

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
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Editor: Dot Butler, Boundary Road, Sales & Subs.: Jess Martin
Wahroonga, (JW2208). Typed by Jean Harvey and
Business Manager: Jack Gentle Dot Butler.
Production: Barbara Brown

CONTENTS

	Page
At our June Meeting - Alex Colley	2
Siedlecky's Taxi & Tourist Service (Advt.)	3
Finding the Castle - Kevin Ardill	4
The Sanitarium Health Food Shop (Advt.)	7
Federation Notes - June - Allen A. Strom	8
Leica Photo Service (Advt.)	9
Magazine Information Bureau, additions for year	1
White Antics - Geof Wagg	10
Panic Every Afternoon	13
Air Bed, Wind Jackets (Paddy's Advt.)	20
The Caloola Club - Visit to Nadgee (Following page	12
" " " - Spring Geography Tour " "	12

MAGAZINE INFORMATION BUREAU

In the issues of Sept./Oct.1954 appeared an Index of all informative articles (routes, distances, times, etc.), which have appeared over the past 23 years. These additional names cover the year just passed (July 1954 - June 1955). Add them to your Index in the spaces allowed for that purpose.

<u>PLACE NAME</u>	<u>ISSUE NUMBER</u>
Bogong High Plains	244
Ettrema Gorge	237
Galong and Upper Breakfast Creeks	239
Hay, Mt.	243
Jellore, Mt.	236
Southern Alps (Vic.)	238

AT OUR JUNE MEETING

The meeting commenced at 8.30 p.m. with the President in the Chair and about 50 members present.

Two new members were welcomed - Henry Ford and Don Gowar. Henry, in his maiden speech to the Club, expressed his appreciation at being accepted to membership.

The Social Secretary drew attention to the forthcoming Photographic Exhibition and stressed that all colour slides were required by July 6th - three weeks before the Exhibition. The maximum number of slides per exhibitor was six.

The President then announced the discovery of a mysterious article, not unlike a groundsheet with curtain rings attached, which had been discovered in the clubroom.

David Ingram told the meeting that, although no day walks were listed on the programme for two months during June and July, Mr. Ted Phillips of the River Canoe Club would welcome S.B.W. members on walks which he was leading on June 19th and July 17th. The walks were designed for public or private transport. He himself would lead a walk on Sun. July 10th, of which details would be available later.

Explaining the Committee's action in voting £10 to the Caloola Club for the publication of a Conservation booklet, the President said that Allen Strom had undertaken to prepare a conservation booklet some two years ago. Because the printer was unable to delay its printing it had not been possible for members generally to see the booklet in draft form. It was believed the booklet would serve a very useful purpose.

The Conservation Secretary submitted to the meeting proposals which Malcolm McGregor, the President and himself had framed for discussion at the Conservation Conference convened by the Chief Guardian for July 2nd. The proposals included the following: Setting up of a National Parks Authority and Parks Service; an Act to prevent alienation of parklands except by Act of Parliament; provision for the resumption of alienated lands for Faunal Reserves and for the inclusion of Crown Lands such as State forests as faunal reserves; one authority for both flora and fauna protection; more effective teaching of natural science in schools; the enlargement, wider distribution and use for education in conservation of the Rangers' Bulletin of the Fauna Protection Panel; better supervision of timber getting in Crown lands. These proposals were approved without comment.

A reply was received from the Kuring-Gai Chase Trust on the subject of reports that the Motor Yacht Club proposed erecting a building at Hallett's Beach. Full inquiries had been made and we were assured that the Trust "never had, nor never will allow 'sections interests' to assume proprietary rights of lands entrusted to its care to the exclusion of other members of the public, and that there is no need for any outside organisation, however well intentioned, to remind the Trust of its duty in safeguarding the parklands entrusted to its care." The Conservation Secretary had replied that we "knew well

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the good work the Trust is doing in safeguarding parklands entrusted to its care - nevertheless cases have occurred when trustees have agreed to alienation of parklands in their care without the slightest notification to the public." He suggested that the Club were not 'outsiders' but interested members of the general public who use the park and know the benefits to be obtained in our natural bushlands."

