

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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From "SNAKE" by D. H. Lawrence

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,  
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,  
and entered further,  
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing  
into that horrid black hole,  
Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly withdrawing  
himself after,  
Overcame me now his back was turned.  
I looked round, I put down my pitcher,  
I picked up a clumsy log  
And threw it at the water trough with a clatter.  
I think it did not hit him,  
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind  
convulsed in undignified haste,  
Writhed like lightning, and was gone  
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall-front  
At which in the intense still noon, I stared with fascination.  
And immediately I regretted it.  
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act !  
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human education.  
And I thought of the albatross,  
And I wished he would come back, my snake.  
For he seemed to me again like a king,  
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,  
Now due to be crowned again.  
And so I missed my chance with one of the lords of life.  
And I have something to expiate; a pettiness.

CAMPING IN THE RAIN

by The Old One.

When I originally offered (I mean, was requested) to write this article for that brilliant publication, "The Bushwalker", I found it difficult to decide which style I should use. Would it be my best Shakespearian very blank verse? No, I felt that would never do. What would the protectors of our moral code say if I produced something like Act II, Scene II, lines 56 to 60 of "A Midsummer Night's Dream"? Alas, it seemed that I could not use my famous blankety, blank verse; I would have to reserve it for another "buck's" party. However, I must get on with the story of camping in the rain.

It was mid-afternoon as eight stalwart males.....stop! Is this true? Well, there were "The Old....", developing a middle-aged spread both from side and back elevations and his two companions, "The Curly Headed Boy" with the blossom of youth still on his cheeks and "The Emaciated One"; "The Wizard" and his "Shadow", well past the bloom of youth, a representative of "The Dying Race", that "Buxom Lad" and "Mr. ICIANZ - STALWART ?". No! - in fact, quite ordinary. It seems we shall have to start again.

It was mid-afternoon as eight rather ordinary males reached the top of the grassy saddle. The sun had long since disappeared, submerged in cloud. There was a distant peal of thunder and the clouds had already settled on the neighbouring mountain like the extra fat lady subsiding into the tram seat just vacated by the extra small school-boy. All of which means that a storm was brewing and brewing fast, the clouds were heavy, the thunder more insistent and there were some spots of rain.

The eight men stopped, Should they camp on the green sward below as recommended by the "Old Master Max" or should they go on for another hour or so and make a hole in that eighteen miles to be covered the next day? Here, at least, was a chance for one of those arguments for which "The Wizard" and his "Shadow" are so famous (or should I say infamous?).

Followed five minutes of the usual inconclusive discussion punctuated by more peals of thunder and more drops of rain. At last a couple of extra loud claps of thunder cut short the argument much to the visible annoyance and secret disappointment of the two last mentioned. Down the hill all charged, collecting tent poles on the way. Having made up their minds in a "helluva" hurry, they were now anxious to pitch the tents. Now we shall have a short lesson in choosing a camp site.

Mr. ICIANZ and his room-mate, the representative of "The Dying Race" pitch their tent with reckless abandon over a brown stain on the green grass (more will be heard of this brown stain anon), "The Buxom Lad" erects his home nearby on a more or less level piece of ground, "The Old..." and his companions throw up their domicile with all speed (they are so fired after an all-nighter in the train, they could "sleep on the proverbial clothes-line anyhow") on a spot with a fairly considerable slope and "The Wizard" - what has he been doing all this time? You have guessed aright; he and the "Shadow" are locked in fiery discussion, "Its too slopey", "that dead tree might come down on top of the tent", "it looks better on the other side of the creek", "no, the ground's too uneven, we'll try up further". They go

further up across a little side creek - "no, this is worse" - and so back to the other tents. "Ah, there is a nice little hollow with soft green grass and just right for the hip." Up goes the tent at last; the great decision has been made.

All this time the "Rain God" has stayed his hand but he is getting impatient.

What have the others been doing during this delightful little interlude, "The Emaciated One", with true foresight born of previous wet camps, has been working on the fire which is blazing merrily. "The Curly Headed Boy" has unpacked the evening meal ready for preparation, "The Old..." has procured the water. What organisation; a job for everyone with each one doing it! Who is the genius behind this marvellous effort? Security reasons prevent disclosure of his name; let us hope, however, that history will not overlook him.

