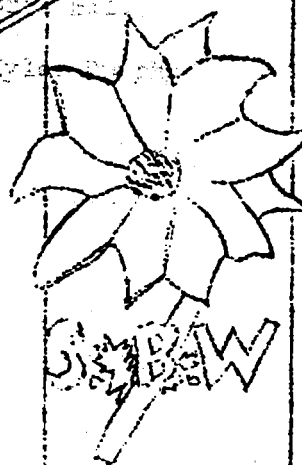


Brenda White

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"THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER"

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WALKING OVERTIME

On Friday night, 3rd. August, 1934, Jock Kaske - a friend of mine, and I left the train at Katoomba en route for Kanangra Walls. We proposed travelling via Megalong Valley, Breakfast Creek, Cox's River and Kanangra Creek. It was extremely cold as we moved along the bitumen road in the direction of the marked tree. Our fingers and ears were completely devoid of feeling and a light drizzle of rain didn't add to our cheer. It was a great relief to start the descent into the valley but care was necessary, for, as a result of the recent rains Nelly's Glen was extremely slippery. At times the track became a watercourse and one hole in the middle of the path was quite eight feet deep! Near Camp Creek we tarried to light a fire and endeavour to warm our innards with soup.

It was during these manoeuvres that we noticed a torchlight bobbing along the track from Katoomba and in a few minutes two dark forms emerged from the gloom. The fire was feeble and it was some time before we discovered that one of the new arrivals was John Lumsden of the Sydney Bush Walkers. His friend Brien and he were a little uncertain of their ultimate destination - on that particular week-end of course - and after a short discussion they decided to accompany us as far as Kanangra Walls and return from there to Jenolan Caves.

Over the next few miles the going was extremely slippery and after John Lumsden had executed a glorious slide we were left with only one torch. As a result it took longer to reach Green Gully than had been anticipated and it was 12.45 a.m. before a halt was called just short of Carlon's homestead. Being very sleepy we dispensed with tents and fire and, diving into our sleeping bags were soon safe in the arms of Morpheus.

A heavy frost lay on the ground next morning and for a while things were "not so hot". A start was made at 8.20 - not quite so early as hoped but fairly satisfactory. Breakfast Creek was bigger than in ordinary times and the crossings icy cold. Cox's Creek was reached in just two hours and a short distance downstream we waded over to the southern shore. The river appeared to be about two feet above normal - just enough to be unpleasant. Further downstream the water was considerably deeper and we decided to keep to the Southern bank. We managed this without any great difficulty and at 1 o'clock were making preparations for lunch at Kanangra Clearing.

Our late start at 2.30 can probably be blamed to gormandizing. I had hoped to be well up the Kanangra by the end of the first day but already we were falling behind schedule. The going along the river was delightfully easy - made to order in fact. We were met by numberless impassable cliffs but always with a flat on the other side of the river. The crossings were numerous. In that afternoon alone we waded through the icy water thirty seven times and had no opportunity of restoring the circulation to our numb feet. The Kanangra, in my opinion, is one of the prettiest of the mountain rivers. The stream dashes through the gorges over granite and basalt and other stones of countless shades and hues and flows between avenues of thickly-growing casuarinas.

As the sun sank the gorge grew narrower and, owing to the scarcity of suitable level ground further on it was deemed advisable to camp while light remained and at 5 o'clock we stopped walking. We had covered about twenty two miles for the day. The night was cold and starry and we all turned in at 8 p.m.

An early start next morning should have been easy, but we slept in and it was ten minutes past nine when we resumed our journey up-stream. The track continued for another three miles and for some distance wound high above the river. It might be mentioned that during the summer it is necessary to arm oneself with a

stick in this part in order to deal with the multitudinous snakes that insist in crossing the path. The gorge was becoming very narrow and after the 64th crossing we found it necessary to keep to the bed of the stream, alternately wading and rock-hopping. The water was crystal clear in places and in some rocky pools quite deep. Beautiful little waterfalls poured in from either side and tree ferns abounded. Suddenly Kanangra Walls appeared high above us on the left and on our right part of the Spires. Reaching Murdering Gully at last a brief halt was called with a view to restoring some circulation to our numbed feet. After eating some chocolate we commenced the ascent to the Walls. I had climbed the gully before in the middle of Summer with dry rocks and no pack, but now the rocks were wet and slippery and even a comparatively light pack made climbing difficult. The average slope is at about 60° but in places is quite vertical. In a few minutes we came to the first big waterfall. We started to climb - Jock up the middle, John and I on the right and Brian, showing his wisdom, took a fairly wide detour to the left. Jock stuck half way up in an extremely slippery place with his feet a yard apart. There he stood unable to move either way and waited more or less patiently for assistance. At the first step one foot shot from under me and I was lucky not to do a toboggan slide back to Kanangra Creek. John and I jibbed at the rock after that and giving one another some assistance, we managed to scramble up the vertical slope on the right, grasping frantically at fresh tufts of grass as the old pieces came out by the roots. Jock rendered valuable assistance by passing numerous sarcastic remarks in which he requested us to quit fooling and do something. When we had detoured and reached the spot above where Jock had been we found that he had disappeared and at first I feared that he had fallen. A little later, however we heard his "coo-ee" from the left where he had managed to get to terra firma. We skirted the gully for a while and found the climbing if laborious at least a little safer. During one "breather" we had an excellent view of the Spires almost opposite and I immediately lost any ambition that I might have had for climbing them. One hour and fifty minutes after leaving the Kanangra, the Jenolan track just below the iron ladder at the Walls was reached. Our walking time (including photos taken) from the Cox's River to the Walls, at an ordinary steady pace, had been 7½ hours. This would be a comparatively easy trip in the Summer but in Winter bushwalkers doing this trip would be well advised to camp at least a few miles up the Kanangra; otherwise the ascent of the gully might have to be done in the dark, there being no camping spots below. I might add that anyone carrying 50lbs. or so on a trip like this has my sympathy.

Jock and I had a hurried lunch in the dance platform cave before leaving for the Kowmung. Chunks of ice lay about on the ground and it was pretty cold even then at 3.30 p.m. It was learned later from John Lumsden who with his friend parted company with us here to go to Jenolan, that heavy snow had fallen a mile away.

After crossing the plateau we hurried and reached the Kowmung in just 2 hours 35 minutes as dark was falling. At this stage we were a long way behind schedule. Our original intention had been to cross the Kowmung and reach the Gingra for tea, going on afterwards to Butler's to camp. Our late start that morning had been disastrous. With even a little daylight we would have made an effort, but the river was running hard and looked deep. The thought of being upset by the current and having to stay in wet clothes all night was the deciding factor. We had tea and went to sleep in Hughes' hut.

Next morning mist lay heavily over mountains and river. The watch wasn't handy and when we did look at it we were dismayed to find that it was already 8.30. Despite the fact that there was not much cooking or packing to be done it was 10.15 when we pushed off with 36 miles to do on our last day. The crossing was cold and

looking
deep enough. Our shorts were wet through so we walked downstream like the famous advertisements for Pelaco shirts. Fortunately there were no members of the S.B.W. Committee present and as for the cows - well they appeared to be broad-minded. The weather was perfect and it would have been a pleasure to have spent a few hours on the river, but we had to be back to toil next day and Wentworth Falls was a long way off. Both Jock and I were sluggish for a while and it took us two hours to reach the Cedar Track. Leaving the river the track took us to Butler's Hut which still seems to be in good order, though minus a tank. En route to Kowmung House Jock developed a bad blood blister on the heel. Jock's description of it was very colorful and to the point.

