

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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HOW RESTFUL ARE HILLS

How restful are the far hills,
the green plains, to city eyes
Tired with the ills
Of brick and weatherboard,
And iron reaching to the skies!
Lord,
The hills and plains are Thine,
And yet, I know the strength will dissipate,
This pleasure turn to wretchedness
As deep as joy is now elate
And, in the loud canyon of the street,
The sweet
Of this swift moment soon will pass
From consciousness.

PAUL GRANO

2nd CANBERRA TRIP, EASTER, 1944.

By Frank Leyden.

"Kosciusko Express. Platform 8. There's Colin, Ha!"
 "Where's the others? These two back carriages are full. The rest haven't been shunted in."
 "Come up the front."
 "There's Johno and the Scotlands."
 "Humph!"
 "Here she comes. Get ready".
 "We're in. Good seats. Fancy coming an hour early."
 "All out. These carriages not going. Engine couldn't pull all these carriages."
 "Is everybody else getting out? Come a couple of carriages back."
 "He won't let us in. Open the windows, Len. Put the packs on window sills ready to go in or out."
 "No, she's going out again. Here's a couple of scouts going to Kosci. Come with us and we'll all rush it together."
 "Look! There's the sleepers on the other line. They've got to be put down the back. That's what it is."
 "There's George and Ken and Rolls in the sleeper. Doraen too."
 "They'll all be telling, as usual, how they were asleep before the train got to Strathfield, son."
 "Here she comes, the sleepers, too. Here's our window."
 "Ha! Ha! We're in. Empty carriage."
 "Colin came in with a swallow drive."
 "I saw Johno with his face on the floor and his feet in the luggage rack. Thought my boots got someone. I heard a klunk-klunk."
 "No mine. A bunch of flowers, I think."

.....

"I can't stand it! I tell you I can't stand it!"
 "Shut up Scotland. The window's going to stay shut."
 "Good on you, Johno. Keep it down."
 "Here's Goulburn. Look out for Cosgrove."
 "He got the early train. Reckoned this would be half empty when it got here."
 "Didn't know it was first stop Goulburn. Aha! Aha!"
 "There he goes! Out the window and get him, Joe."
 "What! You haven't even got a seat for me. I had a seat down the back. Why was I persuaded to come up here."
 "But you've got our company, Bill."
 "Joe will give you his seat and get out in the passage."

.....

"Williamsdale at last. What a louse of a night."
 "There are the sleepers getting out."
 "There's Alex on the platform."

And with the train went civilisation. Surrounding us were those big rolling hills and wide open spaces, much wider than the railway carriage in which we were embedded all night. Beyond the sheep country rose a ring of 6000ft. peaks - Gudgenby, Kelly and the Brindabella - our goal. So across the paddocks and down to the Murrumbidgee for breakfast. The river is somewhat like the Cox above Black Jerry's - good water, good

flow, but a bit silted and with bare slopes.

"Moving off in five minutes, Rolls. Come on Garge." "We won't be druv,"

Crossing the low ridges to the Naas Valley we approached the 4500 ft. Tennent. This mountain is well isolated and thickly timbered, but has a rock outcrop on the summit. Would be interesting to climb. So would the saw-toothed peaks of the 5000ft Tinderry range, the other side of Michelago, which we could see so well in the clear morning air.

We walked along an old road, We went through gates. We walked along a good road, We put on sticking plaster. Then we walked along an old road. Murmurings and mutterings. Tennent went through all silhouettes and grew small in the distance only as our blisters grew large in the foreground.

"Here's water for lunch."

"No, dirty. Keep going before the others catch up or they'll want to stop here."

"To think Michelago is just across the Mt. Clear Range there."

"But that climb would have been the death of us."

"Here's water. Look; there's a calf jammed between two rocks."

"Can't move it. Try after lunch when we're not so tired."

"Len and Joe will give it some water. Bill and I will go back to the farm. Ready to move off?"