An extra loud peal of thunder, some extra large raindrops and the sky opens - its coming down in torrents. The whole party is under canvas but not for long. There is a considerable run-off and water is pouring in under the tents. "The Emaciated One" and "The Old..." rush out in their boots and hats and frantically commence trenching on the high side of the tent. The "Buxom Lad" and Mr. ICIANZ are also hard at work, in their boots and hats, trenching around their respective domiciles. "The Emaciated One", again with commendable foresight, has piled a few logs over the fire to protect it, as far as possible, from the downpour.

The trenchers look up from their labours, and wonder who is the lone figure sitting on the log. Can it be - yes, it is - "The Shadow". Wrapped in his groundsheet he looks more a shadow than ever. And what of "The Wizard"? He is still under canvas protected from the water tumbling from the sky but struggling bravely against the gradually rising water in that beautiful hollow. He is not swimming yet but it won't be long.

The trenchers straighten up with signs of relief, their work completed, The downpour eases off and subsides into some steady raining just like that parched customer at the local hostelry who, after sinking half a dozen pints, settles down to some steady drinking. The trenchers would have derived greater satisfaction if it had poured for, say, another half hour but they are, nevertheless, glad of the lull in the storm. Now we can, perhaps turn our attention to the fire and tea.

Out come the pieces of dry wood which were stored in the tent immediately it had been erected and the fire is soon back to its original vitality. The various food parties are hard at work preparing the evening meal. But, stay - where are "The Wizard" and his companion? They are off up the hill looking for another site. At last their search is rewarded and they are back demolishing their late homestead, which is carried off to the new position. An invitation comes from the others to make use of the fire, but it is not to be; "The Wizard" has his fighting blood up and is determined to get a fire going.

All this time it is raining steadily, the others have finished their hot meal while the "Shadow" has been engaged in a number of fruitless missions snatching burning brands from the big fire. As to whether "The Wizard" ever got that fire going, the others are not sure. Next morning the

4.  
"Shadow" was heard to complain of the cold tea and with commendable determination insisted on cooking his breakfast on the community fire.

Mr. ICIANZ and his companion were rather late in rising. It appears that an aroma arising from the brown stain, after it had been dampened by the rain, had drugged them into extra sound slumber.

I am sorry, readers, that I cannot, on account of dictates of decency and modesty, reveal the actors in this drama which should have a warning object lesson for you, but turn to page Eleven and see if you have guessed correctly.

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WOUNDS WHICH NEVER HEAL

by Dorothy Dix (inc).

It is often said that hearts do not break - they merely bend. In other words, nature and time will heal any mental wound if not deliberately prevented from so doing. Similarly it is so with most wounds of the body. Imagine the sorry sight of the legs of bushwalkers if nature and time had not done their healing work.

But trees are different from human beings. Even a pin stuck through the bark of a tree will leave a wound which remains until death. Never is a tent peg or tomahawk, nonchalantly stuck in a tree so that it won't be missed, forgotten by the tree. It leaves a wound which never heals. The tree may grow its bark over the injury, but the injury is there none the less - perhaps a blood vein or distortion which never heals.

So, if you are tempted to run your motor car into a tree, remember that, though your car may be repaired, the tree cannot. It is for this reason that foresters, who love their trees, never run their trucks into them !

(I don't suppose it would be on account of the shortage of spare parts and tyres would it? Ed.).

WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT IT ?

Should old Acquaintance .....

One very pleasant result of the improvement in the war position is the return or threatened return home of many exiles. Ralph Holroyd recently headed a list of Prisoners of War who had been released. Gordon Upton, a keen young walker whom we had not the pleasure of knowing long before he disappeared into the air force, recently arrived back from Canada. Peter Allen leaped into fame by coming out from England in the Duke's plane. The fact that the Duke was not on board was merely an oversight.

Wanted - a Composer.

The engagement of Elsa Isaacs to Malcolm McGregor provided a libretto which would surely have inspired Richard Wagner to compose a further Ring Opera. The news was to be on the Front Page any day when, unfortunately, the jeweller who was engaged upon hewing the last diamond into shape, was arrested for some illegal dealing and all his work confiscated. The strain on Malcolm was terrific. However, all came right in the end. The general reaction to news of the engagement seemed to be "not real surprised".