It was learned from the Ryans at Kowmung House that the Cox was flooded and running very high. A ray of sunshine was introduced however when we learned that Mostyn Kill, an old friend of mine, was working at Moody's. Mostyn has a reputation for reliability in distressing circumstances and he proved a very valuable friend on this occasion. We arrived at Moody's at about 5.30 to find the river answering in full to Ryan's description. The new manager and his wife were strangers to us, but were good enough to invite us to tea. While awaiting the return of Mostyn who was away trapping at Appletree Flat, we sat beside a blazing fire and thought of the cold river. The crossing was anything from six feet and although we could have swum across there was no method of transporting our packs. Mostyn was our last hope. Our waiting hours were beguiled with stories of floods. The news that the daughter of the house had recently been swept down-stream in the buggy and nearly drowned did not exactly inspire us with confidence.

In due course Mostyn arrived, had tea and as I had expected, was equal to the occasion. He suggested the ford at Oakley Creek $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles down-stream. This lengthened our journey by another three miles but could not be avoided. Leaving Moody's enormous fire we adjourned to the freezing atmosphere without. The crossing was made on horseback without incident. Mostyn led the way, making two trips and the horses walked across without any apparent difficulty. It was pitch black and I was prepared to swim at a moment's notice. The water however, only came as high as my knees. Bidding Mostyn adieu we resumed our journey along a track which, having been partly obliterated by flood waters, gave us a lot of trouble. When we stopped for a minute or two near Kill's at 10.45 p.m. we were confident of being able to do the remaining 15 miles in time to catch the 6.35 train. The passage of the next five hours is a mystery to me it took that period of time to reach Kedumba Pass, a distance of seven miles. We were fresh enough and walked steadily and although his foot and a strained groin muscle gave Jock a lot of trouble there was no perceptible reduction in pace. No serious mistakes were made until the track was lost at the end of the first long paddock. After working around the fringe for about an hour we blundered on the track again only to lose it in the next paddock. These little scouting expeditions, including one little stroll following a ridge half way to the King's Tableland, must have added miles to our journey. The night was freezing. The frost lay white and thick on the ground, crunching beneath our sodden boots.

At the foot of Kedumba we changed our boots and sox and found that we had less than three hours to catch the train. Our last chance went when - mirabile dictu - we lost the track on the saddle which had been converted into a morass by the rain. At this stage Jock, showing remarkable enthusiasm and still optimistic enough to have hopes of catching the train, commenced to tear around the hill-side (with the torch) shouting "Come on, we'll get it yet". I followed (in the dark) over logs through bog and matted lawyer vine and "got it" in another way. Until then I had been having quite a good time, a bit sleepy and very hungry but not sore-footed or unduly tired. In the few minutes before we found the track, I received the best

collection of lacerations ever, and my legs, although usually tough, were sore for days afterwards. At the top of the pass, left with six miles to do and only an hour to do them in, we gave it up and had breakfast just as the grey dawn was breaking. The food consumption for the trip averaged 4 lbs. each per day and we were always hungry. Constant exertion calls for plenty of fuel and it was over a week before my appetite, never dainty, went back to normal. The remainder of the journey was uneventful. The water trough at Wentworth Falls was still frozen hard when we arrived at the station nearly 23 hours after we had left Hughes' hut. We had covered about 42 miles that day and 93 miles for the week-end.

GORDON SMITH.

Dot English wishes to give

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TRAIL-RIDING AT KOSCIUSKO

by Marie B. Byles.

This was not a walking expedition, but I feel amply justified in sending it to the Editor of the "Sydney Bush Walker", because I must have walked considerably more than half of it.

Nominally it was a trail-riding venture, following the example of Canadians who set forth into the wilds for a week to a month with pack- and saddle horses, and generally accompanied by guides, cooks and packers. We intended to be our own guides, cooks and packers, but it took a lot of hard swearing before the owner of the horses agreed to trust his precious animals to two unknown females for the space of ten days. We met him at Jindabyne, the pretty village on the Snowy River before the road rises to Kosciusko. Lucy informed him that I had found my way over the trackless wastes of five Continents, or something to that effect. I in turn asserted that she had been looking after horses since babyhood. Probably neither statement would have stood examination in a court of law, but on the strength of them the owner handed over his valuable beasts. I imagine he went home to pray rather than to hope he would see them again.

His doubts might have been intensified had he known that one of the two women had barely learned to ride and did not know one side of a horse from the other. However, all went well to begin with. Lucy led the packhorses at a good pace across the open grassy sheep country to the Thredbo, and I followed quite creditably. We camped near the fishing shack - belonging to a solicitor on the Thredbo River, hobbled the horses and parked them in the adjoining paddock. A paddock, I was soon to learn, is the be-all and end-all of a horse-rider's life. With it he sleeps in peace; without it he worries all night as to where the horses will be in the morning; and few were the paddocks we were to find in the course of the days that followed.

In the morning I thought I would improve the shining hour and save time by catching the horses, so I went gingerly up to the likeliest, but he took a mighty hop and left me looking pathetically after his retreating figure. Until then I was under the impression that a hobbled horse could move neither quickly nor far. I found, both now and henceforth, that popular ideas on such matters are wholly erroneous. After looking helplessly after the retreating animal, I thought it wiser to call Lucy. She with a master hand spoke kind but firm words, and lo and behold! he was bridled before you could say "Jack Robinson". Once bridled he was as meek as a lamb. Curious that a horse is a wild animal until he feels man's hand upon him; then he is tamer than a cat or a dog, at least if he is a quiet horse, and these were quiet to a fault. I soon learned the art of saddling the horses, including the packhorse, and I could also hobble them for the night and picket them with the correct knots, but the art of catching them is one about which I am still a little dubious, and, whenever I did catch them successfully, I had the feeling it was more by good luck than good management.

That day's ride took us along the side of the smiling Thredbo River that ripples along between grassy treeshaded banks under the bright bare heights of Kosciusko Plateau rising above their lower, wooded slopes into the clear cloudless blue sky. Matthew Arnold never visited Australia, but I always think it was heights like these, devoid of snow or trees, that he had in mind when he wrote:-

"And high the mountain-tops in cloudy air,

The mountain-tops where is the throne of truth,

Tops in life's morning sun, how bright and bare".

The tall trees end abruptly near the 5000 foot contour line, just as abruptly

as the forest ends around the southern lakes of New Zealand at about 3500 feet, and quite unlike the irregular treeline I noticed in the Canadian Rockies.

We mounted steadily beside the river all morning, and by midday came out on Friday Flats, a wide-stretching, upland meadow through which the river meanders in silvery coils.

Herds of cattle were grazing peacefully, blissfully ignorant that they were awaiting the day of their doom when they would be transported down to the abattoirs - truly a short life and a sweet one, and, if it were not for that painful journey to Sydney, their lot might be envied.