Brian Harvey said that one of the wooden steps of Taro's ladder needed replacing and moved that we write to the Federation asking permission to replace it with an iron rod. This was carried.

Kevin Ardill said that he could put on a Club walk in very interesting country at the head of the Corang River in September. There was 9 miles of timber track, and car transport would be necessary, but it could be done as a week-end walk starting on Friday night. He would like to hear from anyone interested.

Frank Ashdown then asked whether there was anything in the Constitution which said that Committee meetings had to be held in secret. The President replied that it had always been the procedure for Committee members only to attend, and there the matter rested.

At the conclusion of the meeting Geof Wagg exhibited a blank Walks Programme ruled up and waiting to be filled.

- Alen Colley.

FINDING THE CASTLE.

- Kevin Ardill.

I've finally lost my pyjamapants and though this news may not be startling you're going to hear the story even if it hurts you more than it hurts me. A gent by the name of Frank Leyden is the cause of the sad loss. Would I be interested in a car-cum-walking trip for the Anzac week-end? I had been promising myself a trip with Frank for some time, so, after a short discussion with my car, I pronounced my willingness.

Friday evening saw me dining on de fish and da chips close to Newtown station. I almost choked myself on a large bone when Edna Stretton poked her head through the car window (open), wished me a safe trip (why?), and then headed off to the pictures with her mother - Oh yeah! Frank and Bill Cosgrove arrived, stowed packs, and at 9.30 p.m. we threw out anchor at Nowra. There we window-shopped, had coffee, and dozed until an Austin arrived with Jack Gentle and Len Fall. The two cars headed south 12 miles to the Tomerong turnoff. The road from there is not sealed but is in quite good condition. A large wallaby (or small kangaroo) created a diversion by trying to suicide, but sudden braking allowed him to escape with only a slight bump.

Midnight and Tianjara Creek coincided so we camped alongside the road on a good spot about 60 yards from the creek. Next morning after breakfast and a good look at the falls we continued driving, and about 8 miles beyond the creek stopped to ascertain the whereabouts of a timber track. By a stroke of luck we met a gentleman who has a first hand knowledge of the area. Frank had met him on a previous Ettrema trip, and in no time a pencil and paper was produced. Mr. Sturgiss has a mountain close to "the Castle" called after him. He drew a map for us, describing rock fissures, barely squeezable, Yadborough watershed and Corang Creek ditto. Mesas and swamps were pencilled in as Mr. S's large black dog sniffed around my lily-white legs.

Thankfully I slid my dry and unscathed legs behind the steering wheel, and bidding good-bye to the spry and helpful Mr. Sturgiss, we swung left along the timber track. For those interested, the turnoff is 23 miles from the main highway and opposite a house. The timber track was reasonable, but had sections of touch and go - when the sump touches the ground you go steadily. After one such section - 9 miles from the road - I stopped Len and we decided to park the cars. We walked the next two miles on a road that was almost perfect. The rest of the team were beginning to talk to me again as we reached the timber mill. The mill was deserted, but extensive plant, milled timber and a small hill of burning sawdust showed recent activity.

The track continued up the hill and over, and the headwaters of a creek provided an excuse for lunch. I must confess that a glimpse of the country ahead made me extremely dubious of my choice of footwear. I had reckoned there was still a trip left in my Cox River sneakers and had worn them, and now as I chewed I was conscious of the impressive array of sprigged boots surrounding me. Above each boot the shins were encased in gaiters, Jack being the only exception.

Somehow my Vita-Weets didn't seem as tasty as usual, and when the walk was resumed my feet dragged a little. They dragged a darn sight more when the track ended at the top of a steep slope clothed in thick scrub. Quite casually Frank suggests we shoot down to the creek and up the other side. The 'other side' looking something like the end of Solitary I'm encouraged no end.