Unsung Heroine No.1

Should be the deserved title of Yvonne Rolfe who for countless years has performed the arduous but unspectacular work of roneoing the magazine. Poor Yvonne has to cope, with a "rattle-trap" of a machine which was old when it was purchased ten years ago. Yvonne fears that the example she sets her infant son on duplicating days may put him in the World's Champion Swearer class.

One Fact.

Joyce Trimble and Arthur Brophy were married recently. That's all we know and it is not our fault, as we see this pair so seldom.

"What bird is that?"

A plague of astonishingly coloured garments has broken out in the club and so far no cure has been discovered except amputation. The garments range from THE OLD SCHOOL GUERNSEY to a variegated fez. We shall be charitable and put it down to lack of coupons or the contents of some "Bundles for Sydney" forwarded on by the Solomon Islanders. While the garments remain in the bush only the King Parrots will need to feel offended.

Getting Very Fast.

Jean Moppett and Flo Allsworth have not long since returned from a biking holiday during which they stayed with several old friends of the Club. It was fortunate that at each place there was a female for rubbing-down purposes.

A Wink is as Good as a Nod to a Blind Horse.

As the Nobles were setting out on a tough walk of several miles last Sunday they were offered a lift by the Northern Suburbs Ambulance. The professional eye of an ambulance man instantly recognises "the sore-distressed". However, at this stage, they were not sufficiently tired to lie down in an ambulance but later bitterly regretted the hasty refusal.

BOUDDI WORKING BEE

by One of the Bees.

History tells us that the colonisation of Australia was due to the loss of the American Colonies which caused the need for another penal settlement for England's convicts. Now it will be claimed by some that, had it not been for the timely help of those same American Colonies, it is doubtful whether Governor Marie Byles would have had the opportunity to found her penal settlement at Bouddi Natural Park on 28th and 29th of April last,

For no worse crime, in most instances, than grumbling on account of having to work slightly longer hours since the war at greatly enhanced rates of pay, 150 people were summarily transported to work for nothing on improvements to the Park. The transported even included four children whose only crime (which in these enlightened days would be classified merely as an error of judgment) was the choice of Bushwalkers as parents.

The First Fleet arrived on Friday night and landed at Killcare. Do not imagine, however, that these people suffered additional privations. Apart from the fact that they had Saturday morning off from work at home and were not expected to go more than "dead slow" in the new colony before Sunday, they were able to pounce upon the local shops and, locust-like, devour all the luxuries in short supply.

With the arrival of the multitude of minor offenders on Saturday afternoon, the site of the settlement began to seethe with people. Tiny Beach, the chosen spot, is only a small, sandy indentation but on the cliffs above the beach is a comparatively large area of flat ground suitable for camping. The tents grew in two, more or less, parallel rows with a street between - a long, long row like the main street of a country town. Upon first coming upon the rising village one thought "This is the largest congregation of tents I have seen for a long time". But after a few paces, a bend in the road would reveal another "straight" of tents and then a tree would be found to be screening still a further cluster: on and on the street wound bewilderingly. Indeed it outgrew the available camping space and at least one satellite township had to be commenced in a neighbouring valley which looked out over the sea while the original settlement spread right to the very cliffs in romantic, if rather exposed, positions. Yet even these communities did not contain the whole population for a race of supermen, I believe, established themselves at Maitland Bay. The latter are said to have been aristocrats guilty of trifling offences such as too great familiarity with the ancestral butler.

Night. A mellow moon gazed kindly into the amphitheatre of beach with black galleries facing a stage of white sand. The crowd ranged around the fire, set on the beach and burning redly. The atmosphere was of smugglers relaxing in some inaccessible cove knowing that excisemen and worries could both be banished but over the tiers of faces arched one solitary tree, curving and flowing with Oriental grace woven in a tapestry. Yet this was no place for solitary meditation: the recurring hiss of the surf as it flung itself on the sands induced an air of expectancy, of excitement, of awareness. And, as the evening passed in song and reminiscence, each one present knew that he had been privileged to participate in a ceremony in uniquely beautiful surroundings.