From here we were to make our way up to the Kosciusko Plateau via Merrit's Camp, a shepherd's hut used in the Summer season when the sheep are taken up to feed on the snow-grass of the tops. Of course there was no sign of the trail in the place where it should have started up, and I spent half an hour or so in scouting round on foot to find it. It was my first taste of how much walking is involved in a trail-riding expedition; it was by no means my last! I found the trail eventually, and then we sat down by the river, took off the horses' saddles and had lunch. The usual lunch hour is a long enough waste of time for anyone, but when you have horses they must be unsaddled and re-saddled, and the waste of time is positively wicked.

I had surnamed my horse "Dolly"; I don't know why except that it suited him.

"But you can't call him Dolly, when he's a him", said Lucy.

"Oh, yes, I can", I replied, "what about Winnie the Pooh"?

"But that was Winnie th' Pooh", Lucy retorted.

"All right", I said, not to be outdone, "then this is Dolly th' horse".

"Well, if Dolly is short for Adolphus, I suppose it will be all right". So we compromised on that.

When Dolly was unsaddled it was found he had developed a sore place where the girth rubbed.

"So he must be ridden with his girth loose, and that means he can't be ridden up or down hill or the saddle might slip off", explained Lucy.

That was that, so I walked - or rather dragged - Dolly up the hill three thousand feet or so, my second taste of walking and still very far from being my last. But of course I like walking! The only trouble was that Dolly would persist in stopping to nibble grass, and when we reached a level patch his pace was just about half my own, so it was rather like dragging a jerky sleigh behind me.

We pitched our little tent a short way from Merrit's hut, unsaddled the horses, picketted one and hobbled the other two. Then Lucy took a late afternoon siesta and I went off to climb the neighbouring hills and take a bath in the stream by the wayside in the last rays of the setting sun.

We made a practice of early starts, and were always out of the tent by 4 a.m. when dawn is already over the hill-tops in midsummer at that high altitude. This day I woke to the very distant sound of the horse's bell far down the valley. The theory about tethering horses is that the hobbled ones will not leave their companion. But these heartless wretches went off after fresh salads regardless of the pitiful whinnies of the tethered one, who in the meantime generally contrived to strangle himself in spite of the most scientific knotting. Anyhow, this morning the hobbled horses had found their way half down to the Thredbo, and I spent a profitable hour bringing them up a second time - on foot!

We made our way from Merrit's camp towards Kosciusko summit. At Seaman's Hut we found a party of enterprising people celebrating Christmas Day by camping

higher up, and therefore nearer to heaven, than anyone else in Australia. But I regret to say they had succumbed to the cosy interior of the hut in preference to a flapping tent on the wind-swept ridge.

Seaman's hut is a typical example of American public spirit. Mr. Seaman was killed in a inter storm on Kosciusko, and his American parents, instead of sitting down to weep for their lost son, built a memorial hut in a foreign land near where his body was found, so that others might not suffer a similar fate.

Just after leaving Seaman's hut we met two young people who were professionally photographing the sights of Kosciusko, and these were the last human beings we were to see for a week.

Apart from the fact that Dolly had to be towed up and down the hills, and all the horses led most gingerly down the rocky slopes of Mount Twynham, nothing particular happened until evening began to fall. We had hoped to make Dicky Cooper that night, this being a prominent hill with a hut near to it. We did reach a heap of boulders that might have been Dicky Cooper, and a footpath ran past it that might have gone to Dicky Cooper hut. So, as usual when we were not certain of the route, I got off the horse and scouted round on foot. After about a mile of uncertainty I turned back, determined that, whether it was Dicky Cooper or not, we had better make camp in this valley, which we did.

Slowly over the dark hills rose a large round moon surrounded by an ominous halo, while in the West Venus sank to rest bathed in watery golden haze. I never knew a misty moon or star that did not portend rain and bad weather, and I had seen enough of mist and snow on the Kosciusko Plateau to dread bad weather there. Now there was the additional responsibility of horses. With a compass one can get human beings out from almost anywhere - with difficulty perhaps, but more or less with certainty, but horses were another proposition altogether; they cannot follow a compass line; they must have a definite practicable route. A few rocks, a swamp, a steep incline, a fence, or even a little bit of thick bush, and they are helpless. I had nightmare that night wondering what I should do if we woke up to a hurricane.

We did not wake to a hurricane, but an angry dawn recalled the proverb, "Red in the morning's the shepherd's warning". I was cursing the poor horses and was too worried to eat any breakfast. A terse entry in my diary recorded that we departed at 6.30 a.m., but anxiety dried the ink on my pen, so to speak, before I could write any more, and this was to have a sequel later. A heavy pack on the back is a severe physical burden, but to me the mental burden of the horses seemed far heavier.

Once on the main ridge again, we saw a heap of stones that might have been Gungarten, especially as it had a cairn on the top. I climbed to the cairn but found it was not a trig station, and that Gungarten proper must be that distant summit seemingly miles away, and meantime the angry clouds were sweeping up, and the thunder growled threateningly across the distant fells, and there were we alone on the lonely moorland - with the horses!

We went on at the usual mile-an-hour pace of horses over trackless country, I between whiles doing the usual scouting round on foot to find the best route. Once we picked up a trail that took us to a deserted camp, and then another that took us to a deserted shepherd's tent in a desolate valley. Above the tent pole a red flag floated bravely in the stormy breeze, and under a bush at its foot lay a mysterious pile of a dozen Kosciusko Hotel dinner plates. How they came there unbroken, and for what purpose they could have been purloined, and whether they had any connection with the red flag, are riddles I leave my communistic friends

to answer.

It was a desolate place, but it might be useful if the storm came up before we reached the Tin Hut to which we were making, so we took a careful note of its position. However, the trig on Gungarten gradually began to gather distinctness, and shortly after, we picked up a first class trail and I had no longer to go trail-hunting on foot. Then we struck a fence marked on the snow-lease map, a landmark which we hailed with joy, little knowing that fences were shortly to become the bane of our existence. Anyhow, for the time being I knew all was well. It could thunder and rain as much as it pleased. Over the next rise would be THE Tin Hut. Most of the huts are made of tin, but this is the only one that has the honour of being so described. The Tin Hut was over the next rise, but alas! the sound of dogs' barking greeted us from afar. This meant that the shepherds, who come up in the Summer, had come up already, and that there would be no room in the hut for us also. However, it was a haven of security amid the lowering clouds and lonely wastes, and best of all, there was a paddock! We turned the horses in, hobbled them and left them knowing that they would stay "put". Then we pitched and trenched the tent securely against the bad weather, Lucy lay down for her usual three hour siesta - to make up for getting up at 4 a.m. -, and I went off to climb Gungarten.

As I tramped over the boggy moorland with the mist drifting on and off the fells, I dreamed I was back among the hills of Scotland. The mist concealed the tops and they might have been three thousand feet above me for all I knew, and the magic glamour of the Scottish Highlands seemed borne on the wind from those shrouded heights. I had to climb three summits before I discovered which was the right one. This was partly because the mist concealed them, and partly because none of them is more than a couple of hundred feet above the valley, and each of them is very much like the others, the highest being distinguished only by the trig sign on top. Still, even if they were not as high above their valleys as the Scottish mountains, it was good to be among them, horseless and free hearted, with the mist and thunder hovering round to give that little dash of fear which makes a thing worth doing. I could not help feeling how very romantic it would be if I were struck by lightning just as I was climbing the cairn. But nothing happened!

