinced I would never manipulate them through their buckles. But what unexpected strengths one may find at such times. Painful as it was, I found my fingers were not freezing as expected and after 15 minutes my crampons were on. So were Deacocks, and Budd had secured one of his. He was struggling stubbornly with the second using completely numb and, as we perceived, apparently frozen fingers. We helped and between us got the things fastened and set off down at once, Budd leading. I had the dubious honour of being end-man, and so was armed with our only remaining belay weapon - the shovel!

It was only half past three and there was the very faintest light, yet Budd led us surely down beside the high crag next the pass. By the time we reached its foot, where a long traverse starts, we could see quite well in the dawn twilight. Budd's fingers were frozen and I vainly tried to restore circulation by holding them under my own clothing. After 20 minutes there was some improvement but it seemed wisest to get further down the mountain quickly to a more sheltered and safe place.

Setting off again, this time I led. Though we had made the traverse many times it was hard to find the way through the crevasses. Stinging drift thrashed in our faces, with visibility only 50 yards. I lost the way, we climbed too high where the wind was even stronger, and we were repeatedly knocked off our feet by the gusts. We got ourselves from one difficulty to another until at last could see ahead some distance in improving visibility. Things improved and we at last were on safe ground with a straightforward 3000 ft. descent to the beach.

We descended steadily hoping to emerge in sunshine but it remained very cold and windy even at the beach which we reached at half past nine. Deacock and I built a shelter using rocks and moss, packing cases and some waterproof fabric. Later we christened this "the wallow" for our existence in it did resemble some habits of the elephant seal! We now had ample food and fuel and we gorged ourselves on hot food and drinks made on the spare primus. Heaven - our clothes began to dry too! Deacock cared for Budd's

hands - they were unpleasant but not gravely serious and later recovered completely.

The first night at the beach was painful, our sodden down suits keeping us only partly warm. Through the hours sudden squalls called for maintenance of our flimsy shelter, and it rained. Later it proved that each of us had nightmares - about being buried by snow! At dawn I prepared some more hot food and drinks but these weren't very comforting. I felt completely depressed by the hardship and the prospect of having to spend another 3 weeks on this wretched island before the ship returned. The extreme discomfort of the wallow wasn't reassuring and so I went for a long walk along the beach in the wind.

I was not alone, for I was in the midst of the usual zoo - thousands of penguins playing in the surf, elephant seals lying on the beach, and there were hundreds of birds. The beach was covered in blocks of ice washed up and the gale was pluming the crest of each breaking wave in the boisterous surf. Above, the lowest ridges of the mountain still held new snow and driving clouds completely obscured everything above 2000 feet - thank heavens we were down, even if we had lost everything at the top camp! As I walked I began to feel slightly warm and somewhat grudgingly acknowledged the magnificence of my surroundings. Sharp memories of our recent tribulation and of the firm comradeship confirmed in overcoming them were more warming still. Indeed, before long I had accepted the fate of those next three weeks and as I trudged along simply could not help feeling even some enthusiasm again for being there.

What a place this island is!

"In this modern age very little remains that is real. Night has been banished, so have the cold, the wind and the stars. They have all been neutralised: the rhythm of life is itself obscured. Everything goes so fast and makes so much noise, and men hurry by without heeding the grass by the roadside, its colour, its smell and the way it shimmers when the wind caresses it. What a strange encounter then is that between man and the high places of his planet! Up there he is surrounded by the silence of forgetfulness".

Gastron Rebuffat
from "Starlight and Storm"

ON LIBERTY

B. BAKER

To see the world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.
Blake

On all sides there were ragged mountain ranges carved by time and by the winds and snows. Their outline stretched to the horizon in almost all directions being broken only to the south where the ocean rolled in, to meet the land in white strips of sand.

Slowly the realization of our triumph settled over us - we were finally there atop this mighty Peak. We stood there gladly drinking in the scene presented by the late afternoon sun; the brilliant reds, the harsh greens, the yellows and browns of the high level vegetation; the dead white of the snow gums protruding in the dark shadowy valleys; and the beautiful grey of the quartzite ranges presenting their precipitous walls to the sun while here and there some lingering snow glistened on ledges and high moors.

Nowhere in our vision could we see signs of human life - we were alone in the most lonely and picturesque area of Tasmania. A haven only for the dedicated and yet a region that beckons again across some 1500 miles and six months of time. We were early visitors to the Peak, later there would be many people in the area some of whom would climb it; but now we were alone and we all felt that it was better. Here to feel the pleasures of achievement, and of companionship, and of solitude amongst the hills.

During the day we had had our troubles taking the wrong gully and then having to climb off a vertical cliff face. This lost us half a day and when we finally arrived at the Climbing Plateau it was 4 o'clock. Then came the climb of about 100 feet which necessitates reasonable skill and concentration. First there was a rock chimney down which a waterfall was flowing, and the agonising moments spent surveying the 2000 foot drop, while I was wedged in against the rock with icy water pouring down my neck and a decision to make,will linger for many years. My world at that time was bounded on one side by cold, dark, wet rock towering above me and on the other by a splendid view of which I remember very little. The ledge beckoned invitingly and, finally, I left my watery lair in a scramble which attained me safety, and a gale to help dry the water!

Next there was another smaller and more protected chimney followed by an airy traverse on a six inch sloping ledge to the last belay. However trouble loomed as the others were doubtful about the time - could we climb

and still return to camp? Surely it was better to accept defeat and return another day? Or was it? In this desperate land it might conceivably rain for the next week and our opportunity would be lost. We had to climb today. And so we struggled on climbing quickly over the next pitch to arrive at the scree chute which needed only a scramble to the top. Finally the summit, where we forgot time and revelled in the splendour of our success. The mountain had not suffered any indignity, instead we were all one with her, we knew that henceforth our memories would be of pleasant hours tried and tested, we knew that the Peak would live forever with us wherever we might be. We knew these things and we were happy on top of that vertical world of rock. We knew furthermor that we had all learned from the experience of each other, and that the Mountain had helped to weld us together as a unit inseparable in matters of the hills.

At last we remembered that the sun was sinking rapidly and that we must return quickly. Scrambling down to the rock climb and then rappelling as quickly as we were able we reached the plateau only to find darkness had descended and our chances of finding our way back to camp now faded. We began making ourselves as warm as possible in preparation for a freezing night, hoping for sleep or at least a comfortable rest. However neither were forthcoming, and all night the dark foreboding hulk of our recent mistress loomed over us as we shivered in the blast of wind.

The next day we returned to camp wiser by far and also happier in our respect and friendship for Federation Peak - the cold grey quartzite fang of Terra Australis.

Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a mountaineer

Wordsworth

.....

Thus all the threatening ranges of dark mountains,
which in nearly all ages of the world, men have looked
upon with aversion or with terror, are in reality
sources of life and happiness far fuller and more
beneficient than the bright fruitfulness of the plain

John Ruskin

.....

Where the clouds can go men can go; but they must be hardy men.

Andreas Maurer

.....

THE CARNARVON RANGES

N.H. EBERHARDT

After seeing many photographs and reading Doug Clague's article in the 1961 Club Magazine on the Carnarvon Ranges, I jumped at the chance to go there in the 1962 May Vacation. Everything was arranged - large party, good walkers, plenty!!! of transport, etc. etc.

As it turned out the transport was my -- I hesitate to say it,"Car" !! If it could get there anything could.

It has been suggested that you could walk in from the Carnarvon Highway at Wesley Station, but this 25 miles would discourage even the most ardent walker. Some form of transport is necessary and any car could make the trip if driven steadily and with plenty of hefty males (or females) to push it through hazards such as creek crossings, sand,and, if it rains ---MUD by the mile.

Once at the C.W.A. hut all your troubles are over - except for wondering how you are going to get home if it rains. Cast these thoughts aside however - what could be better than three months at the Carnarvons.

The main problem is the gigantic size of the park, and unless you adopt a systematic form of walking some of the best places will be missed. While carrying packs it is best to stay on the track as a good pace can be kept up and this allows more time to visit the numerous side gorges. It also minimises the quantity of grass seeds which have to be removed from your socks and clothes every night.

During our stay at the park we investigated all the side gorges on the southern side on the way up the gorge and those on the northern side during the walk back to the car.

The easiest way to find the track is to cross to the northern bank of the creek near the C.W.A. hut and stay on this side until you pass the big pool,then cross to the southern bank where a bit of searching should reveal the track.

The first gorges of interest are those of Koolaroo Creek. The extreme left hand branch of this creek forms Violet Gorge which is a beautiful fern tree filled cleft in the Violet siltstone of the area. This gorge ends in an 18 ft. high waterfall which can be climbed and the gorge followed if you are keen enough to make the cold wet climb.

Koolaroo Creek itself is a typical gorge of the area, being a series of dark rock tunnels covered with green moss with numerous clear pools of water with a faint bluish tinge.

About 3/4 of a mile above this gorge another one is marked on the Forestry Map, but not named. The small creek from this enters the main creek just below the island across which the track passes. This gorge is really worth a visit as it is a cleft worn in the sandstone, about 4 feet wide on the average and 100 feet deep. It is entered by means of a climb up a waterfall or by a ledge up to the left hand side of the waterfall. This gorge is about 200 feet long and ends in a natural amphitheatre about 75 feet in diameter with vertical or overhanging walls, and containing numerous tree ferns. This is an amazing place which should not be missed.

Proceeding once again up the creek for about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles a large creek comes in from the south. A track goes up the east bank of this creek to the Art Gallery. There are several good rock paintings here but many have been defaced.

From here the main creek goes westward until the red hill of Paranbooya is seen;here the creek takes a sharp northward swing and then around a hairpin bend near the mouth of Kooraminya Creek. This place makes an idoal camp site. If you fear rain may spoil your stay, there are caves in Kooraminya Creek, and also at the next point of interest - Cathedral Cave. Don't go to Cathedral Cave with the idea of an actual cave as it is nothing more than a gigantic sandstone overhang; but there are some exceedingly well preserved rock paintings. There are also many aboriginal gr ves in the area but the skeletons have been removed.

This marks the point of convenient penetration of the gorge, as from here all walking is up the creek bed and this is hard going with heavy packs. One last gorge to the south is worth a visit. This is Boowindu Creek. This is a marvellous gorge entering the main one just past Cathedral Cave. In some places it is like a tunnel through the rock and extremely dark with its overhanging sandstone roof. By following it up,and then a stiff climb, you can climb Battleship Spur from which excellent views of the park can be obtained.

The trip out is made interesting by visits to the northern gorges. On the whole these are less interesting than those on the south and tend to be rougher and more choked with vegetation.

Kooraminya Creek is very beautiful with its pinkish siltstone and delicate tree ferns, and numerous small waterfalls.

The next large gorge downstream marked on the map does not hold too much interest as it is filled with thick vegetation and much broken rock.

Just upstream from the island in the creek is a small gorge. From the track a small waterfall can be seen and a sign announces that this is Aljohn Falls, but these are nothing compared with the 100 yard long gorge above them - named Fairyland - a name which fits this small gorge extremely well. It

would be about the most beautiful spot in the park with its green moss walls, tree ferns,and waterfall which you have to wade out into the water at the end of the gorge to see at all well.

The other gorges on the northern side are not very interesting and muck walking is needed to see anything to compare with those of the southern side.

Before leaving the park, a trip must be made up the eastern escarpment to Goothalanda - "The Devil's Signpost". This pinnacle is well worth the climb, but the utmost care must be taken as the sandstone is crumbly and very dangerous - I have several scars to prove it.

Approach the climb from the north and you can proceed straight up the ridge, or to either side up cracks to the northern summit. I found it best going around to the east but others have found it best to go straight up the ridge. Once on the northern summit a short "hairy" razorback ridge takes you to the southern and true summit. The top is gained by going to the eastern side at the southern end of the razorback and then up to the top. From here the view is really marvellous and the sandstone cliffs stretching 50 miles to the south stand out clearly and dominate the countryside.

So that is the Carnarvons - well, a small portion anyway. Now all that remains is to get home - Well, what if you can't, it's a good excuse for a few days or weeks off Uni.

So let the way wind up the hill or down
Over rough or smooth, the journey will be joy,
Still seeking what I sought when I was but a boy.

van Dyke

ON LEADERS

CLAIRE CURTIS

The name you will probably have seen on the back of the Club circulars as being a member of the committee - not that that means anything. He could be an old decrepit member who has BEEN TO FEDERATION or an enthusiastic fresher from last year . No matter what, he most likely has not been there before, but from the map and a trip report of the area written a few years ago there should be no cliffs and plenty of water (he hopes).

There is no characteristic feature about those creatures for they come in all sizes. There are tall and lean ones with rounded shoulders and head forward as if perpetually carrying a 70 lb. pack; some, "broad where a broad should be broad". There are those who tend to the square or round shape; but there is one whose broadest part slipped badly and consequently behaves like a lead bottom "can't knock me over toy" - particularly useful when rock-hopping.

In the morning some leaders see it as their duty to ris first and light the fire so getting the camp moving. Others consider it their privilege to stay in their sleeping bags till last. With the sun high in the heavens and the smell of sizzling steak, one typical of these sleepil sticks a head out of his bag and says "What's for breakfast - there are some sausages in my pack", and immediately withdraws back into the green cocoon.

Leaders fall into three categories. There are leaders who lead, leaders who walk in front, and there are those who walk behind.

The first type is a very annoying person. He knows exactly what route will be taken, how long it will take, where water will be found and if it is necessary to carry it. From this he determines the time of rising and departure, but not the time of arrival at his camp site - fresherettes see to that. The compass and map are essential parts of his equipment - in fact, two compasses, one in front and one behind, just to make sure a straight course is taken. The fun of being lost - not lost, just bewildered - just can't be enjoyed.

The best leader is he who walks in front. He is not quite sure of the route and the compass is only for checking your position after you are bewildered and can't see out through the thick rain-forest to get a bearing off any mountain. After of an hour of pushing through vines and wait-a-whiles, a mountain appears; a compass and map are quickly consulte and a bearing taken. A surprised voice says, "It can't be! We are going in the wrong direction"; so, you go back up the ridge you have just

descended feeling weary and tired, while the leader bounds off happily enthusing about the beautiful view that would have been missed if we had stopped on the right ridge. On arriving home very late, and sinking thankfully into bed, you decided it was a good trip.

A successful trip can be led from the rear but it would have to be on well-defined tracks. On one trip the leader seemed to consider that the most essential part of leading was to keep the party together by walking behind the slowest fresherette, thus leaving the track making to someone who had no ides of where he was going. A lot of unnecessary ground was covered in walking round S bends, and the confusion which resulted meant an unnecessarily slow trip.

Ken did a very good job in spite of "cigi" breaks on the Running Creek trip in 1962, and actually got the party to the Border Station two hours before the train we were to catch, was due - a record surely. A recent trip led by Norwood and run by Jim is not included. How was Norwood to know he was going to attract so many fresherettes?