Jack discovered the lawer vine first, which no doubt inspired him to find an easy way via rock faces down to the creek bed. Vigorous sapling growth and a diagonal course assisted up the 45 degree slope to the base of rock faces where we sidled east. The sidling stopped soon after, and as I sipped water at the foot of a small waterfall the gang went ahead. By the time I caught up Len and Frank had found an accessible route to the tops and were almost up. The rest of us followed and after ploughing up a scrubby rocky slope we were rewarded by magnificent views. Below us were the various creeks feeding into the Clyde River, sandstone cliffs yellow in the sun, and Pigeon House majestic in the background.

Then the ridge began to perform like a ridge shouldn't. We negotiated two shallow crevasses, but the third was deep and steep. Rock faces to the east were impassable but the western side seemed to have prospects. Frank produced about 20 feet of sashcord. This, plus teamwork, plus a little gripping with the eyebrows, took us down about 60 ft. into an amazing valley. There we found ourselves surrounded by rocks of a shape and kind most favoured by producers of Western dramas. After waiting a few moments for the non-arrival of Hopalong, we proceeded to the end of the valley. It was quite dry underfoot, and after pushing through medium scrub to a low saddle we caught glimpses of a most extensive valley below us. We plunged immediately into some extremely thick stuff. At the risk of being drummed out of the Brownies I'll admit I cursed the vines, the ferns, the rotting trees, unpredictable holes, and mostly the protected legs of my companions. By the time the creek turns into a swamp that blocks our way I am hungrier than a leech for blood - anyone's! From the head-high brush come complaints of mud and water, so I slip off my socks and seek a crossing elsewhere. I find a good one, and do I tell the others? I do, like h-ll, and I'm on the open dry sward before the damp ones emerge. The timber looked an inviting camp spot but thick scrub made camping impossible, so we found a spot in the open surrounded by sally gum and scrub. Bill and I walked about a quarter of a mile before the swamp narrowed enough to fill the buckets.

We had decided to leave the tents as a set camp, so at 8 o'clock next morning we packed lunch etc. in sleeping bag covers and slung them across our shoulders. This valley is about a mile across, so with rock faces to the east we headed south-west towards a creek and a saddle. There is not much water in this creek, - there's no room for it - but there's plenty of 6 ft. sword grass, scrub and fallen trees, and at this point I produced my pyjama pants from my pack and put them where they would do most good. We gained the saddle and looked down once more to a creek, and a steep slope up to another rock face. In the creek we encountered thick stuff, but the going from then on was comparatively good. At the foot of the rock faces we found a series of caves; in one place it was possible to walk under

cover for several hundred yards. In the dust were prints of all types of birds and animals - as Frank expressed it, "everything in the bush" - and because of its similarity to another place it was christened "Dingbat Parade." After several fruitless attempts to ascend the rock faces we finally found a possibility at the next saddle. Frank and I chimneyed to the tops and after a short look-see we were joined by the others. A quarter of a mile south brought us to a sheer drop of at least a thousand feet, and Oh boy! What a view! Immediately under us was a vast area and probably the headwaters of Corang Creek, then a ridge masking Yadbrough Creek, backgrounded by Currockbilly and Budawang Mts. sharply clear. Nearby rain-water pools provided water and with the billy boiling our eyes travelled eastwards to what surely must be the Seven Gods Mountain, and then onwards to two large mountains one of which could be "the Castle". Frank's colour shots will be on show some evening, and I hope some expert can elucidate.

After lunch we regretfully headed back to where pyjama pants hanging from a tree indicated the position of the chimney. With tender memories of sections of the morning's walk we returned by a somewhat different route. Jack and I both considered we should have gone south-east instead of south-west in the morning, so we did a short side trip to have a look-see. We got the biggest surprise of the trip! We expected an area ahead somewhat similar to the vast plateau at our back, and instead found the ground falling steeply into rugged deeps of about 1,500 ft. Not one line of rock faces but two rows of them met the eye. A breathtaking view, my little ones; something to be seen to be appreciated.