Despite the chained-up dogs and four melancholy-looking doughnuts in a tin, the shepherds did not return for the night, and we woke to find ourselves still alone among the ever-lasting hills. The sun rose above an ocean of mist stretching to the far horizon, frozen waves on an Arctic sea that never was. Then as the sun tinted them with the crimson glory of dawn upon a glacier, they flung phantasmal spray against the rocky hills, spray that gradually drifted upwards and over the mountains towards us, till we too were wrapped in mist.

I eventually dragged the long-suffering Lucy out of the tent by telling her she was missing the most perfect sunrise. Whatever she thought about it, she merely asked whether I intended to start with the mist on the moorlands. I told her I did, and went and caught the horses - one of the few times I caught them all three all by myself without any help from Lucy's magic words and master hand.

The mist had almost lifted when we set forth along the trail. I knew that this should take us down the valley to Mawson's Hut on the Valentine Creek, but it kept suspiciously to the tops, and after we had gone a couple of miles, it went right over the other side of the range and down towards Jindabyne direction. Our correct valley lay peacefully over on the West, but between us and it there rose a five-wire fence. There was a mournful hymn we used to sing in Sunday

school about, "But Jordon rolled between". Jordon would have been a much simpler proposition for horses than a five-wire fence. It looked as if we would have to retrace our steps for two miles to get round it, but just then it providentially changed from five wires to brush wood. It was a simple matter to take down one section, let the horses through and build it up again, and soon we had crossed the intervening valley and were safely going down the trail along the enchanting Valentine River. The clear stream sparkled along over a stony bed, daisies sprinkled the open, grassy banks, and far ahead we could see Jagungal, the Mecca of the expedition, and the only conspicuous and isolated mountain on the whole plateau. It seemed conscious of the days when it was a fiery volcano pouring forth brimstone and ashes over the country side, and its conical peak with its rugged basalt rocks stood out in bold contrast to the rounded hills and granite boulders of the rest of the plateau. We had seen it from Mount Bimber nearly a hundred miles away, and to-day it lay ahead of us all the way.

We ambled pleasantly down the river banks in the mellow sunshine and the crisp clear air, till we came to another fence. We were obviously not the first people who had sought for a gate through it. But the others had hunted on horseback, the correct method, Lucy said, though I always found it much quicker to get off and go on foot. Anyhow I found the gate all right - about half a mile away in the next valley, and a few miles beyond it was Mawson's Hut - and a large cake of salt lick which kept the horses happy for fully half an hour.

Jagungal still lay ahead of us, and for two hours more we walked pleasantly over marshy, grassy uplands and chattering brooks till we came to another gateless fence where we thought it wise to make camp.

It was a hot afternoon when I set off to climb Jagungal, hot for Kosciusko anyhow, although a cool breeze tempered the scorching sunlight. It took me about forty-five minutes to climb from its foot; I therefore concluded it must be over a thousand feet above the highest valley beneath it, and it seemed to be fully two thousand above the lowest. Around it the hills and valleys stretched out in unending sameness, seemingly all of the same size, shape and hue. "Look away", Lucy used to say, "walk a few yards, and the mountain you were looking at has disappeared". As I gazed over those sweeping moorlands stretching in all directions without distinctive mark or sign, I realized she was right, and I felt for the compass in my pocket, the one sure guide amid those wastes, and the one hope should I miss those two particular trees on that particular green ridge beneath which our tent lay hidden.

From the summit of Jagungal I could pick out beyond the rolling uplands the pointed Jounima Peaks, over fifty miles away, but Bimberi was lost in the midst of many similar rounded mountains.

There was a sharp frost that night and the tent stood up by itself when I took out the pegs and pole, but the day was as hot as before, and the backs of my hands were getting painfully burnt although, between scouting for the trail and walking Dolly up and down hill, they held the reins for only a short time each day. In the end I was reduced to wearing thick woollen gloves to keep the sun off, these being the only ones I had.

That day took us back to Mawson's and on to Grey Mare Hut, crossing on the way two lovely sparkling rivers and two sharp ridges, and sighting the Valentine Falls up the valley. In the Grey Mare meadows we nearly stepped on a large black snake, and ran more than half a chance of being gored by a ferocious bull who pawed the ground and snorted fire and threatenings at us till Lucy drove his herd away, and he followed them, gallantly protecting his followers

from behind. We put the horses in a small paddock, and in the morning found it full up with cattle, despite the fact that it was surrounded by a wire fence. It is a pity horses are not as clever as cattle at getting through wire fences!

I followed Lucy's example that afternoon and took a rest, indulging between whiles in a little clothes washing - strictly limited because I had not even the proverbial one shirt to wash the other.

Grey Mare Bogong was the objective for the next day, and I arose in the bright moonlight at 3 a.m., intending to get back early in the morning, hastily gobbled a few nuts and some cold water, and set forth for the best tramp of the trip, cool, fresh, frosty air, a long lonely walk, wide views, far horizons - and no horses!

Alas! Alas! I do not know if it was the hasty mixture of nuts and cold water, or whether it was some of the salad vegetables I had been sampling in emulation of the horses, but anyhow by the time I reached the tops I began to feel desperately sick, and could hardly drag one foot after the other. At five o'clock I could go no further and lay down to rest in the early sunlight. It was a perfect dawn. The birds chirped above the dewy grass, ruby robins hopped on the gnarled branches, and I dreamed I was in English meadows on a Spring morning. Beyond the deep Geehi valley the dark blue heights lay silent and mysterious before the dawn, and the distant mountains of pale sapphire lay cradled in their midst. Then, as the sun rose and the heat intensified, the chirping of birds changed to the buzz of insects, the mountains turned from blue to grey and brown, and an Australian Summer day had been born. The sun streamed through the cloudless air onto the brown forest in the valleys beneath, and, though I was still shivering with a slight fever, I sought the shade of a rock.

In a couple of hours the desperately sick feeling had partly gone, and I thought I might struggle to Grey Mare Trig. It was probably a foolish thing to do, but the one mountain, Sgurr Alasdair, that I lost through sheer cowardice, has so deeply burned itself into my soul that I never turn back now if it is at all possible to go on. It was a dreary walk, and I was so miserably weary that every half hour I had to lie down and rest. However, I bagged the trig, and that was the main thing. And from it I was able to pick out, in the far distance, the summit of Kosciusko, the roof of Australia, not because it stood out above anything else, but because of the ribbon of road winding to the top of it. I could also pick out Mount Townsend, but it looked no different from other mountains round it, mountains which disappear when you look the other way. Jagungal alone was still conspicuously itself and dependent on no road or map to locate it.

I struggled back sicker and wearier than ever and with no adventures except a second large snake in a swamp under Grey Mare Hill. Poor Lucy had packed up ready for starting, but she nobly unpacked again and fed me with hot water through the afternoon and evening.

Mid-day next day saw the sick feeling gone, and all of us back at Mawson's Hut where the horses again had a gorgeous time at the salt-lick cake. We had two and a half days to return to Jindabyne and we determined to start back leisurely, so that no matter what contingencies occurred we would be certain to have the horses back by the prescribed hour noon on Monday, New Year's Day.

After some hunting for gates we eventually found a good trail that took us about three miles on our way. Then we met a cross fence and simply could not find the least trace of a gate. And there, scarcely six yards away on the other side of the main fence, was a trail much better than the one we were on, and

pursuing its gateless way as far as we could see. And "Jordon rolled between" once more! So tantalizingly near, and yet about six miles away! If only we had been on foot how easy to duck under the fence and get onto it!