"What's up with you now, Joe? He had three raisins more than me for lunch. Now the rubber had slipped off his hip strap. I can't do anything with him. See what you can do with him, Frank."

"Hurry up. Gudgenby creek is a long one. We'll never catch 'em up."

"Which track?"

"To the right up the ridge, of course, Len's not far behind."

"Where are you, Joe? Where are you, Joe?"

We climbed and climbed that steep ridge. We shouted to Len who shouted to Joe. We shouted to the others but our echoes died into silence as the 5,200 ft Booth grew on our left and the valley sank into an abyss in the shadow of dusk and the coming storm. A tree-clothed ridge, straight as a ruler, ran from the Naas Valley over 3,000 ft. below, right to the summit of Booth. Far away in the depths, deep in the abyss, growing fainter and fainter into the all pervading silence, like the wail of the banshee or the cry of a departed spirit--

"Where aaare you, Joe? Where aaare you, Joe-ooo?"

.....

"Which way'd those ahead go, Bill?"

"We'll go flat out to catch the others and tell 'em we've lost the Scotlands. Look, there's George."

"Hey, George! Something's happened."

George waits a little while, out of respect, then plods silently on. We soon realized that, after that ridge, George was in no mood for anything happening. From the top we looked down into the wide expanse of the Gudgenby river valley. Far below us in the distance were the little black specks of those ahead. No shouts could penetrate the distance. No blisters could catch the fleet of foot. Threefold we were split. No shaft of hope in the gloom. Alas, for the lost ones!

When we reached the valley and the road, there was bother. Which way had they gone, up or down? Everything was in the wrong place. Map was wrong and George in a "go no further", camp right here" mood. So we rested George and went back to the farm where we learned our fate. This was Glendale and we had to walk "4-6" miles to Gudgenby that night to make up lost schedule

through climbing the wrong ridge. Woe to him that leads up a wrong ridge.

Perspiring with our shirts off in a freezing drizzle and with blister scorched feet we pounded it out up that steep interminable road in a semi-comatose condition. At last the top, then down the other side with torches in the blackness. We had almost abandoned hope of finding those ahead and intended camping at the first water. But we secretly believed that Roley would have rebelled and we would catch them. At Rendezvous Creek they were camped; John, Roley and Ken near the road and the other people further away for a little quietness. The country, the roads, everything was abused and the Scotlands, wherever they were, were better off than us; especially seeing that they had been given a map that morning. Beware of being given a map in like circumstances!

.....

Gudgenby is a rolling grassy plain 3,000 ft high and surrounded by forested mountains topped with granite boulders above the tree line. Weeping willows and a clump of tall poplars, green meadows and a fine flowing stream were welcoming sights. We tramped over the tussock grass and through the fine forested slopes of middle creek.

"I think we've gone wrong. That must be Mount Kelly on our right.

Nothing as high as that anywhere else."

"But the direction is wrong. Look at the map."

"The map's useless."

Stop here for lunch while we're sure of water."

"This climb has been worse than Hannel's Spur."

"I don't like the look of things."

After lunch we climbed again with more energy till suddenly a little plain came into view. Snow daisies and orchids, alpine plants of various types were scattered in profusion in the snow grass of the natural clearing. Below to the right was the Cotter country and surrounding us high mountain peaks. Everyone was not happy with the spell of these beautiful surroundings and the uncertainty of the morning banished. A high peak to the south was decided to be Mount Kelly and a section of the party proceeded to the attack. The remainder of the party headed for the Cotter Homestead.