As you can see there is no qualification necessary to be a trip leader, but in spite of this they do have something in common - a chant- "Leaving in 5 minutes". Don't worry, this is a very indefinite length of time and depends on the weather, the time, the distance to be covered and the leader's persistence, and so can range from half-an-hour to two or three hours, or to when everyone is ready.

You don't know what a leader will be like until he has led you out of sight of civilisation and beyond the point of no return. After that you must follow him through thick and thin, bramble and brier, until the "vets" truck appears again. After the bruises have faded and the scratahes healed, you find yourself at another meeting putting your name down to see a different area and to determine the qualities of a different leader.

Everybody talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it.

C.D. Warner

THE LAND OF WATERFALLS

JIM HUTTON

Arthur Groom in his book "One Mountain after Another" gives the history of Lamington National Park from Cook's sighting in 1770 to the explorations of Logan and Cunningham and the mighty survey work of Roberts after whom the Shire is now named. Then came the great pioneering work of the O'Reilly's and others in the area. Following the formation of the first National Park in America, Lahey and Groom strove for many years to get this wilderness proclaimed a National Park. Groom claims that here there is a greater density of plant life per acre than anywhere else in the world, yet few people realize this and take the opportunity to visit this area set aside especially to preserve a little of the original flora and fauna of S.E. Queensland.

I was first introduced to this area when reading O'Reilly's book long before coming to Australia and even then longed to visit the "Land of Waterfalls". My first trip to the area clinched my love for the Park - a feeling you will know if you have awoken to the surprise view from the raining cliff campsite.

Ever since that trip I have the urge to discover more of the mysteries of the area, so when Dave. Dash from Sydney University B.W.C. wrote proposing a trip from Running Creek to Binna Burra with an invitation to members of our club to join, another step in my ambition was in sight.

The second week of the May holidays saw the party of four (Dave Dash, Allan Hamley (Sydney U.B.W.C.), Sybil Curtis and self (U.Q.B.W.C) leaving the Border Loop railway station through the tunnel to Running Creek and the trip was on.

For details of the travelling time, etc. see the trip reports.

Easy travelling over open farming country takes us to the Running Creek junction. We took the N.W. branch passing through an area of spotted gums and as the valley walls closed in the vegetation changed to rain forest, from which a track is followed to the England Creek Junction.

Next morning we visited the mighty Running Creek falls, the spot where the river falls 300 ft. from the Plateau to the valley floor. The water falls in a column to a large pool where it whips up waves of a foot or more. Normally a cavern behind the falls is accessible but now so soon after floods plumes of water were dashing the rocks all round making access impossible.

LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK

0 1 2 3 4

Scale in miles

Approx. route showing campsites.

Canungra Ck.

Coomera

DARLINGTON

BINNA BURRA

East

West

Falls

Canungra

RANGE

Gorge

Mystery track

Coomera Falls

Raining Cliffs

Luke's Bluff

Pat's Bluff

O'REILLY'S

Castle Crag

Canungra Ck

MT. MERINO

Albert R. (Nth)

Lightning and Thunder Falls

Lost World

Albert R. (Sth.)

ECHO POINT

MT. WORENDO

MT. WUPAWN

MT. DURIGAN

Q'LD.

Mt. Widgee

Buchanan's Fort

Christmas Ck.

MT. THROAKBAN

RANGE

N.S.W.

Stinson crash

PT. LOOKOUT

England Ck.

Falls

Running Ck. (nth)

Running Ck. (sth.)

MC. PHERSON

Upper Tweed Valley

TWEED

RANGE

Above was the Lamington Plateau accessible via England Creek. The Lamington Range runs from Point Lookout westwards dividing Christmas Creek and Running Creek. Along this range a well defined track is cut. This is the stretcher track cut for the rescue of men from the Stinson Crash 26 years ago, as described in O'Reilly's book. On the Christmas Creek side of this track is a Lookout with a panorama taking in Mt. Lindsay, Ernest, Barney, Ballow, the Main Range to the west, Buchanan's Fort in the foreground, Lost World, Mt. Widgee and Lamington National Park away to the east, and with Lamington Falls falling 500 ft. to Christmas Creek below us.

The track along the Lamington Range runs through thick rainforest which towers high overhead and below is always cool - ideal for the succulant type of plants growing on the forest floor.

At Point Lookout we took the track N.W. down to the old Stinson crash now almost overgrown, but still remaining a marked opening on the steep, heavily bushed hillside.

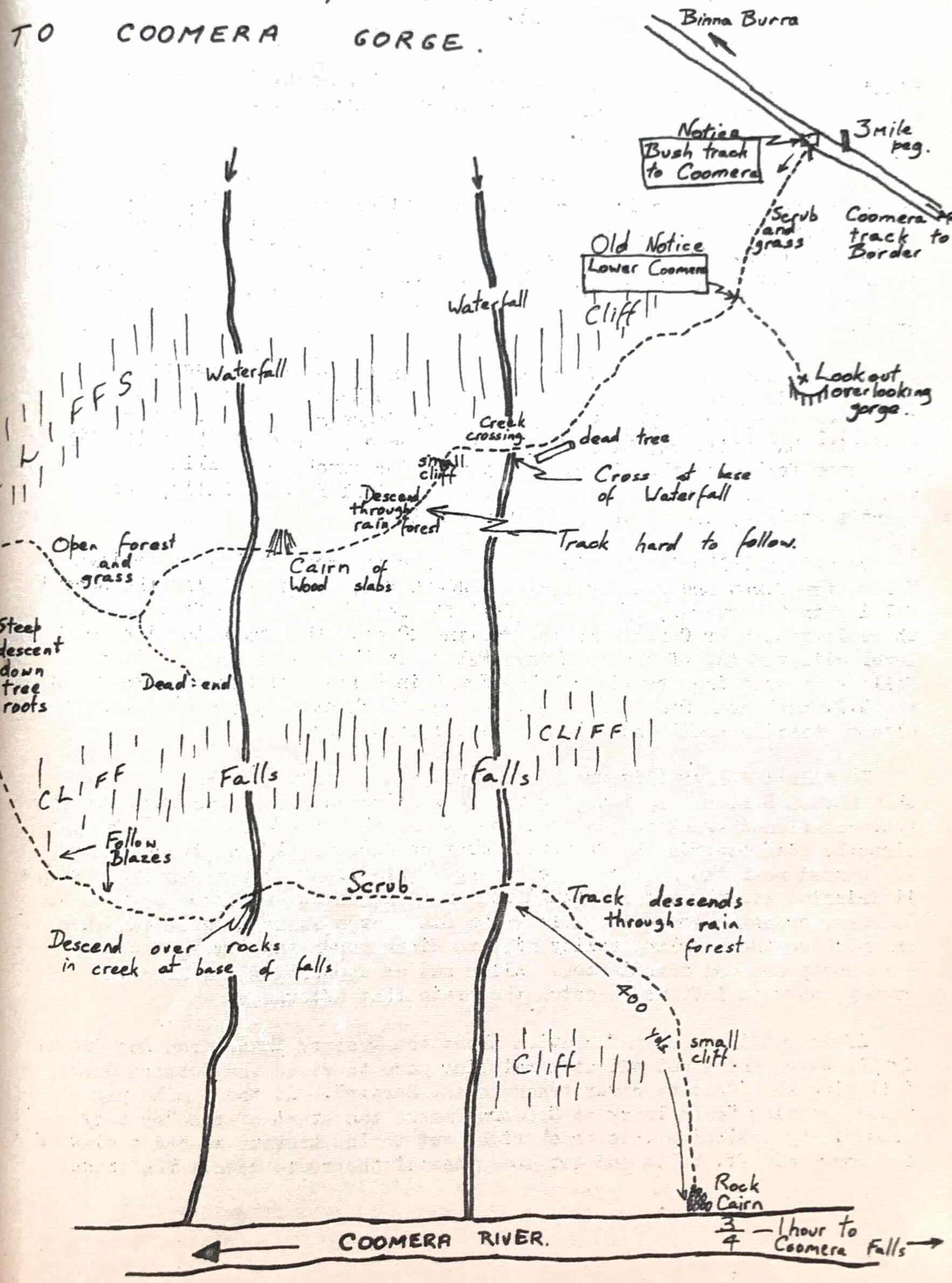
From Pt. Lookout to Mt. Worondo we followed the McPherson Range, the S.E. side of which is mainly a cliffed drop to the upper branches of the Tweed valley. From many points such as Kalinya Lookout we were afforded views of the Tweed range to the west, Mt. Warning to the S.E., the coast and the eastern end of the McPherson range. Along the range runs the border track which passes by the Rattatat Forestry camp and skirts on the N.W. side of Mt. Durigan over Wapawn and on to Worondo. From Lookouts near Wapawn a shout resounds a good echo on the cliff wall between Worondo and Echo Point.

From Worondo we headed west, then N.W. down the long ridge to Lost World. There is a blazed track down this ridge which is well worth finding and following. The ridge drops to a low saddle before climbing up to Lost World.

Lost World is a fascinating spot. It is a huge mass of rock surrounded by cliffs with a razorback at each end supplying the only two approaches. The S.W. side is mainly rainforest, while the N. and N.E. side has long strips of open forest; but a belt of thick rainforest cuts right across the centre preventing a clear open forest run down the northern side. It is fun getting lost there anyway and only careful navigating or a lot of luck will prevent this. The campsite is at the N.W. end on the northern side where a permanent creek falls over the cliffline. It will suffice to say that this is a very favourite camp-spot.

Next morning we recrossed Lost World and dropped into Black Canyon. The river was still up a little and a swim was the order of the day at red rock cutting. The rocks became gradually more slippery as we proceeded but we reached Lightning and Thunder Falls for lunch. We climbed out of the gorge on the N. side 20 yds. down from the Falls but this took us 2 hours and is not recommended. It entails zigzagging back and forewards across the wall,

Sketch Map of THE MYSTERY TRACK TO COOMERA GORGE.



picking a route on the steep face and mainly clambering from one tree hold to another. Once on the Tourist track we headed for O'Reilly's, getting there soon after dark.

The fifth day of the trip saw us heading down the track to West Canungra Creek past Picnic rock, Elabana Falls, Boxlog Falls, etc. and on down this creek in the area aptly named the land of waterfalls, and so to Blue Pool. From Blue Pool down, the track is not in a good condition, but is quite easily followed with a little care, and crossing the river where the track peters out on one side and picking it up on the other.

At the junction of the West and East branches of the Canungra, we ceased our down stream trek and swung into the East Canungra heading back into jungle country. The track in the East Canungra is in even worse condition but still may be followed with some care, but at times it will be faster following the river. We stopped for lunch near Bilingoonoo Falls and Cave and then trekked on up past the beautiful Kareeba Falls, the Giant's Stairway and so up to Toombinya Falls.

Toombinya Falls is the first of a series of three falls. Toombinya Falls, the first and grandest falling 40-50 ft., Fountain Falls the second falling in two stages, the lower 10-11 ft. and the upper 20 ft., and the third Joonbelba or Curtain Falls, falling 20 ft. The track is high - level with the top of the Toombinya Falls on the S.W. bank, and then follows up crossing the river below Fountain Falls, and rounding these on the N.W. bank and from there the track cuts back high on the N.W. bank and climbs steadily northwards over the Darlington range.

We didn't follow this track but went back downstream 10-15 mins., then headed N.E. at right angles to the Darlington range crossing over the above-mentioned track and on over the top of the Darlington Range, dropping directly down towards the Coomera. Just on dark we hit the track again and camped near the next creek crossing. This night we had our first rain - it drizzled lightly and continued next morning as we continued down to the Coomera, crossing above the well known Binnaburra swimming pool and then on up above the swirling valley mist to Binna Burra where we got a very warm reception and morning tea. Allan had an appointment to keep in Sydney, so soon left us to catch the train that afternoon.

After getting some information about the Mystery Track from Don Groom, Sybil, Dave and I set off at a rattling pace to visit the Coomera Gorge, following the "Coomera River track to the Border". At the 3 mile peg a notice reading "Bush Track to Coomera" marks the start of the "Mystery Track". By following this track right out to the Lookout we had a view of the gorge 600 ft. below and got some idea of the route down. The track

goes down beside a line of cliffs, crosses under the cliff line and crosses a creek at the base of some falls - drops down through a forest area, crosses another creek at the base of its fall, goes through open forest and grass across to a cliff wall and drops steeply down a stairway or ladder of tree roots; crosses back over the two creeks at the base of their lower falls and drops through rain forest to the Coomera River - See Sketch, for which we are indebted to Don Groom. A rock cairn marks the bottom of the track - make sure you are familiar with its position so you won't miss it on return. One hour's rock hopping upstream takes us to the Coomera Falls. The way is up through the Coomera Gorge with its vertical walls rising 600 ft. above the river - certainly a very impressive gorge which ends abruptly at the Coomera Falls. The main fall is a mass of water falling 3-400 ft. from the "Coomera Crevice" which runs back 2-300 ft. to where it is fed by the top 2-300 ft. section of the Coomera Falls.

As time was getting on we had to leave this awe-inspiring spot and hightail it for home.

The only incident of note was Sybil's efforts of skating back along the muddy track which ended abruptly in a glorious one-point landing.

That night we took advantage of the wonderful Binna Burra hospitality, with a hot shower and tea at the table of honour with Gus Kouskos, the ranger. So we talked well into the night of mountains and bush, birds and animals.

So ends another wonderful trip.

"AT THE END OF DAY"

Over all the hilltops
Is rest,
In all the treetops
You may sense
Hardly a stir.
The birds are quiet in the wood.
Only wait, soon now
You will rest, too.

Goethe

.....

THE POWER OF MOUNTAINS

. . . The greater mountains, wherein sublimity so much excels our daily things, that in their presence experience dissolves, and we seem to enter upon a kind of eternity.

-- Hilaire Belloc

WRITTEN ON A TRIP

ROD TIMMINS

Wednesday 8.45 p.m.

This part of this story is being written before a club trip to Canungra Creek. A certain young lady has been pestering no end to get in my article for the magazine. I must confess I had started another literary masterpiece, but not being happy with it, I decided to write this. I hope enough happens on the trip or this article will never see the publisher.

Ah! Now to work! Let's see - rucksack, sleeping bag - I asked Don to see if he could get me a new one. This one is getting rather thin and the weather is liable to be freezing. Brrrrr! What's next? Groundsheet, torch, things to cook in, something to eat with, clothes, map? No, I don't think I'll take one. Now the important thing - FOOD!!!