But we were not on foot, and the shades of night were falling uncomfortably fast, so we thought it wise to make camp on the edge of the nearby swamp with its shallow, tadpole pools. The horses as usual were hobbled as tightly as possible and the bell sounded unpleasantly close when we were trying to get to sleep, but when we woke in the morning they were, - again, as usual, - way back along the trail whence we had come! Lucy saddled the tethered horse and went after them, though I always maintained right up to the end that it was very much quicker to go on foot.

We retraced our steps, got on the right trail and followed it merrily till we were faced with the problem of whether we should cross the main fence or not. These fences were beginning to get on our nerves! One track lay on the Jindabyne side of the fence, and one on the other. It seemed common sense to keep on the side nearest our destination. But common sense does not work where fences are concerned. The chosen track got fainter and fainter, and we seemed to progress at less than a mile an hour. Jagungal had to be on our South-west before we descended, but he persistently stayed North-west all the morning. When at last we thought his position was good enough, we ventured down through dead and living bush, where Lucy had great difficulty in negotiating the packhorse without breaking tent pole or pulling anything off. Just as the ground started to level out and we picked up a trail worthy of the name, we met two shepherds, and it seemed almost strange to see human beings once again; they told us we were not far out after all - half a mile further and all would have been well.

Anyhow we were over the worst then, and we soon dropped down to grassy meadows and dancing brooks.

On account of the fact that we were nearing home - fourteen miles the shepherds said - we were afraid that hobbled horses might scent the wind of home, depart thither, and leave us to follow at our leisure with their saddles and saddle bags. It was not a prospect that appealed to us at all. We therefore unkindly parked them in a deserted stock yard where the only feed consisted of young stinging neetles, the sort you boil up to make spinach. But the horses did not like the feed one little bit. They just stood and sulked.

We ourselves camped not far from the clear-flowing Gungarlin River in which I washed my one and only shirt.

The horses paid us out for the foodless night by dragging dreadfully the next day, so that by mid-day we had only reached the Eucombene River. However, we had still a day to spare, and according to the map it was only eight miles by the road and less still by the short cut to the Creel.

While Lucy took her three hour siesta I prospected - on foot, of course - and found the short cut, or thought I had, and in the late afternoon we started off along it; passed a neglected farm and reached some ringbarked country whence no proper track emerged. We started along a kind of a one, but it eventually petered out and we found ourselves just as daylight was fading in the midst of trackless bush with the wild gorge of the Eucombene River below us. I was far from sure that I could get out the way we had come, but the horses knew better than I; Lucy gave them a free rein, and shortly we were back in the ring-barked country whence we had a mad trot back in the gathering gloom.

Once again we camped beside a wide soft-flowing river, but this time we put the horses in a good clover paddock, having first done a little fencing to make

it horse-proof.

Nest morning we found what must certainly have been the correct short cut to the Creel, but there was no time then for trying short cuts, and I recalled the story of a little friend whose mother said.

"Well, Portia, I think we'll take this short cut to the station".

"No, no, Mummy, please don't", was the reply, "we really haven't time; we shall miss the train".

Anyhow it was only eight miles by road, and perhaps a couple more from the bush to the road and we had till noon to do it, and as we were off soon after 6 a.m. there was ample time. We enquired hopefully at the first farm house - the first inhabited one we had passed. "About fourteen miles", was the surprising answer, Heavens! Why the shepherds a day and half ago had said it was only that from the foot of the mountains! We consoled ourselves with the fact that the farmer lady had looked a trifle mentally defective, and approached the next farm house. "Fifteen miles"! Good heavens! Were we getting further and further off? Then about a mile on we met a notice board which said fifteen, and we came to the doleful conclusion that the first lady had been optimistic rather than mentally defective. Thus it was that we had about twenty miles to do before noon on Monday the last day. However, we stepped on the juice, so to speak, and by 10.30 a.m. trotted triumphantly up to the post office in Jindabyne to ring up the owner to come and fetch his horses.

"Why, you are the young ladies they have sent the police and search parties after"! said the post mistress.

"Us! Search parties"! I was frightfully indignant. We had undertaken to have the horses back by noon and it was only 10.30. How dared they? The poor post mistress got the full benefit of my indignation.

"It is curious", she said eventually, "but they certainly expected you back by Monday".

"And isn't this Monday"? I asked bewildered.

"No, it's Tuesday", she said.

So that was the sequel to my diary entry, "Depart 6.30 a.m." and no mention of the day of the week, and perhaps also the sequel to my proud boast only the day before that I had never missed a boat or a train in my life.

Fortunately none of the searchers had got further than the hotel, and we parted on good terms with both the policeman and the owner of the horses, the latter promising us really first class animals if ever we came back again.

THE WOLGAN VALLEY AND COLO RIVER

(continued)

(From Dunc's Diary)

Tuesday 9th. January. Up at 4.45 a.m., fried eggs, porridge and coffee for breakfast. Ray and Roxy washed up while the rest of us explored Annie Rowan Creek which wound its way up between big mountains. We walked about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles and then left Annie Rowan Creek with regret at 8.15 a.m. Pretty good walking to Houston Creek where we had a fizz drink and chocolate. Went on with Ninian leading, me next, when all of a sudden Ninian rushed back and dumped his pack in front of me in the path and cut down a sapling, a tiger snake had come down the bank at him, about half of it 18" off the ground. I watched it while Ninian cut his stick,

it was waving its body about in the air, and then all of a sudden it slid back into the bushes and we couldn't find it.

After that Wal, Ray, Ninian and myself carried snake sticks. Ray bet Wal a diamond bicycle he would catch the first snake, they decided what they were going to do with the skins. Ray cut his stick with a fork in the end and made a slip loop on it out of a piece of tent rope, and reckoned he was going to catch his snakes alive. Wal's snake stick was about 2 feet long and two or three inches thick and he said it smelled like a water melon.

Arrived at Permanent Water Creek at 1.20 where we had lunch, bread and cheese, bread and jam and tea, then very rough going through blackberries, lawyer vines, past another creek, more blackberries and stinging nettles to the junction of the Capertee and Wolgan (which form the Colo) at 6.30 p.m.; all very tired; saw a goanna up a tree. Ninian and I crossed the Colo and looked for a camp spot but couldn't find one, came back and up side of taillus, and found a very bad spot on a steep slope about fifty very rough, prickly feet above the water. Ray erected his tent and carved out the banks to make a spot flat enough to sleep on. Rene curried mutton and spuds, stewed peaches and custard. We fell out of bed all night. The river was very high with flood rubbish coming down.

Wednesday, 10th. January. Heard Lyre-birds all morning, saw yellow hammers and whip-birds. Breakfast of omelettes made out of the remains of $1\frac{1}{2}$ dozen eggs carried by Ray in a cardboard box which had done the sandwich act in his pack and melted the box and soaked all through his spare clothes, he had sat on them; (Omelettes a great success, even if I do say it myself "as shouldn't"), porridge, bread and jam, coffee. Started 10.55 a.m., intending to reach Wollemi Creek that night, very rough going, Colo in flood.