Mount Kelly is one of the most satisfying peaks I have climbed. It is isolated and possesses an uninterrupted view in all directions containing foreground, middle distance and background. Photographs from there with good telephoto apparatus would be startling. In the east is the golden coloured sheep country, with Gudgenby plain 3,000 ft below and Booth just behind; then the fantastic peaks of the Tinderry Range, like mountains in a fairy story. And nearby are the peaks and ridges of the Boboyan, Gudgenby and Scabby Ranges. To the south, Kosciusko's main range is conspicuous by the steep north west face of Jagungal. From Half-Moon Peak and Bimberi, the Brindabella Range stretches across the western horizon and deep below the thick forested slopes is the valley of the Cotter. Far to the west through the Murray gap is seen the steep pointed peaks of the Fiery Range. Nameless peaks in the foreground, endless ridges in the distance, all covered with a faint blue haze, but sharp and clear in outline and detail. This would be a great place to be in winter, with the mountains draped in a mantle of snow. And some fine, long steep ski runs, too, are awaiting someone's skis.

The "Kelly Gang" eventually overtook "the rabbits" camped below the Cotter homestead. The raptures of Mount Kelly were received with disbelief, criticism, cynicism, sarcasm, ennui and eventually indifference; which only shows how successful the raptures were.

Next morning we beat it out down the Cotter with many desultory excursions up sundry ridges looking for imaginary tracks, and much flapping of groundsheets amid the pouring rain in the prickly undergrowth. Lunch was in the rain at a place we decided to name Kangaroo Creek, so that, at least, some resemblance would exist between the country and the map.

"The rabbits are checking out."

"We'll follow up the creek if there's a track. If not, we'll try the ridge. They'll have to get on the ridge."

"The creek looks evil".

"The ridge is going up and up. We ought to turn back."

"Too late. We'll never catch them."

"Ah! that's the finish. We're separated. We'll never see them again now.

Can only keep going."

"Here's a bottle. Wonder if the track goes over the saddle."

"Not a sign of it."

"Gosh, that creek looks like the Upper Kowmung. Won't they be hostile."

"Coo-ee! Coo-ee!"

"Listen! A reply. Can hear their voices. Must be coming up."

"Over there. Let's keep on following the ridge."

The voices died in the silence of the depths. A view magnificent opened up through the mists behind us. Tongues of white vapour rose from the valley of the Cotter and graced the misty diadem of the Brindabella range. Through the rifts in the mist gleamed the deep blue of the mountains and the bright shafts of the sunbeams emblazoned the ever changing scene. Huge granite boulders, round as eggs, big as houses, jumbled together and balanced on each other, topped the ridge above us. Mount McKeahnie, 4,900ft. Another peak falls to the conquerors!

"It's too dark now. I'll give Doreen the torch."

"I don't mind being behind. I can hear you crashing through in front."

"It's freezing. My hands are numb. We've been wet through all the afternoon."

"Wish we knew where we really were. The others won't stand a chance down there. They'll be well and truly lost now."

"You better take Roley's seat in the train, Frank."

"The food party is split and everything. All vegetables with me, and all the meat with Colin."