Two breakfasts - rolled oats, bacon, eggs. Good. I'll only have to buy the bacon, I can get the rest from the cupboard. Lunch - bread, butter, vegemite - I don't know why I take that stuff, I never eat it - cheese, sweet corn, sultanas, chocolate? Yes, I think chocolate would go down well. The trouble is, everyone else will look at me in a certain tone of voice and I suppose I'll end up with about one square! Now for dinner. Macaroni? I can cook that by now - jolly well should be able to, I've had enough practice. How about something different? Curry? I can use some of the sultanas in it anyway. What else could I put in it? Dried vegetables? Ugh! But I suppose it will add some bulk. Rice, a small tin of meat and anything else I fancy, I suppose. O.K. We'll have a bash. You people out there will find out later how it went.

Now, have I forgotten anything? Oh, Blimey! The camera - and I need some film for it! There goes another two quid, or four royals if you prefer. Anything else? Cards, I must not forget the cards. That seems to be everything. Righto, see you at the Kidney Lawn about seven thirty. Wonder who's going. Soon see, anyhow.

Friday, 11.10 p.m.

The trip up in the bus was as usual. Tho' our driver raised a laugh when he handed the Toll Bridge bloke sixpence halfpenny in coppers, and said "Keep the change."

It seems there are a number of new people this trip. We also have a chain smoker (not me) and there seem to be an immense number of girls. Different to Tweed Ranges. Oh! And the immense refers to the number - not the girls. Don didn't turn up with my new sleeping bag so I suppose I'll just have to freeze. We decided to camp in the rain forest out of the

wind. The flattest part around is the track so we are sleeping on it.

Jim Hutton is saying something about some notice or other - something about maintaining the same standard of conduct as we would at home. Can't see what he's getting at, I sleep on the garden path all the time at home. See you in the morning - I'm going to bed. Shiver!

Saturday 8.35 a.m.

I have had breakfast - porridge and a sausage. The sausage came from the lady I slept next to last night. Terribly cold night - practically froze. John came up with Norwood and Claire fairly late and brought my new sleeping bag. Whacko! We will be leaving about nine I suppose. See you at lunch.

Saturday 12.25 p.m.

Lunch! At last! After that early breakfast I feel starved .....

Sunday 8.30 a.m.

Sorry about that, but it started to rain. It didn't last long though, just long enough to send us on our way in rather a hurry. It was a long walk up the other branch of the creek and the track was generally in its death throes. We took to the creek on some occasions and we reached Toombinya Falls about 5 p.m. The party camped alongside Fountain Falls with a breakaway group above Curtain Falls. I should say here that the only claim the party had for being so called was the presence of the trip leader. There were four of us in the party - the remaining dozen or so were the renegades.

The curry was not a howling success. It was edible, but could not be described as really appetising unless you were starved or had a tremendously elastic imagination. The new sleeping bag however is a howling success! I have never been so warm on a trip.

Our intrepid leader is urging me to get packed, so I'll see you at lunch.

Sunday 1.00 p.m.

When we arrived at the renegade camp we found the others still eating so I sat down, cooked three eggs and had some breakfast. After breakfast our leader set off up the Darlingtons but the renegades decided to go up the creek. I turned renegade myself.

I managed to get some photos of the club's Tarzan types swinging on a vine. I hope they turn out O.K. We have stopped for lunch in a rapidly moving patch of sunlight and I am about to partake.

Monday 8.30 p.m.

No. It didn't take us until now to get home. It's just that this is the first real opportunity I have had to finish this. After lunch we bashed on up the creek with some crazy burnmerchant up in front. It was rather silly really with three fresherettes (at least I think they were) trailing along behind. One of them seemed to have had her enthusiasm somewhat dampened. We spent the last half of the afternoon climbing up waterfalls and reached a track around 5 p.m. We set sail for O'Reilly's and soon found a mile post that said O'R. 6 M. I was wondering what sort of language this was when some bright spark said we had six miles to go and I promptly lost interest in translating the signpost. It was rapidly getting dark and I soon found myself in a group of about six or eight people with about two torches, stumbling along a rather degenerate track. Around this time I jarred my ankle and it protested in a most vigorous and distracting manner for the rest of the walk. We reached O'Reilly's about seven and departed thence about 7.30.

The best part of the walk followed. Supper in a warm kitchen, courtesy of the Curtis's. I thought this a smashing idea. One character chose this time to go rather blue round the gills and I thought that he was about to kick the bucket. But then I suppose it would have been rather awkward getting a photo.

"Excuse me old chap could you hold that for about ten seconds" (Moan).

Anyway to cut a long story short I finally tucked myself into bed about 2.15 a.m. The ankle mentioned earlier raised its voice in protest again today and a short visit with the local vet. resulted in about six yards of four inch sticking plaster.

Excuse me a minute, people, my father is saying something ------

Oops! Sorry people. Father says Ben Kildare is on TV. and I always watch him. See you on Barney some day.

To do well and to eat well are two great comforts.
A full stomach resembles an easy conscience.

Victor Hugo

THE NIMBEN PEAKS

G. GOADBY

This is the story of a little trip to the Nimben Peaks. As you most likely know very little about these Nimben Peaks or Rocks, I will give you a brief resume.

They are situated 2 miles south west of the township of Nimben, and to fill in the general picture, Nimben is 20 miles due east of Kyogle and as the crow flies about 25 miles west of Byron Bay, so that it is in the line of hills stretching from Mt. Warning south past Mt. Uki.

Nimben itself, is quite a pretty little town with several creeks dotted with weeping willow trees surrounding it. Our geologist advises that the peaks of rocks themselves are composed of, in all probability, trachyte or rhyolite with a bit of vermiculite in them. The group of rocks is composed of a monastery with a monk guarding it, a pinnacle and a cathedral. The Monastery is a projection similar to a slice of cake extending from a high plateau or flat range top. Almost direct to the north of this at a distance of 200 yards due north is the Pinnacle, a conical heap of rock, while the Cathedral is approximately 1/4 mile due east of the Monastery. The Cathedral is lenticular in shape, having a long axis of approximately 150 yards.

The next most important item to list is the party which consisted of Peter Barnes, Geoff Broadbent, Cleet, Brian Holdaway, Jon Stephenson and myself. As no description would be possible or adequate, these shall be left to your imagination.

The plan was that providing the young bloods had recovered from the Commem. Ball the previous night, the party would set out early in the morning for the rocks with the exception of Peter and Cleet who set off Friday night on Peter's motor bike to do some incidental peaks around Mt. Warning. All went well on the trip down except for Geoff who was suffering somewhat, but after certain muscular contractions of his stomach, he revived.

A delightful lunch was had in view of the Nimben Peaks, in company of a raging bull who seemed to be incensed at the sight of Jon, but on seeing the rest of the group became disgusted and walked away. After driving around to get the best view, and after suitable "oo-ing and aw-ing" and contemplating different routes, we spent the rest of the afternoon in the terrifically energetic pastime of sleeping. As we were to rendevous with Peter and Cleet at a farm house owned by Mr. Brown, we decided as night fell it was time something was done to keep our tryst. After a little effort Mr. Brown was located in his cow yard together with Mrs. Brown milking some cows by lantern light. These two people proved to be extra friendly and charming and would not hear of our going further, and insisted on our camping on their property at the same time providing us with fire wood and milk.

By a strange coincidence we contacted Peter and Cleet by shouting to them from a distance of about 300 yards and a pleasant evening was spent chatting with the Brown family, in spite of the fact that our party, suffering deeply from lack of sleep, had to take it in turns to sleep and talk.

Next morning the usual early start was had and we wandered out of camp at about 9 o'clock to wend our way to the Cathedral. The first thing to be tackled was a small pinnacle on the east side of the Cathedral which provided some delightful rock scrambling and exercise in ingenuity in climbing up a stupid little hump. This climb should be performed with ropes as the rock is not sound and the distance to fall is considerable.

The next to be tackled was the chimney dividing the main body of the cathedral. Peter, Cleet and Brian attempted this while the rest of the party went round to the west to attempt the main body by the more conventional route. This consisted of a vegetated slope past the window to within 80 feet of the top. The real climb is started from a deep saddle and commences with a tricky little overhang up to some easily climbed rock, Care must be taken on this section as there is about 150 ft. to whistle off on the northern face.

To signify our success a smoky fire was built which was noted by Mr. Brown who was on the look-out for something of this nature. While part of the first section of the party to reach this saddle attempted the window, the rest wandered down the window. This proved to be very rotten with large rocks carelessly balanced. A rope was needed and used during this diversion. A short uphill scramble took us to the pyramid which provided us with some exercise but no tactical difficulty. The nature of the climb being up reasonably steep, sound slabs, loose boulders were encountered near the top. Lunch consisting of the usual salami, cheese and dried fruit was partaken of in the face of a smoky fire. A quick descent and subsequent uphill travel, took us to the base of the monastery, that large flake of rock with virtually vertical sides reaching to 200 to 250 ft.

An easy way was found up to the top of the plateau on the southern end of the monastery which gave an excellent view of the route across to the monastery itself. This route looked very interesting as it was across approx. 80 ft. of very steep rock falling vertically on one side down to forest almost 300 feet below, and on the other a less steep slope down 200 ft. The top of this ridge is only about 2 feet or a little more wide and has in its centre the Monk, a pinnacle of rock about 10 feet high, the top of which is just large enough for 2 feet. Cleet led across this slab from a safe belay point on our side until he finally reached a safe belay point on the other side, making himself fast to a small tree. The next man across was Geoff Broadbent being belayed from both sides who managed to climb the Monk after a game of chess with his hands and feet. He did not look happy standing on the top of this needle looking down on to the green tree tops an unnecessary distance below.

Another game of Snakes and Ladders with his hands and feet and much shouted directions and encouragements put Geoff back on the slab. The rest of us followed safely enough across being belayed from both sides and consequently perfectly safe on such an airy position.

Two members of the party being indisposed did not tackle the Monk, but the antics of those who did were very spectacular and in classical fashion this eminence was cairned.

It is believed that Mr. A.B. Salmon's parties and others had traversed this route but the Monk had not previously been conquered. Approximately 160 feet of rope are required for a safe passage, on to the Monastery.

On arriving back at the down mass of the hill, a local inhabitant with an antique rifle and dog was met. This gentleman lived on the plateau where he raised an excellent brand of peanuts which we sampled with great delight, together with his very fine water. From this height the local inhabitant was able to view with a certain amount of satisfaction, the recent flooding of the area, knowing full well that until Noah's time comes again, he will be perfectly safe from the water.

A crazy down hill run, like spring lambs leaping over logs, took us into the valley and along the road back to camp. After the usual gormandising meal one of the locals put on a kodachrome show to which Geoff responded with his Tasmanian photographs which filled the audience with awe and admiration. The next morning, being cool and bracing, 32° as Mr. Logan would say, we were reluctant to leave our sleeping bags much to the amazement of the locals who could view us from the roads.

A very enjoyable trip back through the hills past Blue Knob, Sphinx Rock, Loft's Pinnacle, Mt. Uki, Mt. Warning, etc., led us back to the road to Brisbane. Apart from our pleasure from this outing, our company it appears, was enjoyed by both Mr. Brown and his wife, and we greatly appreciated their freindship and assistance, and any future visitors would be well advised to contact Mr. Brown who lives on the southern arm of the three roads which meet just south of Nimben. Future visitors however are advised to take some large spikes and a hammer to re-nail the planking of the bridge adjacent to Mr. Brown's house as the deafening rattle produced by passing vehicles would disturb anybody but a tired bushwalker.

CLIMBING MOUNT WILHELM

MICHAEL PEMBERTON

Flying in from Goroka the main town in the Eastern Highlands, I could see Mount Wilhelm away to my left just before we circled to touch down at Kundiawa, the sub-district office of the Chimbu. I was very lucky, apparently, as the mountain is seldom free of cloud and even with the cramped view through the small window in the Cessna I could make out its castlelike appearance with three pinnacles rising from its long summit.

Throughout much of the year the only way in to Kundiawa is by plane as the one road is nearly always in very bad condition. Mount Wilhelm lies some twenty miles north of Kundiawa and is reached from the Kerosugl Catholic Mission only accessible by an alpine track from Kundiawa. By oneself Mount Wilhelm would be quite out of range and chance it was that first brought me to Kundiawa on survey work and further to Gembogl to finish my work in the Chimbu. In fact this story is one of luck all round; with one thing going wrong we should never have made it.

My time was nearly up in Kundiawa when a chance conversation with John Wilson, a Melbourne medical student, up in Kundiawa for a few days on a tour of inspection of medical facilities in New Guinea, soon had us both interested in climbing Mount Wilhelm. The conversation was to the point - why not this Saturday? - why not tomorrow? - and realizing we had no equipment we went off to see what we could muster. From Gordon Dick, the A.O., came blankets, patrol box, socks, jerseys and groundsheets, and from the local trade store, our rations. We took what we thought would be sufficient for the three days - six tins of corned beef, coffee, chocolate, biscuits and a jar of honey. We packed everything into the patrol box and then realized one vital thing - how were we to get to Kerosugl, some thirty miles away by a road, and though only twenty miles over land this trip would involve climbing two 8,000' mountains in between. We could only afford three days and a day lost would mean climbing Wilhelm in two days, an almost impossible feat. Again we shot round the station and eventually Ray, the E.O., said he would go up to Gembogl and possibly Kerosugl to inspect the schools there and take us if it was a fine day. We decided we could do nothing more and an early night was essential, but the sounds of a party at Dick Kelaart's soon made it clear that this was out of the question.

Early next morning, still bleary-eyed, we packed up and made ready. We had arranged to meet Ray at 8.30 a.m. and dumped our gear in the appointed place. Time went by, nine o'clock came and still no Ray. Nearly ten o'clock - the weather was perfect - no reason why he should not be going. We eventually walked the two miles to his house only to find he had left several hours ago. Transport gone and our hope of climbing Wilhelm with it.

Walking dejectedly down to the guest house we ran into Gordon Dick who asked if the landrover were ready yet for us to get away and happily we raced off the P.W.D. yard to find Ray's landrover just coming off the ramp. We climbed in and collected our gear en route.

Ray stopped off at his house, for a drink we thought, but soon three patrol boxes and three Chimbu boys appeared. I squashed in the front with Bob Anderson the A.E.O., and Ray, and John very nobly crouched in the back between the patrol boxes.

No one who has not been on Eastern Highlands roads could possibly realize just how bad these are. They are mostly made of pounded earth with stone flakes on top and every revolution of the car's wheels brings a shudder. At the top, or often before, of every climb the engine boils and the Chimbu boys had to keep jumping out to fill up the radiator. The scenery on the way to Gembogl is fantastic. Away to the left is the Wagi Valley running through to Hagen, a vast valley over thirty miles wide around 5,000' high. Turning left and reaching the highest point of the road the view down to Pari is breathtaking. Vast fault limestone mountains with slopes so smooth they might have been cut with a giant chisel lead down to the racing Chimbu river, overhung with dominating white outcrops rising for over 3,000'.