We scrambled along cliffs over land-slides, very steep, needing careful going, round a sharp bend to the right where we got on an old survey traverse very much overgrown with scrub, very hard going. River had overflowed banks from 10 to 20 feet and left mud over everything. Bread ran out at breakfast time so we lunched on rice and milk, on a narrow grassy ledge. Ninian and I climbed the cliffs to have a look-see, but couldn't see anything that looked like Wollemi Creek. Left lunch camp at 3.30 p.m., terribly rough, camped at 5.30 p.m., on a flat in among Kanukas after letting ourselves down over a ledge. Rene, Roxy and I had a bath in the river. A lizard, a bearded water dragon I'm told, was on a kanuka by the rock where Rene was sitting washing herself, and I tried to catch it in my towel to give to Ray, but it got away from me and ran over Rene who was in her birthday suit, and you should have heard the yell.

We had stewed mutton with macaroni, stewed apples and doughboys and custard for tea, slept in tents, had a good night in our tent, boys had a terrible bed, mostly holes, Ray slept by the fire in a gully.

Thursday, 11th. January. Up at 5.10 a.m., cooked three dampers, had breakfast, boiled eggs, damper and porridge, coffee. Ray cooked the eggs and around one of them he found a piece of paper with "SNAKES" printed in big block letters, and on another piece of paper was "100,000" in the same size type, so he stuck "100,000 SNAKES" on the back of his pack with porridge. Left camp at 10.20 a.m., dreadfully rough, no sign of Wollemi Creek, we kept getting blocked by cliffs and having to climb up above them. In one place we had to come right back to climb out, a very difficult climb of about 500 feet on crumbling rock, spent morning climbing along side of cliffs in undergrowth over our heads till we were up pretty high, then we climbed down a watercourse to the river's edge for lunch of damper, tea and jam. More rough going along Lorelei Gorge until we got stuck by a cliff

dropping sheer into the water, and it was a toss up whether we should climb up and over, or cross some rapids which looked very strong and deep with the rocks rather far apart. After a bit of discussion, and as it was getting dark, we decided on what we thought the lesser of two evils, that is the rapids. We stretched a tent rope across the widest part, Ninian taking it across by jumping on the rocks and tying the end of the rope on to a tree on the opposite bank, and we all scrambled across the best we could with lots of help from Ray and Ninian.

We had travelled about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles since morning and were on a bend where the Colo swings North to join Wollemi Creek. By this time it was pretty dark so Ninian, Ray and I chose a camp spot on a sandy spit near the river and a bit muddy, but Rene went back a bit and chose a ledge about five feet wide with a steep rock cliff at the back and a steep sandy slope to the river in front. We had no room for a camp-fire so we made a cooking fire at one end of the ledge, and Rene cooked pea soup, rice, peaches and custard. Had a good night in spite of the fact that our legs were sticking over the ledge, no room to erect tents so we used them as blankets. (In fact, from then on the same remarks apply, with one exception). We thought Wollemi Creek was round the bend, so we decided we would rest the next day and do some washing. We had been seeing dingo or fox and wombat tracks in the mud all along the river, but that was all we saw of them.

Friday, 12th. January. Declared a day of rest, so we camped all day on our ledge in Lorelei Gorge, breakfast eggs and bacon and coffee. Roxy's new sand shoes had worn right through the soles, and the uppers turned up and looked at her, so Ray stitched them to a piece of my ground sheet and covered the stitches with sticking plaster. We did our washing, went swimming and swam and waded down the river in our bathing costumes looking for Wollemi Creek. I stubbed my toe on a rock in the water and I guess I nearly broke it, the toe I mean. We collected our washing and I cooked four dampers, found some worms and went fishing. I caught a perch weighing about $\frac{1}{2}$ a pound and then a tiny little one which we used for bait, then Ninian caught a 2 lb. perch and I caught two eels about three and four pounds respectively, Ray and Ninian got them off the hook for me, I'm not keen on eels on my line. We fished till we couldn't see the corks, then had tea, dried vegetable soup, spuds, pears and custard, then a yarn and to bed.

Saturday, 13th. January. Breakfast of porridge, eels and fish, damper and coffee. Left camp at 8.45 a.m., crossed the river a few yards below where we camped and decided to climb to the top and try and cut off a corner by walking across the tops. Donned Fabrex leggings and commenced to climb up the gully at 9.15 a.m., got to the top of saddle, Roxy's nose bleeding several times on the way up, cut across tops for about two miles, very thick going, we passed Wollemi Creek by doing this. According to Ninian's aneroid we were 3,150 feet up. We reached the edge again overlooking the Colo, started to climb down at 12 o'clock, got down about 100 feet and stuck on a ledge, Ninian managed to get down with his pack and I started to follow and found I couldn't with my pack, so tried to lower it over ledge and got it stuck, couldn't lift it up and was frightened to let it go, so called to Ray to help me, but he was in the same difficulty so he let his pack drop and it went for yards down the mountain, eventually sticking on a tree, he then lowered a tent rope which I tied to my pack and let it down and scrambled down myself to the next ledge about 50 feet lower and as Ninian was taking my pack from me there, they sang out above "Look out for that rock", I had my head tied up with a scarf and my straw hat on, and I crouched close to the side of the cliff so I wouldn't get knocked off. The rock caught me on top of the head and cut my head and there was a horrible bluggy mess all over me and the landscape before you could say "Jack Robinson". Ninian stopped the bleeding by putting a pad of

wadding on the cut and binding my head very tight with a bandage, so telling the others to bring my pack and he would get me down, we started off, yours truly feeling fairly dizzy.

It took us exactly $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours to come straight down from top to bottom. Ninian cleaned most of the gore off me before the others arrived. Ray had a terrible job getting my pack down as well as his own. At one time he lowered it over a cliff on top of Rene and nearly knocked her off with it. We had lunch on the river at the bottom, tea, damper and anchovy paste, jam.

Ray went on ahead and found a camp spot at 4.30 p.m. on a nice sandy spit with pretty silky-oaks and wattle trees shading it, he then came back and took my pack from me. Rene washed my head with cooled boiled water and a little Condy's crystals and cut the hair and loose skin away and tied me up, and I went fishing but it was getting too late to see the cork, so only caught one perch. I went to lie down beside the fire where Rene was cooking tea, and banged my head on a rock and saw all the stars in the universe for a moment. My jaw was very stiff and sore. We had pea soup, spuds, stewed prunes and custard for tea. We had a good bed round the fire. We were about five miles below Wollemi Creek.

Sunday, 14th. January. Cooked three dampers, sardine and potato patties for breakfast, with porridge and coffee. Left camp at 9.55, very hard going through blackberries and raspberries over our heads, the boys bashed their way through with a thick wattle stick, step by step; we put our time in while we were waiting to move up a step, eating lovely big juicy raspberries and getting ourselves bitten by bull ants and jumper ants, the latter were the worst as they would jump at our legs as soon as we got near them. As we were in single file on a narrow path often one or two of us had to dance on a nest of them till those in front were able to move up a bit, and then the ants were good and mad ready to jump on the next one who had to walk over their nest. There was also a luxuriant growth of stinging nettles the whole way down the Colo, but we had so many ants, lawyer vines, blackberries and raspberries to contend with that the mere fact of stinging nettles brushing round us up to our necks didn't worry us. At least we could push our way through nettles alone, whereas we had to belt our way through the other things. Ninian said, when and if he got back to Sydney, and got stuck in a crowd in Pitt Street, he would cut himself a waddy and bash his way through them, he said he was going to run a survey over the Railway department from the outside, it wouldn't be any trouble to him scaling up the outside of the building. I think we could all double pretty well for monkeys.