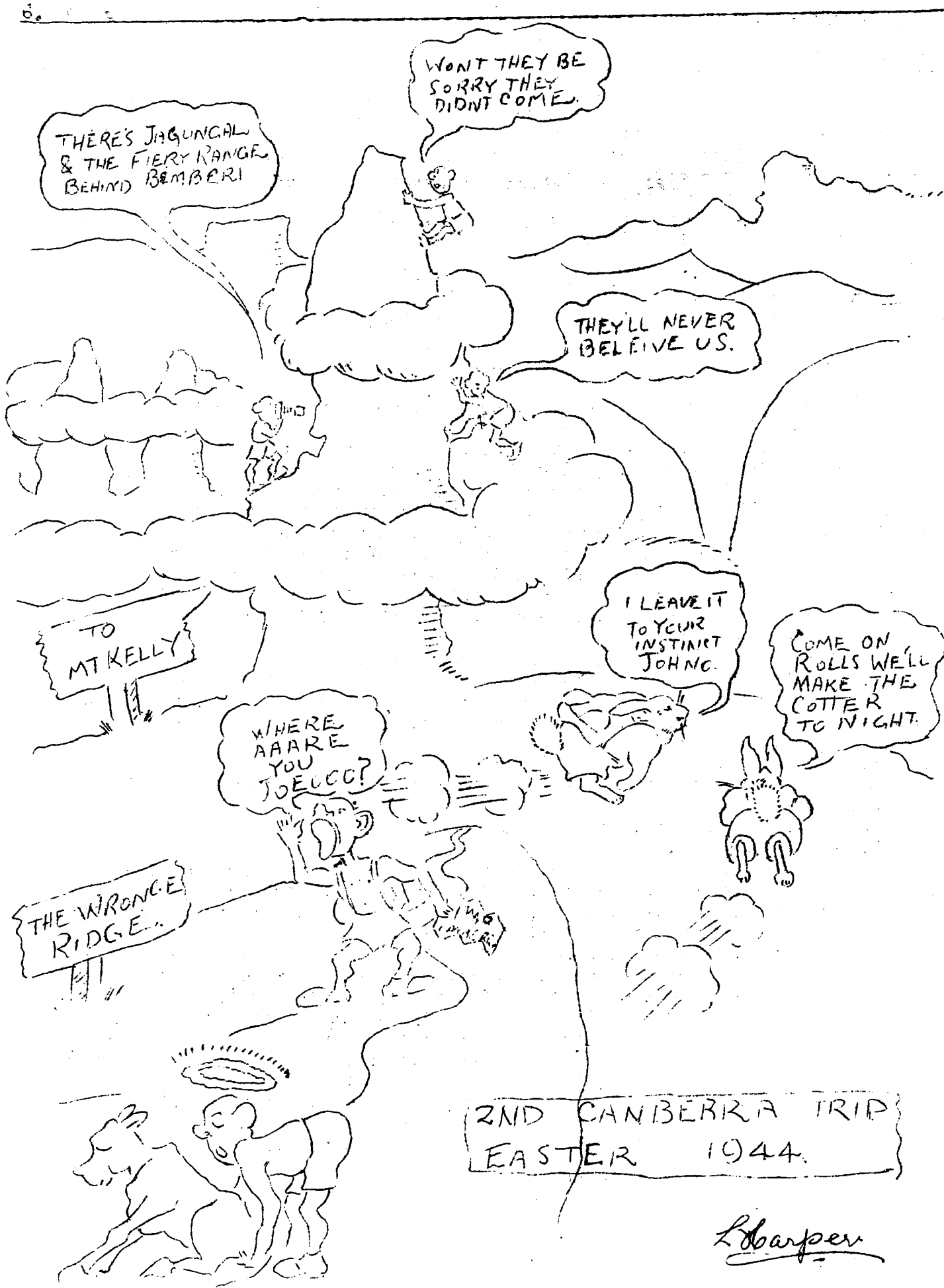
"Look! the lights of Canberra through the gap."

"That'll be our gap. Aha!"

Then we left the ridge and plunged through the dripping jungle of a gully in search of water in the dark. Huge granite boulders formed our campsite - a typical Colley campsite, but none the less a home from home with that blazing fire to quell the icy wind and rain.

Next morning we found the Kangaroo Creek track in the gap and on it the footprints of our separated ones. After walking hard for seven miles down Gibraltar Creek (and the dog-proof fence) to Paddy's River, we discovered them a mile ahead on the Tidbinbilla Road. No amount of shouting and waving could get them off the safety of the road and we lost them again as we climbed the ridge. Hours after, while having lunch on the Murrumbidgee River, George turned up alone. Later we met the others in the paddocks after their quarter hour lunch. The car for Canberra was met at the appointed place.

On the station we met the Scotlands. They went to the Cotter via Creamy Flats and returned through the Cotter Gap to Orroral, then to Naas and back to Canberra.



THERE'S JAGUNCAL & THE FIERY RANGE BEHIND BEMBERI

WONT THEY BE SORRY THEY DIDNT COME.