Bottom gear in low ratio is the only way to get down to Pari in one piece and the climb up the other side is no less steep. The road is cut deep in the rock in parts but up to now seems like a motorway compared with the next stretch of ten miles or so to Gembogl. By the time we reached there Bob's knees were trembling and he refused to go on. The road follows first one side and then the other of the Chimbu. Road, I say, but one could not get out of the landrover for most parts of the journey. For many parts the landrover fits in neatly all round as it goes through the rock and a short-wheel base is essential as several long-wheel base landrovers have actually stuck on some of the corners. Alternatively to your right or left are sheer drops of over three thousand feet, so sheer that one cannot see the river way below in the valley.

Though Kerosugl is only five miles from Gembogl we badly needed to do this part by landrover as we had to make the lakes by nightfall and it was already one o'clock. We persuaded Bob that the road was much better from here on, as indeed it proved to be, and he eventually agreed to go to the mission. The Bavarian Father greeted us very cordially and the church, built in the Bavarian style, with cows grazing, their bells tinkling all the time, reminding me very much of the same scene in Southern Germany. He offered us beer and bread and cheese. We accepted the latter and asked him to keep the beer for when we returned.

We found four carriers, said goodbye to the Father, Ray and Bob, and set off. We had precisely four hours for the first 5,000' to the twin lakes. We set off at a good pace through kunai grass and soon came to rain forest. The carriers seemed to think we were going much too fast and we had to keep them going. We had collected two old lapoon carriers who seemed singularly useless, one guide and a father and son. We made good progress with the latter two and decided to straddle the party, taking turns to go on in front or stay back. John was 6' 5" and s both of us must have taken almost one step to their two!

The rain forest became thicker and after an hour we came out of it and had to follow a creek bed. Luckily it had been dry for an unusually long time in the Highlands and so very little water was coming down, making walking very easy. Huge boulders, over fifty feet long, were scattered about testifying to the usual force of the river. Remembering that this part of the Highlands can have up to six inches overnight, one could easily imagine a very different scene from the tranquil one which confronted us.

An hour later and we were up to about 9,000'and left the creek bed and soon were slipping and sliding through dense forest. We imagined what this would have been like if it had been raining as even now we had to grab at roots and branches to stop ourselves from falling. The carriers put a long pole through the handles of the patrol box and carryin it on their shoulders managed surprisingly well.

We felt the thinness of the air as we eventually came out of the forest into a kunai valley, scattered with water palms and leading up to the twin lakes. It was still hot though only an hour from sunset. Everything had gone to plan - an hour for each quarter of the journey. We were soon following the stream that flowed out of the lowest lake and thankfully drank from its ice-cold waters. No need of water-bottles anywhere in this country. At last, with the sun setting behind the mountains, we arrived at the little bush hut beside the first lake, about 11,000' up. There, just after six as planned, and the first leg of the journey was over.

We started up two fires inside the hut and the Chimbus soon were roasting their sweet potatoes which the Father had given them. The seven of us huddled round the fires, smoke belching everywhere, and with eyes streaming ate our corned beef, spread our biscuits with honey and sipped our scalding black coffee. It tasted very good, as did their kau kau, so they informed us. By now it was literally freezing, and John and I bedded down on the kunai floor under the blankets with our jerseys on and as near to the fire as possible. I do not think we slept much, whether from anticipation or sheer discomfort.

Dawn the next morning and we were poking the fires together and collecting up to get away as soon as possible. Visibility is usually only good up till 7 or 8 o'clock and so an early start is essential. We set off and straight away were climbing steeply. Whereas I had not felt the altitude the previous day, I now felt as if I had iron fotters round all my body. Now it was the Chimbus turn to tell us to hurry up. Having left all the gear at the hut, and being in their usual climate they soon left us far behind and had to be called back for fear of our getting lost. The second lake came into view as we climbed up by the waterfall leading from the upper to the lower lake. Both lakes were very deep and a wonderful shade of deep greenish blue. A brief respite and then on again, the altitude now 12,000 ft. and both of us feeling its effects. John maintained a slow, mechanical pace whereas I rested and then went in bursts. At least we kept going.

We had been told about people whose noses bled, who felt sick and had to be carried down, of throbbing temples and so, but we continued to feel nothing more than an ever-increasing lack of control of our legs. Now we could see back over both the lakes and many miles around as we rounded a ridge and came to the last part of the climb. The weather was fantastically good - apparently not more than two or three days of the year are clear at these altitudes in the highlands. Under foot was now only rock and moss, the kunai slowly thinning out above 12,000 ft. We saw the wreckage of a DC3 which had crashed during the war, scattered over a good two miles. During the war this mountain had been mapped as 13,000 ft. instead of 15,000 ft. and it was lucky several other aircraft had not suffered the same fate.

The rocks were slippery with icicles still hanging on some of them and crossing smooth rock faces needed care. Altogether we had been climbing for seven hours and still had no view of the summit. Somehow merely having a goal encourages one but the climb presented only ridge after ridge. At last about 9.30 a.m. we came up under an enormous outcrop to our left, rising a good 500 ft. above us and had our first view of the summit. We could be less than 1,000 ft. below it. It rose castlewise in a solid rock formation almost sheer for 200 ft. from the ridge we were on. We increased our speed and were soon freely climbing up its face. Away to our right was a sheer drop down to the lakes 4,000 ft. below, and we had circumnavigated them as the direct route would have been almost impossible. We clambered up, fingers frozen on the still ice-covered rock, not caring now we had nearly reached the summit.

At last we both collapsed on the top and the carriers looked at us with great amusement - probably justified. The view when we looked around us was really wonderful. We could see a good hundred miles. To the north and north-east were Madang, Karhar Island, the Markham Valley with its river sluggishly winding down to Lae; away to the west the main massif of

the Eastern and Western Highlands with the Hagen Range visible, Mt. Hagen itself standing out clearly, and away in the Southern Highlands, Mt. Gilwe, 13,500 ft, the highest mountain in Papua. A few small billowy clouds strung out like migrating geese four or five thousand feet below were the only hindrances to our view. We read the notes, stuffed in a tin and a bottle in the rocks at the top, and "Bad Visibility", "Cloud", "Thick Mist" confirmed how lucky we were. There must have been ten or so notes but not many people apparently climb the mountain.

The carriers demanded we should take their photographs, which we did, and then we started the long climb down. Going down hill was really a pleasure but once we came to more climbing we were very soon panting again. We reached the lakes by lunch and now nothing would deter us from having a swim. We stripped off everything, and while I was still undressing watched John gingerly go in. I thought he must be soft and so dived in only to be out again before I hardly touched the water. Fed by streams from the mountains it was nearly freezing but it really refreshed us. Just another thing which made the carriers think we were mad - whoever would swim at 11,000 ft. with nothing on?

All the way down from the lakes we thought about that cold beer and started almost running at stages. We made it down to the mission by 5 o'clock and were greeted by the Father, surprised to see us so soon. We had to stop several times on the way to allow the carriers to change their shorts - consisting of leaves tucked under their belts. A new bunch of leaves was substituted for the old and contentedly they went on their way. The beer tasted really good, as did the newly baked bread and the cheese. We thanked the Father but refused his kind offer to put us up for the night, as we wanted to make Gembogl and be ready to leave the next morning for Kundiawa. We paid the carriers the usual amount of four shillings a day and, taking two new carriers, set off for Gembogl.

Again we were lucky the next day as a native owned landrover happened to be going through to Kundiawa and we arrived back before several people knew we had even gone. Three perfect days of weather, quite unusual in the Highlands, getting equipment, carriers, and the lift to Kerosugl, if any of these had fallen through, it would have been impossible.

Indeed, we were lucky!

DAWN - AND THE TIME BEFORE

PAT CONAGHAN

I awake with a start, prompted by a series of impatient shoves from someone's prodding hand.

A vague voice is saying "Here, wake up and eat this!"! The mind is slow to grasp the situation. Upon peering through the iced-up hole in my bivouac bag through which I have been breathing, I perceive that some idiot has awoken me in the middle of the night. Outside it is still dark and the stars hang in a canopy, like holes in a moth-eaten blanket, over the ghostly wastes of the wide glacier ice.

One reflects on the absurdity of the situation. What on God's earth am I doing here? one ponders, stuck in a frigid uncomfortable hole in the ice with three other bodies on a bed of ropes, boots, packs, other odds and ends, and only a fragmentary piece of a communal lilo.

The cook's impatient hand begins to slop porridge over my bivouac bag from the proffered plate, while I struggle blindly with draw cords to reluctantly escape from the warm bag into the cold morning air.

The world slowly begins to materialize as one's eyes, now almost fully open, become adjusted to the pale light. On my left The Grand Old Visionary is contentedly slurping away at his porridge. We exchange Good-days - justified only by tradition one reflects sleepishly, and wishingthat the weather was bad so that one could snuggle back into one's bag and sleep normal hours like the common hoard of the proletariat

A strange mixture of guttural sounds and snores suddenly emerge from the cocoon-like mass on my right, announcing that The Protagonist - bless his indomitable soul - is still happily oblivious to the fact that the cook is imminently disposed to extend to him also,the magnanimous luxury of "breakfast in bed"!

One's next thoughts turn to all those inhuman injustices suffered by that outstandingly courageous member of the party - the cook. I glance at the cold luminous glow of my watch and perceive that it is 12.45 a.m. God! What a hideous time to be eating breakfast. One reflects happily that porridge, except for tea, constitutes the only course and proceeds to congratulate oneself upon escaping the nauseating experience of having to eat dehyde-egg in addition to the porridge.

Eventually after much procrastination, The Protagonist takes his honoured place at the breakfast table, grumbling justifiably at the quality of the porridge, and asking if the cook's name might possibly be "Pong".

THE OLD OAK CHEST



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As the cook hands out the luke-warm
the frightful revelation that we mus
forsake our cozy nests as soon as it
has been drunk is suddenly apparent.
In singularly perverse manner therefo
one consciously prolongs the drinkin
of one's tea, and is suspiciously aw
that other members of the team are
indulging in this disgusting act. B
all good things must come to an end
the cook, already imbued with two hou
of suffering is soon demanding that
too share his discomfort and depart
for the precincts of the mountain.

The cook now begins to assume hi
more usual daily role of "The Tiger".
With The Visionary in tow, abusing th
outrageous pace of ascent maintained
by The Tiger, the latter is perceived
to dash off up the dark slopes of the
mountain, leaving The Protagonist and
myself, always stoic rearguard members
of the team, still struggling with sti
ropes and boots and grumbling about th
ensuing, obviously adverse, protracted
spell of fine weather now settled over
the alps.

Our start is not auspicuous apart
from the early hour. The cook's
earlier, distressing diagnosis of
crusty-ice conditions is soon confirmed
as we struggle, like trapped animals
in a bog, breaking through the crust
with each step. Five minutes from camp
and The Protagonist, already having
drawn attention to the fact that he
does not feel his usual happy self, is
taken with a fit of ablutionary activi-
ies, thus delaying our attendance upon
the mountain. Immediately I suspect
he has contracted either "glacier
lassitude" or "bivouac lassitude" or
possibly even both, but for fear of
depressing his failing spirits I blame
his indisposition upon his refusal to
eat the supper which I had so carefully
prepared for him and the rest of the
team the previous evening.

At last we are climbing again upon the steps of the first rope and those of our abortive attempt upon the great mountain on the previous day. Suddenly, the crusty surface gives way to good hard frozen snow, so we stop once more to fit our crampons, this finicky procedure having been delayed earlier in view of the poor surface conditions. My companion The Protagonist, argues however that this action is not warranted since he maintains that the improvement of conditions will be certainly short-livod. (I secretly suspect he still hopes we will be forced to return to bed by a non-improvement of conditions).

After some bickering, I persuade him that for safety's sake we must put them on. Always a lengthy process, we finally manage after fifteen minutes dexterous work to fit the spikes, only to discover after five further yards of advancement that The Protagonist has fitted his on the wrong boots.

My patience, to my acute embarrassment, is slowly growing weaker. Another fifteen minutes fly by while the crampon adjustments are executed. During this idle time I am preoccupied with growing concern for our slow progress upon the mountain, reminded of this fact by the first manifestations of the approaching dawn on the eastern horizon.

Onwards we climb, up and up the frozen snows until at last we cross a large shrund and embark upon the long one thousand foot steep slope below the crest of the range. Here the surface is really hard. We climb up the endless slope in our steps of yesterday's descent, remembering painfully the throbbing ankles of that previous ascent, made by continuous cramponing up the hard steep slope.

The long slope ends in a gently rising snow arete which leads up to the large snow basin under Mts. Green and Walter. As we gain the top of the arete we can just see the first rope already high up on the steep slopes of Walter. The Protagonist and myself with weary steps, drag ourselves across the flat basin. We are both terribly dehydrated and stop several times to rest, once quenching our thirsts with a draw on the large "medicine-bottle" of lemon and lime.

Finally we arrive on the summit of Mt. Walter, a sharp corniced ridge of a summit soon to plunge down to Divers col. Beyond the col lies our objective, a great sprawlimg 10,000 ft. dome of ice outlined against the blue of the sea.

As we turn to view the Alps to the South our gaze is drawn to a magnificent scene. The mountains are ablaze in an armour of pinks and golds. Day has come to the high snows, but away out over the Tasman Sea the night still clings to the waters. The dawn out there is still descending through the deepening layers of pink and violet, slowing encroaching upon the sea.

But, suddenly, our gaze is frozen in disbelief. We stand there on the mountain top, literally gaping incredulously at a sight our minds refuse to accept. Can it possibly be real?! We ask each other if we are both seeing this miraculous transcendent object, expecting it to suddenly vanish - wishing it would; for surely it is only an illusion, a trickery of the mind!

But the object persists under our gaze. Slowly we learn to believe it is real, and more slowly still do we reason just what it is.

Out over the Tasman Sea, bridging the span of night and day, lies a long dark single blade - a gigantic shadow thrown upon the water. It is a magnificent lesson in perspective. Never before have we seen anything so huge save perhaps the ocean itself. Away in the south, standing alone in the blue morning sky is the cause for our wonder - Aorangi, the Cloud Piercer, throwing its shadow upon the sea.

We linger a little longer, watching the spectacle dissolve with the rising sun. As we turn and continue towards our objective our step is lighter and our hearts beat faster; we are both reborn with the new-born day.

THE MOUNTAINS

Only a Hill: but all of life to me
Up there, between the sunset and the sea.

Geoffrey Winthrop Young.

.....

Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Walks tiptoe on the misty mountain tops

Romeo and Juliet

THE BIRDSVILLE TRACK

ARTHUR ROSSER

It is not practicable to walk to Birdsville from Armidale, so we equipped ourselves with a 1951 Land Rover and a 1950 Holden called Budweiser, packed them with spare parts, food, and petrol and water containers and set off, calmly ignoring cries of "Don't go! Don't go!" uttered by alarmed New England academics.