We now started to look for Wollengambe Basin, we had crossed over to the left hand side of the river and were walking along that side making very poor progress. Ninian climbed up a rock and his feet slid from under him, and he came a terrible bang on his chest on a sharp rock, which shook him up somewhat. We came to a creek coming in on the left hand bank, but as we had no record on our map of that side of the Colo we do not know the name of it, there were plenty of wombat tracks about in the sand and mud. We stopped and had lunch and a swim, and tested the depth of the water to see if we could cross, but decided to stay on the left hand side for a while, had damper and cheese with jam and tea. Carried on for a while but found the going so bad we crossed to the right hand bank on which we stayed till 5.50, when we camped in a pretty little glade with stringy bark trees, black wattles and sassafras. We were all pretty tired and my head was very sore as I had banged it on trees as I passed under them. We carried our fish from the night before for bait, and Ray and I went fishing. I lost my hook and line and Ray had his hook straightened out, then I hooked a wallopig big eel, but I couldn't get

him out of the water, so I turned him over to Ray who got down on a flat rock in mid-stream, and it took him nearly half an hour to land it for me, it wrapped itself round the rocks and made them all slippery and fought like the very devil; at last Ray managed to get him killed and had three penn'orth of fun getting back off the slimy rock to the bank. The eel was about 2'6" long and weighed about six pounds. I fixed my line up again and lost a couple more hooks, then hooked another big beauty which Ray killed and landed for me, this one was about a pound lighter than the first one. Just about this time Roxy came on the scene, and I fixed up a line for her, and she had no sooner put it in the water than she got a bite, three or four big fish got off her line and took her bait or hook till at last she got real mad, every time she would get them right up close to the bank and they would get off. At last she hooked a lovely big one about 5 lbs weight, Ray did for him and in the process lost Ninian's sheath knife in the river. As it was then pretty dark and Rene had the tea cooked, we packed up fishing and Ray tied our eels up with a rope and he and Wal carried them back to camp for us. Wal was fishing alongside me all the time and never got a bite, and Ray was nearly as bad. We had pea soup, spuds, peaches and custard for tea and went to sleep immediately after. As it was Sunday night we were going to be real good and sing hymns round the camp fire, but the next thing we knew Rene woke us up at 20 to 12 to go to bed. We camped approximately three miles below the creek where we had lunch.

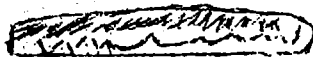
(To be continued in our next.)

FROM THE DIARY OF CHARLES PRYDE.

Wally knew how to get me biting when he asked me to accompany him on a rush holiday trip, by saying he would show me how to make damper, but after I'd said I would go there was no need to add a further insult by putting this at the head of a food list:-

FOOD LIST.

Chas. Pryde,
(The Damper Duffer)



Side Elevation
Pryde Damper
(couldn't be much damper)



Side Elevation
ROOTS Damper.

However I thought to my self "We'll see", so on Friday, 14th. September 1934. I got to Central in good time to meet him for the 6.35 p.m. train to Katoomba. Phil came to see us off and I fancy would have liked to come also and act as referee. We got comfortably seated although there was a good crowd on the train. Our packs and gear always seem to be a great source of interest to people, and so often we are asked questions about weights, etc. and where we get to - They are told, but usually the information conveys nothing to them - on this occasion I was beside a Glenbrook man (a councillor or something of the district) who did not know about the path to the Red Hand Cave. Then a native of Lawson asked similar questions.

On arrival at Katoomba at 9.35 we weighed our packs (Wally had 54 lbs. and I 62 lbs.), and then went to the "All British" restaurant for supper. The lady

there asked me about "the baby", she being under the impression that I was the father. What a knock for Wally! We left at 10.20 and after a good walk out to 1st. Narrow Neck made camp at 11.35 p.m.

Saturday, 15th. We were moving about at 6.30 a.m. There was a very keen wind and we were glad when the sun reached us. By 8 o'clock we had finished breakfast, packed and were ready to start off. The birds were wonderful and the bright sunlight on the cliff faces had a glorious effect. We went round the head of Diamond Falls Swamp which was very boggy. We both were feeling a bit off colour, so had a spell at Corral Swamp at 10.20. I wakened with a start at 11.30 and found Wally still asleep. Glen Raphael at 1.40 p.m. meant lunch. That spot is getting into a very bad state with the litter of tins, papers, bedding, etc. We burnt off quite a lot and then started at 3.15 for Clear Hill. The wind was coming from N.W. in very heavy gusts that occasionally made us stagger when it caught the packs. I found a map with the name Colin Smith, Pay Office, inscribed. Judging by the routes pencilled in, Smith seems to have been round the country quite a lot.

It was tricky getting down the ladders, as the wind was blowing hard on to us. By 5.35 p.m. we'd reached our old camp spot in Medlow Gap and got settled. As we were both feeling very tired we went to bed at 8.0. Before turning in we noticed some clouds travelling very fast but high, and about midnight were wakened by a rain and wind storm, which however did not last long.

Sunday 16th. On rising at 6.0 found a nice fresh bright morning with the sun just touching the hills. Such a variety of birds there were flitting about, and calls of every description. By the time breakfast was over the sun was well into the gully, and we enjoyed the wealth of wattle bloom acres of yellow and green. The wattle certainly is a pest to get through with a pack, but the glorious colouring compensated a lot. We had a much-needed bath in a small rock pool, and in the creek-bed saw some fossilised wood and some tiny orchids. Slow going brought us to our old King's Birthday Camp spot for lunch at 12.30. Off again at 1.55 through Black Horse Gap, where we took various bearings of the positions of Mouin, Bimlow, Kowmung, King's Tableland, etc. to check up, and then round the Eastern side of Warrigal along "The Wombat Parade" - This is a narrow track about one foot wide close under the cliffs at the head of the taillus slope, and it runs right round to Merri Merrigal. All sorts of animals seem to use it, judging by the tracks. I got a nasty spill and for a few minutes thought my ankle had gone, but it was only a sharp wrench. Through Merri Merrigal and then a slide down the taillus until we struck water and made camp at 5.30. Got a good fire going and sat until about 10 p.m., when we had coffee and cake and turned in after a perfect day. It was a glorious moonlight night with bright stars.

Monday, 17th. Astir at 6 a.m. to find another nice day promised. Rough scramble up the taillus slope to Merri Merrigal, and then found a way up the cliffs to the top of Dingo. Put our names in the bottle, rebuilt the cairn and added a pole.

We got some wonderful views of the country ranging from King's Tableland, over Burragorang right round almost to Megalong Valley, and took some bearings. Left our packs at the only way down the cliffs and went out to Splendour Rock. The views were magnificent but the light bad for photography. We noticed there has been a second rock fall at Kanangra since the big one about Easter, but could not exactly locate the position. There are now two distinct white tracks down the cliffs.