THEYLL NEVER BELIEVE US.

TO MT KELLY

I LEAVE IT TO YOUR INSTINCT JOHN.

COME ON ROLLS WE'LL MAKE THE COTTER TO NIGHT.

WHERE ARE YOU JOE!!!

THE WRONGE RIDGE.

2ND CANBERRA TRIP
EASTER 1944.

L. Barber

THE SOURCE OF THE THREDBO

(THE BIG BOGGY)

EDNA GARRAD.

There is something very fascinating about tracing a river to its source, and there is great satisfaction in reaching country that you have seen from afar, and conjectured about.

Last Summer, as we battled against a violent and bitter gale on the Ramshead Range, we had managed to pause awhile and gaze away to the east to a lovely valley that ran in a vivid green strip from the depths below (where we knew the Thredbo flowed) to the horizon. All the year that valley was at the back of our minds, and when we planned to go to Kosciusko again this Summer it was hoped to include this portion of the district, which we had learned in the meantime was known as "The Big Boggy", and was the source of the Thredbo River.

From the hut at Dead Horse Gap we set out one sparkling March morning. The frost and ice cracked beneath our feet, and the lovely irregular shaped tarns that were dotted along the river valley were coated with ice until about 10.30 a.m. The Thredbo here was just a small creek, but as gay and lively as the river lower down, where the fishermen catch their trout in the pools below the rapids and falls.

This valley is very colourful and reminiscent of Barrington Tops. There was every imaginable shade of green and brown, and it seemed to us like the moorlands in Scotland that one reads about. No doubt after rain this valley would be very "boggy", and it is easily understood how the name originated, but when we were there it was end of Summer and the cattle pads made pleasant walking. The low, tree clad hills on either side had obviously made the comparison with the brilliant green of the swamp that had impressed us from the Range. We wandered up and up, thoroughly enjoying the morning, and after several false alarms came to the gap which separates the Thredbo from the Little Thredbo. This was a glorious spot. It was a perfect day, with blue sky overhead and a good breeze. We sat in the midst of a carpet of snow daisies, and around us grazed a number of cattle that completed the rural scene. And over the gap we gazed away to the Moonbah country, equally delightful as that which we had been travelling all morning. After a long time we turned and commenced our return journey of about six miles to the Hut. We were nearing home, when on rounding a bend in the track, we were faced with one of the most glorious vistas imaginable. The whole of the Ramshead Range lay before us, flecked with large drifts of snow and surmounted by a blue sky across which raced billowing clouds. The wild rocky peaks of the range stood out bleakly, and at the summit was Kosciusko, for once looking impressive, its snow capped dome wreathed from time to time in cloud. It was a breath taking climax to a very delightful day.

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SO MUCH CHATTER

Most of us in the Club, (the cynical ones, anyhow) have watched with varying emotions, the distressing spectacle of a professed "woman proof" bachelor in the throes of changing his opinions. And those of us who have been forced to listen on so many occasions, to the ranting and raving of this particular bachelor on the advantages of being single, must be forgiven if they now get a tremendous satisfaction from the fact that he has now fallen flat on his face. That is such an agreeable change from his previous attitude of leaning too far backwards, that it is all the more enjoyable. We are telling you that Tim Coffey is engaged to Gloria Harkness. To Gloria goes our sincere admiration and to both, our wishes for every happiness.

We haven't seen Len and Dorothy Webb in the Club lately, but probably their time is taken up with their brand new son. No doubt Dorothy will bring him in soon to join the Junior parade.

Latest news from Beryl (English) is that she is with her husband in the far North driving. They are making quite a holiday of the trip although the life is not an idle one. Beryl's husband is out of the army as you may have gathered by the above.

One large (and notoriously argumentative) party has left for the Alpine Hut, where we understand there is plenty of snow, while yet another smaller (and more reasonable) party is getting ready to holiday at Mt. Franklin, where there is no sign of snow yet. The latter party being ready for all emergencies have planned a walking trip as an alternative should the snow refuse to co-operate.