Clive West, a man who studies sheep from a biochemical viewpoint, had arrived at the last minute at high speed in his VW having been in hospital in Sydney having teeth removed; Andy White, a geological thug from Sydney, Brian Lowry (the keeper of the Land Rover), Carol and I were all organised at Armidale. At Toowoomba we picked up an unemployed artist called Hermine e. This was no idle acquisition on our part. It had been prearranged by Lowry, who is a Kiwi and quite a one for girl artists.

Before we reached Charleville, Carol had given up counting broken windscreen remains when the total reached 65, and Clive had managed to get the oil dipstick of the Rover almost inextricably entwined in vital mechanical parts deep in the bowels of its engine. We suspect that this feat is unique to Clive. After passing through Quilpie, where the water comes from a hot bore and has to be cooled before being used for bathing purposes, we came across Theiss Bros. workmen constructing the Channel Country road network. To keep people off the newly constructed roads they had placed trees across them at regular intervals. This is quite effective. One of their graders obligingly left the road for us at moderate speed and struck some deep ruts and commenced to bounce wildly up and down, particularly at the front end. The driver also bounced up and down, gradually getting out of phase with the grader and thus providing a very entertaining spectacle for us.

The Land Rover travelled at precisely 33 m.p.h. whatever the condition of the road, while Budweiser's speed ranged between 12 m.p.h. and 50 m.p.h. We drove in shifts of about 1½ hours each in Budweiser, which contained Andy, Carol and me. Since the roads were quite good in this area we were usually in front and we saw that the country was thick with hopping wild life. It was essential to watch for the second kangaroo to cross the road in order to avoid crashing into it while the first was being admired. We also passed piles of kangaroo corpses, shot by the local landowners and left to rot.

We were amazed at the size of Cooper's Creek; had there not been a concrete bridge we would never have got across. Here we met the first indication that our trip down the Birdsville Track was to be a Sunday drive.

We met the schoolboys: a bloodthirsty lot of South Australian adolescents who had come up the Track from Maree with their schoolteacher, a P.M.G. truck, a Land Rover, and several rifles per head. They said the Track was easy and their main disappointment was that their practice of shooting anything that moved brought little sport in the motionless desert. We later discovered that they compromised by shooting up signposts. Since they classified Cooper's Creek as a moving body there was constant gunfire from their side of the river, and we retired out of range to camp at Dead Man's Gulch.

As we entered the fourth day of steady westward driving, covered in dust and dirt, the enormous distances involved in crossing the Australian continent became readily appreciated. The early explorers who set off with their drays and flocks of sheep were either very brave or very ignorant of what lay ahead.

The most notable surprise of the trip was now upon us; we had never realised that the red centre spilled over into south-west Queensland, but the two days from Cooper's Creek to Birdsville revealed a landscape of great variety: gibber plains, red sandhills, sand plains, black gravel plains and white ghost gums. The gibber plains consisted entirely of dark brown wind polished rocks which gleamed like shiny ball-bearings in the sun. The sandhills were the most fascinating: usually about 50 feet high they were a rich red colour which changed slightly according to the angle of the light. We all wanted to camp near one; we also had to allow time for possible breakdowns of our ancient vehicles. There would be plenty of sandhills further on, we told ourselves, as we drove past with clouds of dust behind us; there were, but they were not red. The sandhills south of Birdsville are all sand-coloured.

Just before Betoota we passed a waterhole which teemed with birdlife, a delightful place to camp if you did not mind being trampled by galahs and corellas and tripped by waterhens, all screeching at the tops of their voices. We pushed on without stopping, to my intense disgust. The camp near Betoota was not on a red sandhill (we never did get to camp near one) but it was near a waterhole, with genuine trees. It would have been pleasant had not the idiots we were with been incapable of doing without their civilised accessories; they lit their pressure lamp and turned on their transistor radio and we might as well have been back home. In the morning they felt bound to go out and kill something; Andy is not happy without the blood of animals drying on his hands, and Lowry is much the same with some hypocrisy added. The two of them aimed and fired simultaneously at a duckling which consequently died of fright. It was too small to cook.

The Betoota camp was notable for the fact that we used Budweiser to collect wood, and it was here also that we became aware of the extremely dry, sandpaperish condition of our skin. Dry heat is much more uncomfortable than a good steamy Cairns day.

Between Betoota and Birdsville we had our first experience of driving in sand. The basic trick is to maintain momentum; if you slow down you stop and cannot start again unless pushed. We also saw some bustards in this area. Andy was unfamiliar with these birds, and when Carol started yelling "BUSTARDS! BUSTARDS! STOP! STOP! he thought she had gone off her rocker and was abusing him. He assumed a fixed grin and drove steadily onward.

Our arrival in Birdsville was notable only because the town had become a symbol of remoteness for us. It is a fairly normal small town with a flash aluminium school. However, it seemed deserted. No-one manned the post office. The police station was policemanless. The bar was packed. We said that we wanted petrol. "Not a chance", they said, "the petrol man has gone to the races at Bedourie".
"We're not in a hurry; what time will he be back?"
"Oh", said the barman, vaguely, "in a few days".
Eventually we got our petrol by buying most of a 44 gallon drum and finding a buyer for the remainder. We had to have petrol because none is available along the 350 mile Birdsville Track linking Birdsville and Maree. A tourist who arrived in Birdsville the day after us could not get petrol at all; he went to the races at Bedourie, which is 125 miles to the north.

Birdsville used to be a smuggling centre when the states were unfederated and it was necessary to pay money to bring goodies across the border. West of Birdsville is the Simpson Desert with its thousands of miles of continuous sandhills running parallel in a north-west to south-east direction. About 13% of Australia is covered in sandhills. South of Birdsville is Sturt's Stony Desert, which is a bigger and better gibber plain. If you have come from the east and have no desire to join the masses at Bedourie in the north you have no choice but to cross the South Australian border a few miles from town and head south west along the dreaded Birdsville Track. Deciding between the Flood Road and the 50 miles shorter track across Goyder's Lagoon is no problem at all: if the lagoon is dry you cross it, as we did. The first 50 miles of the Track is the worst. The route crosses the lines of sandhills diagonally. Naturally you don't charge up the sandhills at their highest points; not even Land Rovers with huge balloon sand tyres could do this. You seek out gaps in the long hills, drive through these and then approach the next hill across the several miles wide sand plain in a sidelong manner. The sandplains are flat and firm, and we drove in parallel at 33 m.p.h. talking between the vehicles.

Sometimes after sandstorms the Track disappears altogether so that the traveller gets lost, drives round in circles, and ends up drinking sump oil and dying. There was no chance of this happening to us as there had been no recent sandstorms and also the oil survey people had thoughtfully put little red flags on bits of wire all along the track. We daringly left these to camp near a whitish sandhill. We almost bogged the

car here as there had been some recent rain and Andy nearly drove into a patch of sand coloured mud. This was our only camp in the real desert. There was some plant life near our camp and on the sandhills, but the nearby sand plain was utterly bare. Unfortunately we were in sight of the main camp of the oil searchers; but for this we could have stood in one place and seem absolutely nothing on all sides - a pleasant and desirable state of affairs. At night we walked on the sand plain. Our sole means of orientation apart from the stars was the oil-camp light, and we were quite happy about this until it was pointed out that it could be switched off at any minute. We hurried home.

The second day on the track took us past Goyder lagoon and on to more gibber plain country. We met the mailman on one of these gibber flats. He told us with great amusement of two new Australians he had just passed, washing their car. Our second camp was on a bore lake near a small station homestead. There are a number of huge stations in the area along the lower parts of the track and many deserted homesteads. As usual the bore lake was populated by thousands of screaming galahs and corellas. There was also one particularly irritating small bird which camped just above us and at 4 a.m. started to make more noise per unit bird volume than I had imagined possible. In a rage, I threw a stone at it, and it retreated until it calmed down and then returned to make more noise than ever.

Our daily inspection of the vehicles revealed that Budweiser had a broken spring leaf, thus explaining his peculiar driving characteristics; his rear end was likely to go off the road at the slightest excuse and required frequent correction. On the final day we drove along excellent roads, and we could have travelled much faster than the Land Rover's steady 33 m.p.h. We passed several hot bores with their accompanying clouds of steam, and square miles of purple, blue and yellow wildflowers. However, the country was still very barren, but had no sandhills and was not real desert; there were a few gravelly hills and we climbed one of these as we were eager to get some exercise.

Fifty miles from Maree we had our gravest mechanical crisis. The Land Rover's clutch had previously undergone an overdue adjustment at the hands of Andrew who is pretty slick with a spanner, and now its generator had seized up a bearing. To allow the fan belt to turn we had to disembowel the generator and continue to Maree on the battery only.

Maree was the end point of our main trip. After repairing the vehicles we spent a couple of days bushwalking in the Flinders Ranges u in a dust storm and were thoroughly miserable. This time would heve been better spent along the Track or back in Queensland. One hundred miles per day would have been a sensible target, allowing more time for exploration on foot. There is certainly little point in wasting interesting country by rushing through it at 33 m.p.h.

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FIRST SEASON IMPRESSIONS

ALBERT TAKKEN

"Going Bushwalking this weekend". "What! are you one of those too?" This I find is far too common a comment passed by many students and others and is singularly annoying. They apparently prefer to sleep or otherwise squander a weekend away. Walking, once a necessity, is now an outlet and pleasure for those of us in the U.Q.B.W.C. Not being a writer by nature, this article is 80% due to the persistent editorial nudging and general statement - "Article, Albert?".

As a fresher to the Club with the preconceived idea of being a reasonable walker and relatively fit, I embarked on the four-day through walk to Mt. Barney at Easter, complete with shaving gear, extra shoes and food for a week. Never again! That is, never again would I carry the former two articles, less of the latter and at the time no more through walks for this lad.

Having started late a 50 mile detour around Beaudesert and Mt. Maroon made us even later. My navigator, being off course here and there, was forgiven when a certain ability in the culinary arts was displayed. Thus we arrived at Grace's Hut at 3.30 a.m., snatched four hours sleep and then started the first of several long days. A small mistake landed us on Monserrat Lookout instead of Mt. Ballow. The view was magnificent, however the next fifteen minutes of bashing through gympies soon made one oblivious to this fact. Having met the fiendish gympies I was soon to be introduced to our little blood sucking friend - the leech. Ah! delightful creatures. Two hours later another gremlin made himself known to me - CRAMPS. Lack of salt reserve plus heavy perspiration was tying the odd muscle into knots. Beware! to those who have yet to experience these.

So started a most memorable four day trip which was interspersed with numerous interesting incidents. Burnt porridge for breakfast in the rain, Ugh! Leeches toasted on match-sticks. Getting lost on the hour every hour caused some concern. Scrambling down off West Peak in the dark and mist, assisted by freezing 40 m.p.h. wind gusts had its moments. On reaching the much maligned (by older members) Barney Hut we were met by an advance party member, none other than our pyrotechnics expert. Hot coffee was never so welcome. A four course meal of curry, rice, stewed fruit and instant pud made me feel almost human again. Before retiring to the hard hut bunks I was almost put into orbit around East Peak by a misguided rocket. The explosion of the war head did manage to land me in the creek however.

Monday saw the party (fourteen) on the return to Grace's via Midget Peak and the Upper Portals. Lunch and a swim plus bath below the Portals was very refreshing and soothed aching feet. Now followed a stretch of rock-hopping, a completely new experience, which nearly ended with a thorough

drenching when I jumped on to a wet slab of rock. Having planned to have our packs driven out from the ridge above Grace's, bitter disappointment was our lot when said car was gone. Another 90 minute walk gave the answer to this riddle. Base campers had driven it down to the other vehicles to get a search party organised for a lost walker.

Tea in Beaudesert served by a most delightful (I must say) country style waitress was not a fitting end to this trip. Ooh! my feet ache.

Since this first trip I have been on six others plus a Sunday at Kangaroo Point, and each trip has been as worthwhile as the last.

The last trip, to the Steamer range to get a photo for the magazine cover, whilst not an epic certainly had its interesting features. Only two out of a party of five reaching camp site due to mechanical failure of one car.

Having to seal a severe petrol leak in our car at Goodna gave some moments of deep thought. Chewing gum and black insulation tape served the purpose down to a tee. Occasionally one or two pistons ceased to push when crossing the fourteen creek fords. Gordon twice tangled with the dreaded Gympies and suffered considerably. Pain was somewhat offset by the finding and catching of crayfish to be used in his further studies.

The views observed from the Steamer Range and the possibilities for climbing with easy access makes this a trip to be recommended. Several ridges leading on to the main range gave indications of possible excellent two to three day through-walks. Peaks observed include Mts. Guymer, Huntley, Double Top, Panorama Point, Steamer, Lizards Lookout and Conn's Plain.

So ends a first season of Bushwalking and Rockclimbing with the prospect of starting 1964 climbing in the New Zealand Southern Alps.

THE MANY PEAKS RANGE

T. BROWN

I first saw the Many Peaks Range in August 1956 from the Bruce Highway on the way back to Brisbane from a surveying camp at Mt. Morgan. The range runs south for some miles near Gladstone, and some rock peaks and pinnacles on the crest of the range caught my eye. During the following year Neville Stevens, who had been doing some geological work in the district, suggested that this might be interesting bushwalking country. I bought the one mile military map of the district, Barmundoo, an emergency edition without contours, having little topographical detail, but with comments such as "Extremely rough and rugged country", "Numerous precipitcus peaks" on the blank parts of the map.

In August 1957, following another surveying camp, I had arranged to meet Murray Rich and Peter Reimann in Gladstone. I found them sitting on a lawn near the railway station. They had arrived early that morning and they were being eyed with suspicion by the police, so we set off.

First we went north of Gladstone, through Yarwun, to climb Mt. Larcom, the most prominent peak in the district. It is an impressive peak from below: a huge jagged white rock, with some subsidiary pinnacles and a rocky ridge running to the north. On closer acquaintance we found the mountain rather dull: an easy climb, and it was a hot day and too hazy to get any view from the top. That night we camped on the Calliope River not far from Gladstone, and it rained, and was still raining the next morning when we set off for our main objective - the Many Peaks Range.

The road runs inland and then south through flat uninteresting country. The weather improved, but not until we were quite close did we see the mountains : a mass of rocky bluffs, spires and peaks, their ruggedness accentuated by the rising mist and the first sunshine after the rain. We camped at Charter's Crossing on the Boyne River and made enquiries locally about the mountains. (We were also told of some limestone caves in the district, 'Caves you can get lost in' were the words used. But we didn't look for these).