We put our names in the cairn. There is no permanent water on the top, but

we found some rain water in rock holes which we mopped up and went back to the packs for lunch. By 3.0 p.m. we were ready to start down over the tailus for the Yellow Dog Range. The going was very tough - over loose broken stone lying just on the angle of repose - and every step had to be tested. The vegetation was principally that holly leaf shaped bush with plenty of prickles, which had to be made use of as a means of steadying ourselves. There are three pimples on Yellow Dog which are very trying both on the climbs up and down. For a good distance there is a very distinct knife edge. As we gradually got down we took the Southern shoulder and reached the Cox River almost opposite Moorilla Creek at 6.5 and made camp. Both of us were very tired, but a meal and being clear of our packs soon livened us up. While at dinner, a rock blew out with a tremendous explosion, and scattered the fire in all directions. Loafed until 11.0 and then turned in. It is another glorious night and Wally is getting quite a songster. I've heard him humming something several times this evening.

Tuesday, 18th. After breakfast and a dip we started off at 9.30 up stream. The river was running strongly and we had plenty of wading well over our knees. Saw a fox, any number of wallaby tracks (some a big size), wongas, lowries, etc. and a flight of wild duck kept just ahead. There were also some very dead animals on the track, and we came across a big clump of wild celery.

Got as far as the foot of Blue Dog Range for lunch, and then on again to Tin Pot Creek where we made camp on a nice little flat. Wally had been very cheerful all day and was singing occasionally. When I asked him what it was all about he sang

"I must be on my way
with my big load of hay"

but he did not know any more. So far through the trip it was very noticeable how Wally would eat anything except bread so as to conserve our supply, but at lunch time we had finished it up, so there was nothing to do but make a damper. When there was enough ash he started, and gave me minute instructions. After about an hour he tested it and pronounced it done, and laid it aside till the morning to cool off. Much to my disgust when it was cut we found it to be as nearly perfect as could be, a really splendid example of bush cooking. He is now retiring on his laurels - wise man.

Wednesday, 19th. Got an early start on and after breakfast shaved which we both needed after 5 days growth! Shortly after passing Galong Creek we cut up to Black Jerry's Ridge, which saved a lot of walking and time. On the map there is a track shown from Black Jerry's crossing Galong and Tin Pot Creeks, but we could find no trace of it. The sun was very strong and it was hot work getting to the top, so we had several spells. Just after reaching the road at Euroka we met the Carlon family, coming from church and we had a long yarn. The bush wireless had been at work and they knew we were in the district and expected us. The track referred to above has been obliterated for some years. Got to Megalong at 1.5, had lunch and left again at 2.0 for Katoomba via "The Devil's Hole". Made good speed and got to the top at 4.40. On reaching the station we found the last train had left at 4.49 p.m. and that there would not be another until 2.0 a.m.; so we went to the "All British" Cafe and had a meal and argued about what to do. Decided to ring up messages for our people at home and catch a train at 4.0. It was a dreary stay in the waiting room, but we rolled up in our blankets and got some snatches of sleep.

Thursday, 20th. The train was well crowded but we got seated comfortably and had some more sleep. Parted at Strathfield after a good trip, which I enjoyed every bit as much as I think Wally did.

NECESSARY ITEMS OF GEAR
THAT SHOULD ALWAYS BE LEFT AT HOME.

Practically every pedestrian camper suffers at some time or other from H. P. (Heavy Pack). It generally comes on in the first mile or two and lasts according to the stamina of the camper (and the length of the trip) from a few hours to several days. H.P. is a serious complaint and should not be treated lightly. It has spoilt the enjoyment of many a trip and should therefore be given weighty consideration. Your friends can't tell you about it, because generally speaking they don't know. Short of jettisoning part of the camp gear there is practically no cure for H.P. once the trip has begun.

Therefore if you have ever suffered from the malady, resolve now to attack the problem right away.

The first essentials are a pair of household scales which will weigh by $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces, and if possible a spring balance which will weigh up to 25 lbs.

These items are - to be used only at home of course -

The next requirements are a note book and pencil, and the treatment can then begin.

Clear the floor of a room - or verandah, and neatly arrange thereon every bit of camping gear you possess. Then get out the scales, note book and pencil, and having placed a cushion on the floor proceed to pack the gear you would use for a 3 day trip. (If the patient suffers from Rheumatism, stiff joints or old age the treatment may be carried out on a large table, carefully cleared and covered with newspaper.) When this has been done weigh the pack nacksack. If it is more than 25 lbs. H.P. has got a very severe hold and will require drastic treatment. Make a note of the total weight and then proceed to weigh each item separately. The separate weights added together should equal the total weight - (but this rarely happens first try).

The next step is to read carefully through the list, and see if you are getting full value for weight. A little consideration will probably help you to reduce the weight by several pounds.

Next get out all your food containers and weigh them. Glass jars and bottles are to be avoided as they aggravate the complaint. All tins should be suspected and carefully weighed, and even aluminium containers should be reduced to minimum numbers and size.

If these instructions are carefully carried out, the cause or causes of H.P. will be readily discovered, ^{it can easily be remedied} by leaving the offending item out or substituting it for a similar but lighter article.

Dieting is not necessary during the treatment.

In this as in all other gear problems Paddy Pallin is anxious to assist do not hesitate to discuss the matter with him. The gear list contained in his booklet "Bushwalking and Camping" (price 6d) giving the weights of a typical outfit, should prove a useful basis of comparison.

Inserted in the interests of good camping.

by F.A. Pallin,
312 George Street,
Over Hallam's (opposite
Wynyard Station.)
SYDNEY.

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SOCIAL NOTES.

On 9th. August a very enjoyable Dance was held at the Arts Club - a dancing competition provided much amusement.

On 17th. our old friend, Mr. Pryce Conigrave, in his usual fluent style, gave us a lecture on "Tramping in Papua".

A week later we spent a very pleasant evening listening to Dr. Chen, Consul General for China, talking of his native land.

On 31st. was held a Mock Trial, dear little Bobby being the star performer.

During the month of September, we held our usual monthly dance in the Club Room on the 7th., and on the 12th. we held our final dance for the Season at the Arts Club. Although the attendance was not large, the evening was very jolly and thoroughly enjoyable.

On the 21st. was presented, as is now our custom, a 3-Act Play. This was "To Have the Honour" by A.A. Milne, an exceedingly delightful work. The Principals in this production were very well cast and gave a good performance. There was a very large attendance in the Club Room, and the audience thoroughly enjoyed the Play from start to finish, and expressed the hope that it would not be long before the Bushwalkers produced another one.

The following Friday was left vacant owing to being a forerunner of the 8-Hour Day Holiday.

We wish to heartily congratulate Marg and Myles Dunphy on the birth of their second son Dexter Colboyd.

RENE D. BROWNE,

Hon. Social Secretary.

My dear,

We had a perfectly scrummy time at Esmeralda's party last night. She looked very nice but she has no flair for clothes - Do you think? Nick (the darling) was there and we had lots of dances together. He rescued me from the clutches of Tim - he's absolutely too utterly utter for words - and what do you think - guess who's gone into commerce - I was dodging through the Royal Arcade and lo! right at the Pitt St. end in one of those dinky little cubicle things in the middle of the Arcade, who should I see smiling at me but GWEN LAURIE. She was surrounded by stocks of cigarettes and tobacco and life savers and bananas and oranges, and there was Gwen thoroughly at home - even down to the telephone.

You might pass the word round to the rest of the gang that she is there, so that if they're buying smokes in that end of town they'll remember Gwen.

Don't forget - PITT ST. end of the ROYAL ARCADE - that's the one that runs through to George St. not far from Park St.

Bye, Bye, - will see you soon,

Yours,

Con.