It is a long time since we have seen Joe Turner but we did see him last Friday in the Club, looking very fit.

We are wondering if the Treasurer will have his report ready for the next General Meeting and if not, why not? And why Johnny Wood makes his report so long.

News has just been received that Dick Jackson is the father of a Son. Unfortunately Dick is in Darwin and has not seen the baby.

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FEDERATION REPORT

Meeting held on 20th June, 1944 at 6.30 p. m.

Kosciusko State Park. The list of trustees appointed to manage this new park has been published. It was noted that Mr. Myles Dunphy was not one of them. Federation decided to write to the Trustees asking them to appoint a sub-committee of two of their members who are interested with such matters to meet representatives of the various recreational organisations whose members use the Park. Search and rescue section were in the absence of Mr. Skelton, Mr. Knight reported that the S.B.W. Section had held a meeting and arrangements were in hand for the Practice Week-end the date to be the 2nd and 3rd September next. Please note that the section had 40 boots and

MEMORANDUM: As instructed, I read to Council Miss Byle's letter to the S.B.W. and gave a brief explanation of the position and the suggestion to donate certain funds in hand to the Department of Land towards the immediate resumption of the whole, or a part of the Era Lands. I then conveyed to the Federation the Club's request that it open a new subscription list for say one month so that the donation would go to the Government from all bushwalkers, and stated that the Club and contributors to the old fund would open the new one with £225, with possibly more to come.

The delegates present were rather staggered at the generosity of the S.B.W. as they felt that its contribution would necessarily be the greater part of any fund available in a month's time. They decided that, in view of all the circumstances, the Federation would co-operate with the Club and would circulate all the other clubs asking for donations to our Club fund. In addition, the Hon. Treasurer is to prepare details of how the Federation's funds are made up, showing what amounts are in special trust accounts and what amount would be available if the Federation decided at its next meeting to make a donation towards the resumption of the Era Lands.

DIRTY CAMPSITE: I regret to report that certain members of this Club have brought shame upon themselves and the S.B.W. During the discussion on the possible future affiliation of the Youth Hostels' Association one of the C.N.W. delegates expressed doubt as to whether the members of that Association would have bushwalking ideals about tidy campsites etc. The President of the Federation (Mr. Bill Watson of the Rover Ramblers' Club) commented as follows:-

It would interest everyone to know that the last week-end when he was out at Corral Swamp he saw the dirtiest campsite he had seen for a long time, and it was an S.B.W. campsite! He was the last to leave Corral Swamp that morning, and, before leaving, he went across to the campsite left by negligent members of the S.B.W. It was filthy with a litter of papers and scraps of food, AND LATER FIRE WAS STILL SMOULDERING!

Your delegates just sat and took it. This delegate has checked campsites and camps after so many re-unions, but had always hoped that those which were below the standards set by the Club were those of new, inexperienced members. In this instance, the President of the Federation stated that the culprits were "nominal members of the S.B.W." and he would not know the new members!

The Committee will probably have no difficulty in finding out which members camped at Corral Swamp in June and saw Bill Watson there. They are obviously a menace to the Club and to the bush.

That this should happen to the Club after nearly seventeen years of hard work and ceaseless propaganda!! Words fail me.

LETTERS FROM THE LADS AND LASSES

Letters were received during June from the following members of the walking fraternity:-

Jack Adams
Alan Clarke
Geoff Parker
Bennie Bryant

Dick Jackson
Frank Freeguard
Bob Banks
Doris Allden.