Most of the rocky peaks are confined to an area of about twelve square miles, drained by three creeks, at the extreme north end of the Many Peaks Range. The area is bounded by the Boyne River in one direction and by mountainous but not rocky country in other directions. The rock is granite, but the mountains are different from those of the Granite Belt in south Queensland. The rock seems to be less massive, tending to form pinnacles, ridges and peaks rather than huge domes like Bald Rock and

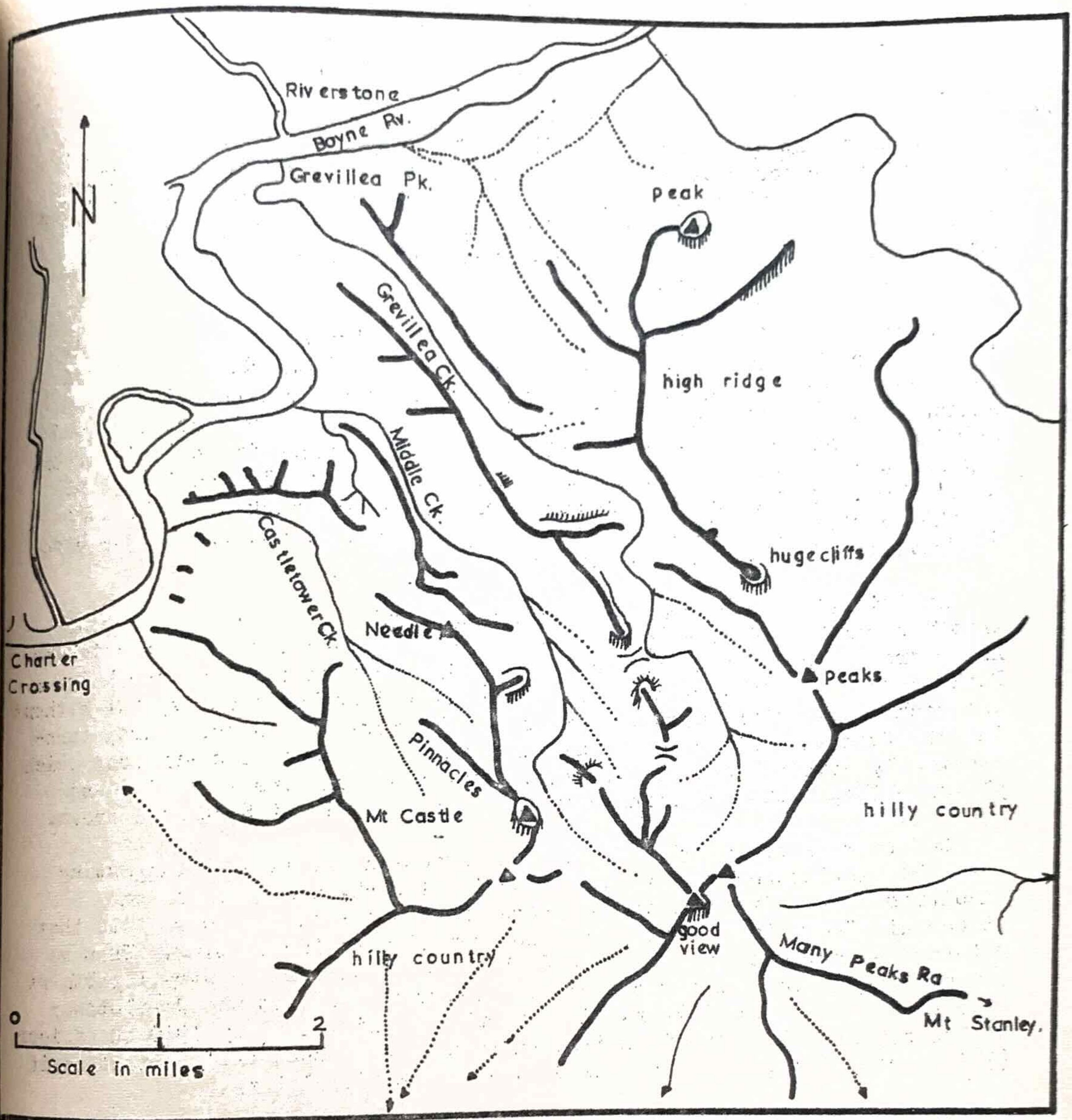
Mt. Norman. We found it very good country to walk in, with vegetation similar to that found on many southern Queensland mountains: grass-trees, small eucalypts, etc., with no lantana or rainforest.

Where we were camped we could see little of the mountains, and the next morning we set off to cross over into the valley of Castletower Creek. We came to a vantage point above this valley. There were mountains on all sides, a confusing jumble of peaks, pinnacles and cliff faces. We identified two peaks marked on the map as 1680' and 1770'. The latter is marked as Mt. Castletower: it is a large regular peak with some broken cliff faces. The peak marked 1680' has a strange rocky summit and is ringed with cliffs: it is obvious that this is the peak which should (with a bit of imagination) be called Mt. Castletower. (The Barmundoo map has many other errors).

We dropped down into the valley and climbed up the other side, along a ridge, continuing past two pinnacles, until wwe came to Mt. Castletower's summit, which consists of three rock peaks separated by narrow clefts. From the highest we got a good view of the whole area, and across the nearby peaks to the north, the Boyne River and Mt. Larcom in the distance. We had lunch and followed a different ridge back, trying unsuccessfully on the way to climb a granite monolith which was prominent in the view from the road. On the way back to camp we found a neglected citrus orchard on the banks of the Boyne, and gorged ourselves on ripe oranges.

The next day we moved our camp and came to Riverston, a few miles downstream. Here we spoke to a Mr. Clive Jensen who had done some walking in these mountains. He was helpful about where to find water, and promised to keep an eye on the car while we were away. Crossing the Boyne, we followed its tributary, Grevillea Creek, which cuts back into the mountains. The valley became narrow and we made our camp on the soft gravel of the creek bed. Nearby was a deep pool of good water, and high above us could be seen the cliffs of one of the peaks.

That afternoon we climbed the ridges on either side of the creek. From the edge of the cliffs of a peak to the north we could see across the coastal plain and out to sea. A few hundred yards away, separated from us by a deep gap, was another peak ringed by high cliffs: these were the cliffs I had seen from the Brude Highway the previous year. We descended again into Grevillea Creek and climbed the peak on the other side, which overlooked our camp. A steep climb from ledge to ledge brought us to the top, a bare rocky ridge. We could see reflections in the pools of the Boyne, and the blue outlines of the distant hills were growing hazy in the afternoon sun.



MANY PEAKS RANGE

Compiled from bearings & sketches

by T.W.G. Brown 1957.

The next day we followed Grevillea Creek upstream. We passed deep pools of water sculptured in the granite creek bed, and a waterfall. Then we climbed one of the peaks on the ridge to the south, and followed this ridge over a succession of high bluffs. The valley of Grevillea Creek, narrow where we were camped, opens out upstream to form a wide basin ringed by high peaks.

A long hot climb brought us out on to the highest peak of all. It is a wonderful viewpoint. To the south the Many Peaks Range stretched away, with groups of higher mountains at intervals, patched with cloud shadows. A few miles away Mt. Stanley stood up abruptly, forested, and showing the marks of recent bushfires as brown patches in the dull green. Beyond this was the coastal plain ending in the channels and inlets of Rodd's Bay. We lay in the sun here, on a huge flat rock near the edge of the precipice, until it was time to go, then followed the ridges back to Grevillea Creek, and so to our camp.

At this stage our time was running out, and as we had seen most of what was worth seeing, we packed up the next day and set off for Brisbane. As we drove south, what we could see of the southern parts of the Many Peaks Range was not very interesting: rough and broken country, but without the rock peaks of the Castletower area. We drove across the range, turning off from the main road at Builyan, and following a Forestry road which eventually joined the Bruce Highway. Here the mountains were high and plateau-like, with much rainforest and many magnificent Hoop Pine trees.

Before we left the district we had discussed the idea of suggesting that the Castletower area be made a National Park, and we made some enquiries in the district about ownership of the land. We were told that it was all Crown land, some vacant and some leased for grazing. When we returned to Brisbane we asked the Club to approach the Forestry Department through the National Parks Association recommending that the Castletower area be made a National Park. As a result of this, in July 1960 an officer of the Forestry Department visited the area, and subsequently a part of it (3830 acres) was gazetted as the Castletower National Park.

We thought our trip had been well worthwhile. The mountains are not of great extent, nor very high. But they were different from mountains we had seen before, and as Frank Smythe once wrote, "Comparisons between low hills and high hills are invidious . . . Altitude in terms of figures counts for little." And this we certainly found to be true of the Many Peaks Range.

ADD VICE TO FRESHERS

BARBARA REID

Recently rumours had reached civic fathers of the existence of a strange species of humanity frequenting various regions of south-eastern Queensland. Reports from alarmed citizens were becoming more frequent. However, it was only when it was discovered that the group began their nefarious schemes for the year by luring into their number fresh and innocent freshers and, horrors! fresherettes, that the wheels of officialdom really began to turn. The youth, pride and flower of the State, had to be saved from such a malevolent design. The social structure might crumble! The onslaught threatened to wipe out all the culture and sophistication instilled in these youths by years of a civilised, social pattern of picture theatres, pre-ball parties, and sound lounges - all in one week-end away from these joys, amid the unknown horrors of (ugh!) untouched nature.

This article is a result of the official disquiet: let it serve as a warning to all who would be lured into the U.Q.B.W.C. by kind and open-faced youths, distributing pamphlets in Orientation Week.

Firstly, perhaps we should discuss how the group was discovered. From time to time, unsuspecting tourists have lighted on a group of bodies in the ranges, all in an advanced stage of decay, similar to that experienced by all rainforest growth. These beings were always ravenously attacking great mounds of a revolting grey mass, slightly resembling over-cooked porridge, if one can imagine this without milk and of a colour harmonizing beautifully with the rain-forest surrounding. Others have vowed that this group is the same as one occasionally seen running at great speed up and down mountains and along creeks, but no hiker has ever been able to see them for long enough as they zoom by, to accurately verify this.

Now, in the interests of all sane path-loving tourists, a rough sort of guide has been devised as to the whereabouts of this group, who designate themselves in their strange, primitive dialect as the U.Q.B.W.C. Primarily, they come out in the rain - usually in the middle of the rain forest where it is raining the hardest. Often also, they may be found on precipitous rock-faces, swinging round on pieces of string, throwing rocks at one another. So you are advised, unless you are of particularly great stamina, to avoid these regions during week-ends, especially long week-ends. Very rarely do they invade the city, and then are quite harmless, even if they do tend to cause disturbances on public transport owing to the peculiar smell which emanates from them, and the strange encumbrances they carry on their backs.

It would hardly seem necessary to describe them: You certainly know when one approaches. However, if you should see a grey-green body, and he is wearing dirty, smelly apparel and especially huge boots - this is

a bushwalker (the term used here to designate members of the species U.Q.B.W.C.). Generally, they speak English, but they have retained certain words of their native dialect: for example, their long name for themselves U.Q.B.W.C., and their strange call:"Heybob",which carries a full range of meanings from Ha! I'm up first! to - Where are you? Often also, they use pseudo-civilised means of communication; whistles and bike horns. It is suggested that these were obtained from passing tourists in a manner reminiscent of early barter-ing with Indians.

In the interests of humanity, your correspondent, at great personal risk - let it here be mentioned that bushwalkers are violent if woken up too early - joined the group and has done her best to record their various habits.

Their chief occupation is walking. They walk and walk for miles and miles, carrying huge weights on their backs. At first sight it would seem that only males are present, all the group being dressed alike in decrepit trousers and shirts; but the females of the species may be easily detected after a day's walking. They are the ones who customarily crawl the last mile.

In cold weather, the valleys echo to a deafening roar: the bushwalkers are making a misguided attempt at warming themselves by producing these alarm-ing noises in what is perhaps a superstitious appeal to their deity, the God of Barney. Others of them, however, seem to have an inbuilt protection against the cold, and cut revolting studies in bare goose-pimpled legs.

The eating habits of the group are very strange. Already mentioned is their porridge. Also, I would suggest that liquor manufacturers investigate the potential of a certain powder which reacts violently with greenish water, preferably abounding in wrigglers. This drink has a most invigorating effect on the bushwalkers, and is staple in the summer months. Certain of the group live off others as regards food. Their especial target is the gourmet group. This select coterie specialises in five-course meals which they prepare in huge volume. They are most generous with their excess and refuse to throw any food away: this would constitue a waste and is an entirely different matter from pouring the unwanted remains over the head of one of their compatriots.

So, to all freshers I give the warning, that next year in Orientation Week the U.Q.B.W.C. will be looking for fresh sacrifice for the God of Barney. I shall feel that all my agonies have not been in vain if this article should fall into the hands of some of these tender specimens, and induce them to follow the philosophy I have devised as regards joining the U.Q.B.W.C:

You can't lick 'em, so join 'em!

CLIMBING WITH COX

KEN WARNER

My first impression of Cox was a long, skinny, untidy, fast-talking character - especially fast-talking. How else could I - a poor timid first-walker who had just carted about 50 lbs. of unnecessary food up South Ridge (to me then, as now, a heart breaker) in a ten bob rag pack which had cut a deep groove in my shoulders to about waist level - have been persuaded to rock-climb with him on Leaning Peak. (Perhaps it was the thought of not carrying a pack).

"Easy", he had said; "a few hours in the sunshine on the East Face (this despite the fact that it was already 10.30 a.m. with a howling easterly); back in the hut by 5 o'clock". This persuasive logic had also roped in Judy Bryan and Adele Kehoe, at that time also inexperienced walkers, and shrewd old Graham Hardy who had come along to see the fun.

Arriving at the North-Leaning saddle at mid-day a discussion ensued as to whether to eat lunch then, carry food to the top, or eat when we came back. The climb we were told consisted of a walk along a ledge (to me it looked like the roof of a Swiss chalet) to some trees (which we could see leaning at a precarious angle from the cliff face), a short walk up a dirt slope to the summit aided by trees to hang on to (by craning our neck, we could vaguely discern a part of the face which eased to 89 degrees, studded with some unusual detached vegetation), and a short rappel back to the saddle (looking directly at the imposing wall it seemed enormous).

As this could be done in about two hours lunch was postponed. Ron set off along the ledge and a few moments later a cheery shout told us he was at the first stance. The long process of ferrying three panic stricken would-be rock-climbers across the exposed ledge with one climbing rope, and another to pull it back to the next person (and the resultant inevitable tangles) then began. Two hours later as we clung to the ledge, one per sapling, Ron started off on the second pitch - along the ledge till it gave out, then up the dirt wall.

Wall it was, as I looked at it some time later. A 40 foot slash of black dirt in the surrounding ferns, with small cascades of soil and greenery still raining down from Ron's previous exertions. Three black-boy trees at inconveniently long intervals stood between the ledge and the top. A scramble, and much exertion and I was at the first. Newton's third law of motion states, "To every action an equal and opposite reaction", and by sending down about two tons of dirt and assorted herbiage, and aided by a tight rope from above I found myself in a decidedly uncompromising situation with a weak and shaky grass tree. The third stretch was a little easier but by the time the two girls had joined us, there was very little light left. The veteran came up in record time leaving a cloud of dust and small pebbles to mark his progress - it appeared he had climbed with Cox in the dark before. A rest at the top was demanded by tradition and exhaustion.