After pleasure cometh pain! Who could have been so pessimistic as to predict that a wicked cloud would, with enveloping tentacles, crush the moonlight and pour torrents on the peaceful campers? However, instead of having to remove mountains with the bare hands as on any such usual occasion there were at hand in anticipation of the next day's work, shovels, mattocks, tomahawks, adzes, crowbars, forks, hammers, axes-so one just had to choose the most suitable instrument for deviating an incipient river.

Saturday night's signs of growing Democracy must have irked the autocratic Governor so on Sunday, at an early hour, she once again very firmly seized the reins of Government. But every detail of the numerous jobs which had to be done and adequate chain-gangs to perform them had been arranged meticulously. Clearing tracks, mending tanks, planting trees, making fire-places, erecting signposts, repairing fences were a few of the tasks which were carried out with speed increased by the knowledge that the sooner it was over the sooner one could relax.

Every previous colonising venture seems to have failed miserably on account of some unthought-of difficulty but not Bouddi. Let me remark on two aspects.

In order to ensure an unfailing water supply at Tiny Beach a dam was designed to span the trickle which managed not to evaporate before reaching the sea. Bags of cement were carried down from the road on the backs of male convicts (of the worst type and sentenced to hard labour) on Saturday night and left at hand for the rearing of the great wall. Strangely enough the dam was completed despite the fact that the builders relaxed occasionally by flinging cement at each others faces. Though a great improvement was noticed in the faces this was not the object of the gathering.

The Intelligence. Stand erect with awe and respect. Where would we be without the Intelligence? Where, indeed? The President of a well-known club was allotted the task of keeping up the lines of communication and, as those working away from the headquarters toiled, they lived in constant fear of this euphemistic Gestapo. Would she gallop by, riding side-saddle on a white charger, with hair streaming in the wind? Or would she pedal up the track, head bent down in groaning effort, on a Japanese bike? We did not see her so we presume no transport was arranged.

So successful was the colony and so nostalgic did the Governor become for her precious files, her ponderous tomes, her bills of costs and costs to Bill that she granted everyone a pardon on Sunday night on only one, unnecessary condition - that they return every year for B/B Day.



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OUR ABSENT FRIENDS

During the month we have received letters from the following:-

Ninian Melville    Les Douglas            Bob Savage            Geof Higson  
Bill Burke            Frank Ricketts        Bruce Simpson        Gordon Upton.

Geoff Higson - Bougainville 10.4.45. I appreciate those letters of yours as, apart from the "Bushwalker" which I receive more or less regularly, yours is the first letter that has given me any news of the club and its personalities for many months and it is like a flashback to the "Old Days of the Blue Gum, Araluen and Shoalhaven", so I hope it won't be long before I hear from you in the future.

I could do with a few cheers in the way of letters as these days I don't even bother to expect them, except for duty letters of course. So when I do get one, rather a large ceremony with offerings to the aircraft that drops it from the blue is the order of the day and everyone else in the section cheers for me. Apart from that I am extremely satisfied here - more satisfied than anywhere else, as a matter of fact, with no worries and as fit as is possible.

Give my congrats to Edna. Your description of the Reunion brings back fond memories of past Reunions in peace time at Leonay etc. Tuggie's trip has the earmarks of a wild and wondrous time but the thought of Tumut isn't very nice for the man on the land, a most disheartening job under present circumstances.

Well I'll go into my dance now and try and give you some of the "G.G." of this place.

As for the Solomons I suppose by now I'm as wise as the next bloke but as for following in that gentleman's (or was he) footsteps I'll decline gracefully.

I have been here five months now and am extremely contented. We have



wandered over a great area and done a lot of things. No doubt you have read about "those brave commandos" in many a garbled newspaper account. We sometimes get them sent to us and they are quite a good laugh.

We have always lived under fair conditions due to us having a large number of natives working with us and when we want anything done "Orright now 'spose you like workin' house blong me". That's all there is to it. Although we are stuck right out in the Nips, to see us during the day you'd think we were in the middle of Hyde Park. Pretentious intelligence offices (two of) and Sig. offices as large as life. Huts everywhere and all the time we wonder why "Nip" doesn't have a go at us instead of us having to go out and find him. Where this place is, used to be an old native clearing and it has waving palms and jungle scenery and a really beautiful scene of a mountain which must remain unnamed. We have about 50/50 sunshine and rain, a little more sun perhaps and the general apparel is a "lap-lap" which just covers the nether quarters and of course boots. So we work and play (very little of) making the most of life.