Jack Adams 12th May from London. Mighty pleased to have your descriptive airgraph of 25th April (Anzac Day). Shall make "Honeymoon Bay" one of my first hikes hope it isn't a tough one, for I'm sadly unfit for hikes like the Power Ramblers Barrington Trip. The crew (they are always hungry) and I too, await that tin of sweets, hope it's a big tin. Greedy! Went to Berlin again on our 5th sortie. As I've 18 now including 6 in 10 days during April, the crew have been giving a hand in "softening up" prior to a Second Front. As 81,000 tons were dropped at rate of 2 tons per minute for 30 days in April, you can imagine the RAF and USAAF have a job ahead of them. Parcels from home, mail too are coming along fine including your "bits and pieces". Heard of Nev Bruce's sad death - a great lad and walker too. Well good hiking now that autumn is here and write again soon.

Alan Clarke, 23rd May from New Guinea. Its ages since I last had the chance of treading the tracks back home, I'm still interested in the monthly magazine and the doings of you folk who are keeping the pennant fluttering. I'm seeing New Guinea again for the second time and sincerely hope the task will be finished when we are due to head south once more. There's plenty of walking hereabouts whether one likes it or not, practice had by those in peace times has stood ~~one~~ in good stead for the adventures unlimited to be had in these places. No doubt there are a sprinkling of the various club members scattered around the north, all storing up the many tales to be told around future reunion camp fires. I for one look forward to such times and judging by the speed the "Honorable Gent" is fleeing north, that day isn't so far away now. As I have read of the letters by others who have trodden this Isle, you should know plenty about this spot. At least the temperature hardly changes and for lovers of sol the climate is ideal. Vegetarians wouldn't go hungry by any means, fruit in particular, of all tropical varieties can be had in abundance at a mere cost of trade value, tobacco, matches or razor blades and even coloured paper will satisfy the dusky inhabitants. Canoe trips occur now and again when the occasion arises but not like we know it back home. Its all smooth water either salt or fresh and the foaming rapids and grassy banks are missing. Such places as the old Cox or upper Kowmung or even delightful Bluegum Forest and the winding Grose will always remain pleasant memories of bygone days.

Frank Freeguard, 26-5-44 from Cloncurry. Regrets at not having replied to your note earlier. Fact is the letter went on a tour - some so-and-so at Hqs. Forgot where I am located or had been sending so many letters to the other address that this one went the same way. The photos were very nice, there are a few I shall have to be introduced to when I come down. Certainly the S.E.W. have changed - very sedate almost reminds one of a Religious Convention. Suppose you will say I have been mixing with too many Yanks, Frank Cramp looks as if he will break out any minute, however. Apparently the photo

BACKYARD BUSHWALKING (Contd)

We were talking about our bush-plant raising experiments and had got to the stage of building a "frame". The experiment is a great success. Most of the seeds that had hitherto appeared so difficult to raise just came up as easily as cabbages. Pink tea tree, red bottle brush, golden glory pea, waratahs, middle harbour pine, banksia (3 kinds) sturts desert pea and several others have germinated well and are developing into sturdy little seedlings.

Meanwhile life goes on amongst the wildlings that have to fend for themselves. The boronia (b. ledifolia) is now in full bloom, each tiny shrub appearing to consist solely of flowers. The Dillwynnias are crowded with buds and a few hardy pioneers are giving promise of the glory to come. The eriostemons too are just awaiting a few sunny days to relieve their dark green foliage with masses of star-like flowers. The red spider flower is making a brave show and black eyed susan shyly hangs her pretty head. A stranger who has made itself at home and indeed brings its own welcome is the Cootamundra wattle. It is a blaze of colour. The Sydney wattle is preparing to take up the torch to brighten sombre winter days.

The proverbially busy bees are working on the wattle as though possessed. With pollen baskets full they speed from flower to flower with frantic haste, to fill the larder with honey against hard times to come.

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Returning to mundane things, Paddy has a supply of cape groundsheets standard pattern 6' x 4' at 12/- (no coupons). He hopes shortly to be able to take orders for green extra lightweight tents.

'Phone
E3101.

PADDY PALLIN
327 George Street,
SYDNEY

Camp Gear
for
Walkers.