By 8 p.m. the ropes were laid (we hoped) down the cliff face to the saddle. Hardy was sent down first to see if they reached the bottom and to take out the tangles, thus becoming first sitting for lunch. Meanwhile on top Ron was trying to fix a double snap-link rappel for Adele with the light of a 2 inch long pencil torch.

As we on top pictured Graham and Adele helping themselves to our lunch we became obsessed with the idea of getting off this - - peak. Judy was unceremoniously put into harness with the last feeble rays of the torch, and bundled over the side. As her crys became louder and more insistent it finally dawned on us that something may be wrong. Ron: "It's all right Judy just keep going". To me aside "I thought I may have put one too many turns round that link". To Judy loudly: "It's quite all right Judy, you might have to push it a bit,that's all". To me aside "God, I hope she makes it."

About this time faint "Heybobbing" type sounds were heard around North Peak, and thoughts on the attitude of the non-rockclimbing club elders to inexperienced climbers passed our minds.

When Judy had reached the ground after a rather eventful rappel I climbed into the rope in the pitch dark, very thankful for Ron's belay above. Having conjured up all sorts of pictures of vertical and overhanging walls below in the inky blackness, I was mildly disappointed after the first few backward steps to find myself in the top branches of a tree, but after a few scratches I was out and made reasonable progress till about halfway down the cliff.

Then I fell off.

Having executed a spectacular 20 foot swing towards the gorge and crashing back into the cliff on a shoulder I (hanging my head in shame) let go the back rope - well I was scared. In regaining my footing a great boulder went crashing down towards the gorge. Mildly concerned plum-are- you-all -right-type queries floated up from below and down from above, where Ron was lying flat on his back in the belay. After cogitating for some time on the matter - - - - - - - - - well, anyway, I managed to get down and a very quivery and shaky Warner was fed hot soup and tea by a bevy of anxious females.

Ron arrived down amid a veritable web of ropes just as the rescue party arrived with our sleeping-bags for the bivouac they expected us to make on top. We all sat down to a very enjoyable lunch at 10.30 p.m.

MT. BARNEY'S LEGEND

D. KLINGER

Mt. Barney, or to the Aboriginal,"Boogah, Boogah" meaning - go away back, get further away!", has always been a place of mystery and superstition to the blacks, and although from time to time they passed through the area, they never stayed for very long, the over-powering grandeur of Mount Lindsay and Barney being too great for them. The dark nights of the Upper Logan River, and the mighty echoes of thunder and falling rocks were perhaps the angry voices of departed warriors. And so the legends of the mountains were built up.

Many years back, it appears, some of the blacks put aside their fears and began to climb and explore "Boogah-Boogah". Among those who disregarded the warning to "go away back" from this great rock mass were the leader of the tribe and his nephew. The leader was a great warrior, strong and fleet of foot. He could climb rock ledges and cliffs where even the wallaby had to turn back. The more he climbed and defied the evils of the mountain, the greater became his power over the rest of his tribe. But as time passed he became greatly disturbed. He found his nephew was discovering new and wonderful places on the rock sides of "Boogah-Boogah". This nephew was younger, and though not so strong, he was even swifter at running.

Then came the day when the tribe's leader discovered a cave, situated over 3,000 ft. up the mountain's side, its entrance nearly hidden by a large number of dead grass trees. The darkness of the cave terrified him so he didn't venture in and returned to camp. He told the tribe of the cave and declared he had seen an evil spirit in it which had quailed before him, an evil spirit which his young nephew would not dare free.

The nephew accepted the challenge. Next morning the whole tribe moved part way up the mountain, and watched the two black figures climb up Boogah-Boogah's side. At length they appeared to be close together on a ledge above a tremendous drop. Then one figure disappeared from sight. Time passed by slowly. Suddenly, the sharp-eyed watchers below saw black smoke swirl upwards and out from the ledge. Fear gripped them. Surely it was the evil spirit, and they turned and raced madly down the slope.

Meanwhile up on the ledge, the leader was carrying out his fiendish plot. He had enticed his nephew to enter the cave and then had promptly stuffed the entrance with grass-tree leaves, and had quickly lit it by sparks from a flint rock. The leaves produced a thick suffocating smoke, and the leader of the tribe chuckling gleefully moved to a vantage point where he could watch and wait.

Inside the cave, the nephew found himself to be trapped. It was asking for death to try and crash out through the burning entrance, but to stay meant suffocation.

Perhaps it was a natural instinct that caused him to realize that smoke would not travel unless it had somewhere to go. He turned, and with outstretched hands, stumbled his way through the growing heat.

At last his sharp eyes detected a greyness which soon turned into a jagged slit of daylight ahead. He struggled through the narrow opening, tearing his flesh and took great gulps of air. He found himself to be on the opposite side of the mountain, looking down on the wildest country he'd ever seen. He resolved to climb back over the top of the mountain and drop a great rock on his uncle's black head. He firstly blocked the cave exit with a large stone so that no other would ever find it.

While the leader of the tribe sat gloating, and watching his tribe madly fleeing, he began to have some doubts as to his action and so raking aside the grass trees, he entered the cave.

On arrival at the cave, the nephew found the leaves raked aside, and deducing his wicked uncle was inside, he again piled dead grass tree leaves on the glowing embers, completely blocking the entrance. Again, black smoke swirled up from the ledge high up on the Eastern Peak of "Boogah-Boogah". The young blackfellow with song in his heart, turned and almost flew down the mountain. He would be the leader of the tribe now, he thought, as he raced towards the tribe, camped in the shadow of "Ollmoorum" (Maroon).

He told them of the spirit of the cave, of how his uncle had been drawn into the spirits fiery den, and of his own desperate fight with the spirit. The frightful cuts on his body bore mute testimony to his bravery. In the camp there was a great celebration far into the night, and the nephew was elected undisputed king.

ME AND THE BUSH

MARGARET MOSES

I am, without doubt, the worst kind of bushwalker. I grumble, I get stuck, I can't light a fire, I can't cook, I can't even fill a billy properly! So why do I come? (Can two whole bushwalks really justify this question ?). Ah! It's the bush I love - the freedom ... etc. (You'll find several articles and poems already written on this aspect, so I won't detail). And why don't I come? (More to the point!). My feeling of inferiority re afore-mentioned disabilities and the fact that everyone else seems to want to keep moving and actually get to the top!! The silly clots go tearing through the undergrowth regardless of prickles, leeches, spiders - and LIKE it!!

I would like to propose that there be made a branch of the U.Q.B.W.C. called the U.Q.B.L.C., the L standing for 'Lovers'. The Bushwalker's slogan 'We cater for all types' doesn't include me and my type. Are there <u>any</u> bushies who deep in their hearts would rather walk at their leisure through the bush enjoying the beauties of nature, etc., etc., instead of rushing full pelt to the top? I maintain the view is just as good half way up.

Any followers? I should perhaps add that my name is Moses and a famous ancestor of mine was responsible for quite a big movement: indeed the opposition were quite sunk - so, again, Any followers?

. . . . . .

ME AND MEETINGS

I haven't missed one Bushies meeting this year. Walks, yes, but meetings, never! They are the essence of my existence. Yes, whenever I feel I need a break, or I'm not working hard enough - I need inspiration - I take a Bushies meeting to relax and stimulate me.

I used to arrive at meetings at 6.25 all enthusiastic, leaving myself five minutes chat with fellows. Now I arrive at 8 and have 15 minutes chat with fellows before it starts.

"Well - we haven't got the minutes from last meeting. Does anyone remember any business arising from them? ... NO? Good! Er - there's no correspondence to speak of. Any general business? ... You haven't found out about that yet? Okay, let us know next meeting. Well, did anyone bring any slides?

So we watch slides, have supper and go home. See how relaxing and stimulating it's been!

Like I have a whale of a time at Bushies meetings. Whenever I laugh out loud (and the desire comes often) I seem to be the only one, so I sit there trying like mad to keep a straight face. Of course, I bring a book along in case there's a dull moment but never yet have I had to open it. A tribute indeed!

Please don't think I'm casting aspersions on the efficiency of the committee. I think the form of the meetings is entirely in keeping with Bushwalking. I know how tiresomely up to date and business like I'd be in an official capacity and thank Heaven for secretaries like Barry!

"NAVIGATING WITH DON" OR "LOST IN THE BUSH"

ANDY BROOKS

Finally, on a certain Friday night we arrived at Grace's Hut - I could tell from the start it was going to be one of "those"trips. As we prepared to 'bed down' after the pyrotechnical display (which seemed to cause some undue concern amongst some of Grace's cows!) Don arrived. He greeted us cheerily with "Come on, we'll 'walk in' to the Upper Portals - it's not far".

I'm sure he thinks in terms of nautical miles or light years or some such. At 2.30 a.m., after a brisk trot - rather like a marathon, only we had packs on - we 'bedded-down' at the Portals.

We were awakened by rain - another sign of a good trip! Breakfasted, tins burned, bashed and buried we set off up Mt. Barney Creek towards Gwyala. During the course of our trek up the Creek, I couldn't resist the temptation to bathe myself. In fact, it was such a strong temptation and seized me so suddenly, that I was quite often immersed in the cool, clear, crystal stream before I had consciously realised it.

We arrived at the bottom of the ridge we were to ascend the next day. We camped. We dined. It rained. We slept. The day dawned slowly and the clouds hung low above us as we set out. Of course it was the wrong ridge, so we set off up the Creek again. Taking map and compass readings and looking round for the densest scrub, Don said "Up there"! (having found it).

We climbed, slipped, crawled and fell up the slope and ended with a stop for lunch under a large rock. I prayed the thing would fall on us and relieve our misery, but it didn't.

What a glorious day! The mist swirled about us soaking the vegetation and us. Occasionally it lifted just enough to let us see the person in front. At last we turned back, dampened in body and spirit and headed for home.

But no! Just when we were nearly there, we lost the Portals. In vain did we look for them. Then, while I was sitting on the ground awaiting Don's return from his reconnoitre, I heard heavy trudging behind me. I bounded up and turned expectantly to greet Don.

"How didja make out?" I asked

"Moo-Oo-o" came the reply.

I tried to remember. What was Don like? Did he have four legs and horns? A tail? I looked again. There were four legged, horned Dons everywhere.

"I must be in hell" I thought, and collapsed on a rock.

Then I saw a light coming towards me and prepared for the worst. Martians? a Tram? or Don?

Then I knew it wasn't a tram - it didn't have square wheels. And then the glaring light stopped right in front of me. I reached forward blindly to grope with the dazzling demon when it spoke: "Hello Andy".

I marvelled. A light, away out there, and it knew me!→ Then I saw it had a face and arms and legs and it looked vaguely familiar. It was Don!

After a gallant struggle against time, fatique, hunger, darkness and footrot, and by carefully reading the stars for Grace's Hut, he had finally found the Portals.

Then I knew we weren't in hell and we set off.

"On occasions such as this, mothers wait anxiously for the return of their children, and on finding them safe, give vent to their joy in the shape of anger"

Victor Hugo

.....

DE GUSTIBUS

I cannot well argue with such detractors from what I consider a noble sport.... No more argument is possible than if I were to say that I liked olives, and someone asserted that I really eat them only out of affection. My reply would be to simply go on eating olives; and I hope the reply of mountaineers will be to go on climbing Alps.

Sir Leslie Stephen

.....

THOUGHT FOR BENIGHTED CLIMBERS

If all our misfortunes were laid in a heap, whence every one must take an equal share, most persons would be content to take their own and depart.

Plutarch

A LONG ABSEIL

GRAHAME HARDY

'Twas long, long ago, in the Autumn of 1960, that a reckless young fathead named Cox wanted to rappel down the East face of Mount Barney. I never took this seriously until Easter Friday found Basil Yule, Ron Cox, and myself slogging up South ridge, bowed down with every bit of rope and ironmongery we possessed, three motorcycle helmets (so we wouldn't be nutted), five tins of Tropical Fruit Salad (Ron's basic mountaineering food), 3 pints of jelly beans (Basil's iron rations for the descent), 3 pairs of etriers, plus a few comforts like sleeping bags and so forth.

We spent Friday night outside the hut, and, contrary to our usual practice, were up before dawn. To save time in the morning, we had cooked breakfast the night before. The memory of that ghastly meal of cold rice, eaten in darkness, has stuck with me over the years. Still, we wanted to have time to have a look at the face before starting down, as we had decided that the only practical method was to go down in pitches on a doubled rope, pulling the rope down at each stance. Obviously a lack of belays could be disastrous using this method.

We got on to the top of East Peak shortly after dawn, dumped our gear, and went about five hundred feet down Logan's ridge, to study the descent route. The 1,100 ft. wall looked horribly blank on both sides, with some enormous overhangs, but down the middle ran a great crack, with wisps of green appearing in it. This relieved our minds somewhat, as green presumably meant bushes, which meant belays. The visions I had had of us dangling on the face, vainly trying to hammer a piton in the notoriously unpitonable Barney rock, dimmed a little.

We went back up and managed to find the top of the crack after fossicking around a while. Then we grimly put on our crash helmets with shaking hands and started down. A gentle gully full of bushes led down to a sloping chimney which we got down easily enough, and at the bottom of this was a clump of bushes, projecting out over the drop.

The order we decided to follow was this: Ron, as the acknowledged piton expert, would go first and prepare an anchor. Then Basil would go next, as he would be carrying the pack with all our equipment and might need a belay from above in case of trouble, and I would go last, belayed only from below, as I was disposable. Basil, by the way, used an Allain "descenduer", while Ron and I used snaplinks for abseiling.

Ron set off while I belayed him, draped with slings and etriers and a hammer, and with a dozen or so pitons tinkling around his neck. He went down about a hundred feet, and presently called to Basil to follow.

Basil went down, then I started myself. So far I hadn't seen much of the drop, but this time I found I was out of the crack and had quite a feeling of exposure. Little wisps of cloud hung about, occasionally revealing the gorge more than a thousand feet vertically below. But shortly I came to a chimney which opened on to a sloping grassy ledge, and there was Bas and Ron, stuffing into Tropical Fruit Salad and jelly beans.