I am in charge of the Int. Section under the Skipper and save the taxpayers no end of coin as I am still only a trooper - but one of these days?

I have managed to grab myself a couple of Nips but at the moment I am under a cloud (shades of former days) and I don't go out on patrol probably because if they find me and I get killed they may not be able to collect. It'll all blow over soon I hope and I can get amongst the fight again and pip a few more of them. The trouble is we've got to go out and look for them and we're sometimes wandering for days around their back areas looking for them. So much for the little brown bathplugs.

The areas we have been in have had considerable native and Jap gardens of kau kau, corn, melons, pawpaws and what have you in the tropical line and many and delicious were the feeds we enjoyed.

The photography up here has been rather good but the results disappointing due to fungus growing in the film after exposure. Funny it doesn't touch the unexposed film but once exposed, unless developed immediately the film is ruined in a few days. So it went on, disappointment after disappointment for months and some really good shots ruined. Now we have a tank and even a sunlight enlarger and we have turned out some extra good negatives lately. We work at a temperature of 80-85° for a formalin bath before development fixes the hardening. The printing isn't worth it up here so I have my first batch ready to send down to be printed. If anything is worth sending I'll do a little reciprocal trading by sending you a photo of something of interest - not my ugly dial.

I notice you are still keeping I.C.I. poor using up their envelopes - and time I expect - but they can stand it for the poor boys "mopping-up" up north. If anyone tells you that Dunk, tell them for me that calling it that doesn't make a bullet any softer or a grenade any less effective. Perhaps the Jap doesn't know its mopping-up - evidently his education has been neglected. One more thing before I go. Here is the latest news - stop press in the late final extra - Right off the rollers or straight from the C.O's moustache. I have been nominated for a military intelligence school, about the only one I have ever wanted to do. It is at Southport, Queensland and starts the end of June. After that I'll probably get more leave so all in all its something to look forward to and my ugly mug may show its features around the Clubroom down in the not so far future. etc. etc.

GUOUOGANG

by Laurie Rayner.

It all started back in 1941 when Ray and I peered into the impenetrable mist on top of Guouogang in an endeavour to find the right ridge leading to the Kanangra River. After a short deliberation (without map and/or compass) we agreed on the course and plunged into the mist. Following first a short and steep ridge to a gully and then fighting our way through dense undergrowth for hours, we arrived at last on the banks of - believe it or not - the Cox River.

Now, as you may remember, this incident caused quite a controversy in the club because, according to the map, we should have climbed at least one intervening ridge to arrive at this point. Some "nasty folk" even suggested that we did climb this ridge in a delirious state due to the effect of the stinging trees. To settle this dispute was our object last King's Birthday weekend and to achieve this result we had to find a ridge leading in an unbroken line from Konangaroo Clearing right to the top of Guouogang.

As Leon and I set out from Katoomba Station for Corral Swamp we seemed to be on the wrong track. That night, this usually quiet path was like a thoroughfare, walking parties everywhere. The campsite reminded us of a reunion and there was fun around the campfires in which we dare not participate as we hoped for an early departure next morning.

This we achieved, arrived at Clear Hill quite early and enjoyed the view which seems to lose none of its charm by becoming familiar. After descending the ladders, our path led us up and over the intervening mountains eventually to Splendour Rock which was our first opportunity to study our chances. The ridge was there all right, but was there not a break in it just where it should join the main mass of the mountain? Anyhow, we shall see for ourselves tomorrow; let us get on now with today's walk, for the shadows are already lengthening. Over rocky Yellow Dog and the Yellow Pup Ridge we dropped to the Cox. It was dark now and our idea of crossing on some rocks was not feasible so we had to unlace our boots and - boy, was it cold! But we were soon warm again at the cheery fire after pitching camp at Konangaroo and discussing the morrow - whether or not we should take rucksacks was the main argument. After many pros and cons it was decided to shoulder them.

In the morning, we started our long climb with an easy slope which became pretty steep as we approached the crest of the ridge. This ridge commences about a mile upstream on the Cox above Konangaroo and leads through three saddles, one of them a veritable bridge or knife edge. The rocks at this point fall sheer down to the Kanangra River. The views all along are beautiful; on one hand, Mt. Morilla and Paralyser, on the other, Mts. Jenolan and Queahgong. One lovely grass-tree covered rock platform provided an excellent view, both of our route of the previous day and right back to Medlow Bath.

As we pushed on to the mountain we moved into thick mist which seems to be my fate on Guouogang. Lunch-time was cold and clammy but we were warmed inwardly by the experience and satisfaction gained on our four hour climb. Our luck was not entirely out, however, as we were fortunate to observe the unique dancing of a lyre bird; it imitated all the well-known bird calls and this drew our attention to its dancing ground.

The mist still blotted out any view so we decided to follow some wallaby tracks down a very steep shale ridge dropping from the second peak of Queahgong to Mumbedah Creek. This we reached by sunset and camped at its junction with the Jenolan River. The conversation that night was exclusively of "our" ridge which became easy and well graded as the night wore on.

A late start next morning caused us to put on speed to make Medlow Bath via the Jenolan River Gorge, though it seemed easy following upon our success of the day before. We followed the footprints of Tim's party along the Cox River and up the Six Foot Track and lost them only as we cut across to the charming little church at Megalong. This day was misty too but it did not diminish the loveliness of the valley. Everything seemed to cheer us - the moist, glittering gum leaves, the low clouds, even the pools on the road. As we plodded up the well graded track to the top of the cliffs at the Hydro, the view of Megalong shrouded in darkness was the finale to one of my best walks in the Blue Mountains.

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CAMPING IN THE RAIN

Dramatis Personae

"The Old....." (still censored) - John Johnson, growing old disgracefully.

"The Curly Headed Boy" - Colin Lloyd, whom we have seen grow up - boy and man - these two years.

More discerning people describe Ray Kirkby as like a young larch - rather than emaciated.

As for Frank Leyden - Wizard, cure thyself !

Poor, old Bill Cosgrove - when he's too old to walk he'll at last have an opportunity to talk.

Mr. Edward McKinnon, budding ARCHITECT, who, we opine, will be nipped in the bud.

We idly wonder whether Ray Dargan will be as buxom when he has our years and cares.

Mr. John Hunter is employed by Imperial Chemicals etc.etc. who have discovered the Philosopher's Stone which turns baser metals into gold.

BACKYARD BUSHWALKING

Apart from birds there are few wild animals which survive the overpowering destructive forces which accompany close settlement, but on any common of the outer suburbs of London rabbits and squirrels may be seen. Strangely enough (or is it?) their opposite numbers of the marsupial family, bandicoots and possums frequent Sydney's suburban gardens. The bandicoot is a somewhat secretive fellow for though his piglike grunts often betray him his erstwhile presence is generally only known by his burrowing for the insects and grubs he lives on. The possum on the other hand is a merry chap, or as merry as the presence of cats and dogs and the unpredictable human will allow. Each year a possum makes a nest of twigs in the virginia creeper growing on the wall of the house and when the leaves fall the nest is transferred to the end of the guttering which is under the eaves. There a possum may often be seen sleeping through the Winter day, but at night he joins his cobbles to raid a neighbour's dustbin whose lid is insecure (we refer to the dustbin). Then they top off the meal with wattle seeds, gum nuts (whatever they do eat) and then hunger satisfied, they retire to the flat roof of our verandah for fun and games. Judging by the noise they make they have a number of favourite games. Swinging from the overhanging branches of the wattle tree and landing with a bump on the roof is one, some form of hop-scotch or leap frog in another and (most spectacular of all) is a sort of glissade down the steep tiled slopes ending with a handspring over the guttering and a double roll on the flat roof. Special gala nights are held when the moon is full and a good time is had by all except for those unpredictable humans who are trying to sleep below. But then of course if folks will insist on sleeping all night and working all day when all good possums are in bed, what can they expect?

PADDY PALLIN.

(Still makes) =

Camp Gear for Walkers,

327 George Street,

SYDNEY.

'Phone B3101.