This time there was no bush for an anchor and no cracks for a peg, but a piece of rock projected through the grass. The top edge of this was horizontal, and over this Ron hung a sling, passed the rappel line through it, and went down for about 80 ft. while I belayed him (unanchored) sitting on the rock in front of the sling to hold it in place. Blows of the hammer floated up to us for a while, then he called that it was O.K. When it got to my turn, I had an attack of jitters. To start, one had to slide off the ledge hanging on to the sling, without, one hoped, dislodging it from the rock. I made scared noises to Ron. "Yer okay", he said, "I've got a real good belay on yer". He didn't remind me that I would fall about 200 feet before he stopped me, so I started off feeling very safe. I had an excellent chance (unappreciated) to admire the view as I went over a roof and came down into a chimney with Basil wedged in the bottom of it. Ron was a bit further down, standing out on the face with his heels on a tiny ledge, and his toes waggling over a vertical slab which went down without a break for perhaps a hundred feet. The "real good belay" was a piton hammered in behind a block which appeared to be on the point of falling off. Gingerly we pulled the abseil line down (not once did we have the traditional difficulty of it getting stuck) and attached it to the piton with a sling. I started off. Part way down the slab it began to appear that what looked like a flat ledge from above was sloping too much to stand on, and I might need to go a long way further to find a stance. A chip out of the rock gave me enough of a foothold to stand on while they coupled the spare rope on to the abseil line; then I kept on till I found a sizable tree poking horizontally over the void. Now that I was secure myself, I found Basil and Ron's troubles getting over the knot in the rope quite hilarious.

While I was waiting for them I peered over the edge. It was getting dark, but I could see some greenery about 80 feet down and a bit over to the right, which I thought would be a bush we could use for a belay. By and by Basil joined me, and we started eating jelly beans, now and then giving a tug on Ron's belay line, so that he'd feel well looked after. What happened after Ron joined us is best described by the following extract from Ron's diary (written afterwards). "Fourth abseil off tree. Hardy led. Darkness and mist arrive together (7 hours so far). Hardy lets out agonising scream from the darkness below causing Cox and Basil to nearly have kittens. Turns out Hardy has come off diagonal abseil and hit head on rock. But for crash helmet, and fact that head is extraordinarily solid, would no doubt have been knocked unconscious". I had pendulumed about 15 feet (quite thrilling)

in the dark and the yell had occurred when I had hit the rock, fortunately backwards. I dangled on the belay line for a little while, then started off again a bit more cautiously. A little lower down I found a narrow ledge just wide enough to balance on. This took me to the top of the tree I had seen from above. I clung on to this till I got to the bottom of it. It turned out that my exciting diagonal rappel was pointless after all. The tree was on a grass-covered ledge, which extended right under the anchor above. Ron and Basil were able to come straight down from where they were to the ledge.

Things got a bit easier from now on. We always found a bush to use as an anchor; the mist vanished, and eventually, a few hours later, the moon came up, which was a help, as our torches were almost completely flat. I forget how many pitches we had after the ledge, but they just seemed to go on and on, while the jelly beans in my tummy rattled louder and louder, and I became sleepier and sleepier. I remember once falling asleep for short intervals perched astride a tree, when I was supposed to be belaying somebody. Well, finally, at about 1 a.m., we arrived at a 45° shelf at the foot of the vertical part of the cliff. "Give me some jelly beans", I said to Basil. "They're in the pack", he said. "Well where's the pack"? The pack, of course, was 80 feet or so back up the cliff, where some idiot (not me, I wasn't last down) had left it. I refused to go on without it, as I just had to have a jelly bean. Anyway it was my pack. So we decided to sit where we were till dawn, no one particularly wanting to climb back up in the dark. I wedged myself between some bushes and the side of a boulder, keeping on my waist band for warmth.

As I started going to sleep, I seemed to see a train going back and forth ten feet or so lower down. A closer look revealed it as Basil with his torch, crawling through the bushes trying to find a (non-existent) flat spot, making chuff-chuff noises with his hands and knees in the dead leaves. I awoke in about an hour, shivering violently, and went to look for a better sleeping spot. I came across Ron on a sloping patch of grass, likewise shivering. I cursed him for not being a beautiful girl to warm myself with and shivered with him till dawn.

Retrieving the pack proved no trouble. We still had a minute tin of meat left, and about 2 pints of Basil's infernal jelly beans, but without water we couldn't face them. Miserably we skirted the foot of the cliffs moving towards S.E. ridge. Presently we came to a trickle of water, with an accumulation about 1/8" deep on slime covered rock. From this we sucked, one after another. It had a sort of rich taste, and left the stomach with a lively feeling, but it enabled us to eat our meat and jelly beans.

We toiled back up S.E. ridge to the hut under a blazing sun, and found Tom Brown and Roger Ewer there. They had come up Logan's Ridge in the dark, Tom boosted on the way with dexedrine and rum. Shocking conduct from one about to become a priest!

I cooked a mixture of spaghetti and eggs for our tea. It smelt somewhat odd so I got Basil to try a couple of spoonfuls first. He immediately ran into the bushes and vomited most spectacularly. He ate two more spoonfuls and explōded again, so I chucked it away untasted and had bread and scrape for tea.

APPENDIX

Equipment List for the Descent

1 nylon rope, 300' x 7/8" (belay)
1 nylon rope, 200' x 7/8" (abseil)
1 nylon rope, 150' x 1¼" (abseil)
3 motor cycle crash helmets
Assorted pitons (about 24)*
Assorted wooden wedges (about 6) *
Assorted slings *
2 piton hammers
2 knives
3 torches
Karabiners (about 15) *
6 etriers
1 Pierre Allain descenduer (for Basil)
3 tins T.F. Salad +
3 pints jelly beans
1 tin meat (4 ozs.)
1 pack
1 Basil Yule to carry it all +

* I forget exactly how many. It was a long time ago. Anyway an awful lot.

\+ Utterly indispensable.

ST. PAUL TO THE MOUNTAINEER -

Prove all things;
hold fast to that which is good. Thessalonians

.....

See that ye walk circumspectly. Ephesians

A NOTE FROM SYDNEY

E.A. BERNAYS

On a recent trip to the Blue Mountains, I was able to observe and enjoy the very different habits of Sydney bushwalkers.

Recall an article in the 1960 Magazine by A. Rosser, which speaks of a certain female bushwalker, Loocee, who rigidly observed the customs of the U.Q.B.W.C. of those days. Things are different now for "Loocee" is now a member of the club I was with for the week-end.

We met in Katoomba for a drink and it was a very jolly hour - friendly and entertaining, and above all, warming in preparation for the bitterly cold night ahead of us. Sublime Point Leura is an ideal place for a basecamp because of the view, besides which there is a shelter and a water tap: but we did not sleep much, as it was too cold for those without Hothams. We lay listening to the transistor under wind blown trees.

Everybody had fancy utensils and fancy food but we finally finished breakfast and went our different ways - under such a beautiful blue sky, it could have been Queensland. Again the methods are different, for around Sydney roads go only to the tops of mountains, so one climbs down and then up - it is rather depressing to have to start with leaving the view behind.

Saturday evening was good - we all sat around the fire cooking and the boys went into town to buy some bottles of ale which we consumed amidst much laughter, song and dance. We listened to Brahm's Violin-concerto, told jokes and smoked - the holiday atmosphere prevailed.

Sunday - some rock climbing and then home, but not without a farewell drink in Katoomba.

The Sydney "rockies" though, are keen and able rock climbers and have to contend with a good deal of bad weather and bad rock, but they are easy-going and lighthearted, having no fanatical rules, except where necessary - on the rocks!

He who goes to the Hills goes
to his Mother. - Hindu Saying

.....

HAPPY PHRASE

An early start is, of course, always desirable before a hard day's work; but it rises to be almost agreeable after a hard night's work.

Sir Leslie Stephen

OF OTHER THINGS

DOUG CLAGUE

As this is my fifth and perhaps my final year of walking with the club, I consider that a somewhat long, diverse and unavoidably controversial article is permissible.

When reading this article one must remember that I am merely expressing an individual point of view. Differing view-points on every aspect of this brief sojourn will be numerous. Life would be boring if they weren't. I am not setting down a law that everyone should agree with me and that conflicting opinions are wrong. If a person has an entirely different conception in which he firmly believes, I recognise his ideals and respect them as such.

My article of last year has been criticised by a number of people who fall into two main classes:

(a) People who show intolerance by believing that their ideas are the right ones and the only ones.

(b) Those who fail to realize that I gave the mountains life merely to form a different media through which I could express my opinion that we fail to fully appreciate our country through our own failings rather than those of our continent.

Surely this attracted far more attention than it would have if I had only stated that we often fail to fully appreciate our country because some of us walk too fast.

The subject I herein intend to discuss is Beauty. It is my contention that Bushwalkers have one of the greatest opportunities in the world to obtain a full realization of Beauty.

Before the birth of Christ the Chinese Philosopher Lao Tzu wrote "Among mankind the recognition of Beauty as such implies the idea of ugliness." This obviously is true for if we did not have ugliness on what could be based our impressions of Beau[illegible]? Personally, I do not see ugliness in Nature but rather in the works of man. If one knows Nature well enough, Beauty is evident everywhere. Even what may appear to be a hideous spider, if examined closely enough, will probably prove to have a beautiful web; an unattractive bird a beautiful song, nest or egg.

A snake repels many people. Dispel fear of it and examine it objectively as you would a bird or a butterfly. Its grace of movement, flexuous body and shining scales all demonstrate a fantastic harmony.

Why is there Beauty is this world? Why can man alone appreciate it while animals appear to be oblivious to it? Even though Lao Tzu knew nothing of our religion, he attributed Beauty to a supernatural Being.

As an answer to the second question some biologists would have us believe that Man can appreciate Beauty more than animals due to an increased development of the neo-cortex of the brain. This surely does not answer the first question. One popular answer to the first question is that Beauty enables an individual to attract a mate. If Beauty is merely necessary to attract a mate, why does man revel in the beauties of Nature instead of only finding Beautyin his own species?

I cannot believe that Beauty exists as it does, or has formed as it has merely through Evolution. Like Lao Tzu I believe that there must have been a supernatural guiding force who is in fact - God.

Most of us enjoy admiring a pine tree. It grows with a symmetrical calm type of Beauty. I personally prefer to view an old, gnarled and knotted gum tree. Perhaps this is because it is a symbol of something that has battled, shown courage and the dauntless will to live. But in it I see the wild, uncontrolled, unpredictable Beauty of Nature that possess the ability to inspire a man rather than calm him. To me, walking through a forest of pine trees is tranquilizing. Contrast this with a walk through a scrub of fine old gum trees. Here exists an inspiring Beauty.

I love the great treeless plains of the interior of this fine land. Standing there with only the waving yellow grass, the blue sky and a slight breeze, I feel free. The very concept and feeling of freedom is beautiful. But, I am sorry to state, many people in this continent fail to appreciate the freedom they possess. Perhaps it is necessary for us to lose our freedom before we fully appreciate it. Standing alone, but for my reflections, I can understand why men over the centuries have given their lives for that beautiful taken-for-granted feeling of freedom.

Much of the beauty of other lands is due to tradition that has been built up over the centuries. We must build up a tradition around all of our mountains and country as we have around Barney and then their true beauty will be recognized. Or rather, perhaps, we should make people aware of the traditions that already exist.

When our fore-fathers settled this land they had previously been associated with green fields, orderly trees and gardens and other such objects of their homelands. On first seeing Australia they stood aghast. It did not agree with their traditional form of Beauty so they decried it as being a harsh, beautiless land.

Traditions always die hard.

Rather than looking at Australia from their view-point I prefer to view it with the traditional view of an Australian.

To me the colours are not harsh but rather pastel shades and soothing to the eye. These pastel shades are everywhere - the crystal blue of distant mountains; the soft varying shades of green of the trees; the intermingling of the browns and greens of the grasses of the plains and the varying greys, blues and reds of rock faces. Surely these are more beautiful and easier to look upon than the never ending picture of the one-shade-of-green fields that tradition would have us believe to be beautiful.

Perhaps the main fault of Australians with regards to this subject is that the majority are too lazy mentally to form their own opinions of Beauty and merely borrow their ideas from others.

In essence this article is not merely a plea for a greater appreciation of Beauty but also a plea for a greater appreciation of country. The rewards for cultivating both of these appreciations is immense, and it is you who are walkers who are given the chance to develop these points.

Go on every walk that you possibly can or your regrets may come too late.

(P.S. New Zealanders and other "foreigners" should not be insulted by this article. If they cultivate these feelings towards their home-land all I can say is "Good on you, Cobber".)

Foot note: "Cobber" is a Kiwi term (slang) for a bloke you knock around with.

.....

--- So cop that lot mate! For the last two years I have had to read such as is written above - that bird's getting too old - he's like an old hen or like Ferdinand sitting in his paddock sniffing the flowers - well this bee might sting his snorer. That is all he is - a dreamer. As I feel his article is pointed at bushwalkers like myself, I feel I have to protest on behalf of all true bushwalkers. Why do we go bush walking - for a change - a break from sitting on our seats all day - exercise - but you can get this by running round a paddock. There is something more - companionship, excitement, the thrill of seeing new country. These can be obtained from many sports and bushwalking is one of the best.

The trips you remember and cherish as your best are the tough trips - Why? For the simple reason that they supply all the required factors of the recreation - Hardship, yes - but this is the biggest aid to companion-ship - beauty, yes, because anyone entering the bush would be blind to miss the beauty of nature - but beauty is only a relative thing. How can the

poor Kiwi compare the beauty and grandeur of his own snow, ice and bush clad 10,000 ft. heaps of rubble to this ancient continent. He can't, so he learns to compromise.

If he was satisfied sitting staring vacantly at an old gnarled gum tree he would take some convincing that Australia was beautiful. He must get about and discover every little corner to find its secret beauties.

Sitting on the South Ridge of Barney won't show you the waterfalls of West and East Canungra Creek - you have to visit the Stinson crash to get a real picture of what its survivors and rescuers had to endure - you have to battle with the jungle of the Tweed Range before it reveals its secret beauty - you have to sweat and climb Glucose Ridge to see the views from Lizzard's Lookout, you have to struggle up the razorback to visit Lost World:- This to me is bushwalking - the sense of achievement, not out to set records, not to find just one form of beauty but to try to see as much of the beauty of all S.E. Queensland.

To me the above writer appears to be moping - he has seen the Carnarvon Gorge, which is beautiful I am sure; but now he is sitting on an old stump staring at a butterfly on a gnarled gum tree trying to convince himself that this also is beautiful. He should have a good drink of "Sal Vital", cough a bit of the stale nicotine out of his lungs and shift his feet before the roots take hold. - After all, any self respecting bush-walker has been up and walking for two hours seeing new country - country that he won't have to flounder through in the dark, falling over cliffs and studying the beauty of blackness.

So friends, to be a bushwalker you must Walk - Walk - Walk, endure hardships, find companionship, and feel the sense of achievement - achievement as felt after an exhilarating rock-climb - having matched your knowledge, skill, strength and endurance against the task in hand and win or lose still have the satisfaction of having tried and leaving a goal still to be reached - the goal of Life.

A Kiwi "Cobber"

Comment from Ancient Rome

Go, madman, and traverse the rugged
Alps, that you may please the boys
and become a subject for recitation.

JUVENAL

.....

Give me my boots, I say! RICHARD II

Buy hobnails by the hundred. HENRY IV, PART 1

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