We returned to our camp feeling extremely contented, had early tea and then talked on the outskirts of a beaut log fire. A light shower during the night didn't improve the rest as rain could easily turn the timber track into a horror stretch. The morning was clear as we broke camp and started homewards. When we came to Hopalong's valley we decided to go straight through instead of returning to the tops. Sure enough, the creek we followed terminated at the shallow waterfall near where we had ascended on the Saturday. So near and yet so far! We could see the smoke from the timber mill on the ridge opposite and here we were stuck above 15ft. of miniature waterfall. We turned right and up we went. We must have spent two hours looking for our original route. We had some wonderful views of Pigeon House, but after a while got sick of charging up and down blind creeks so returned to the waterfall. I had noticed a tree growing close to the rock face and it was still there when we got back. As a special privilege I was permitted to try the tree first. There were no branches between me and the bottom so I gingerly wrapped by arms and pyjama-clad legs around the trunk and let gravity do the rest. Then I scouted around and found the way down, instead of letting the others bark their limbs on the tree. A draughty sensation below brings my eyes to my pants. There are more holes than stripes - in fact a complete write-off. I've no heart to continue the story; decide yourself whether we got home or not. No trip is worth such a sacrifice, but if by any chance you are down that way you could do a lot worse than have a stroll around. Valleys on top of ridges, surrounded by rock faces - a topsy-turvy area with magnificent views - that's the Castle area. See it yourself.

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DAY WALKS

An additional day walk will take place on Sunday, 10th July,
1955, from:-

Turrumurra - bus to The Sphinx - Upper Cowan Creek -
Terry Hills - bus to Chatswood. 8 miles. Moderate
8.43 a.m. electric train, Central - Turrumurra.
9.25 a.m. Bobbin Head bus from Turrumurra.
Tickets: Turrumurra return.

An invitation has been extended by Mr. E.C. (Ted) Phillips of
the River Canoe Club to members of S.B.W. to attend a day walk to be
led by him on Sunday, 17th July, 1955, from:-

Hornsby - bus to Birralelee - Banks Creek - Calabash Bay -
Calabash Trig. - Birrilee. 7 miles. Rough.

8.28 electric train, Central-Hornsby via Bridge.
9.30 a.m. bus Hornsby - Birrilee School (terminus)

Private transport may be used - cars assemble at Birrilee
School at 10.20 a.m.

Further particulars from David Ingram. 'Phone B0543 (B).

FEDERATION NOTES - JUNE

- Allen A. Strom.

BUSHFIRE FIGHTING: The organisation of teams for co-ordination with Sutherland Shire Bushfire Brigade for 1955/6 was discussed. The President said that it would be necessary to elect a new organiser as he would not be available this year. Fire Season 1955/6 promises to be as bad as the '39 year. Federation is anxious to hear from a volunteer for the work; it is hoped to fill the vacancy at the Annual General Meeting in July.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING is scheduled to take place on the third Tuesday in July (July 19th). Visitors are invited to attend (6th Floor, Scotts Chambers, Hosking Place). Ideas for the more efficient running of Federation during 1955/6 would be welcomed.

SEARCH AND RESCUE: The use of armbands is being investigated by the section. The Section was alerted for a search on the Wild Goat Plateau after the Anzac Holiday week-end; but the lost party reported promptly to the Mittagong Police and S. & R.

CONSERVATION CONFERENCE, JULY 2nd.: Messrs. Peach and Moppett will represent Federation at this Conference convened by the Chief Guardian of Fauna on behalf of the Conservation Bodies.

Resolutions submitted by Federation cover:-

- a. Legislation for a National Parks Authority and security of tenure for National Parks.
- b. Fuller advertisement of the provisions of the Wild Flowers and Fauna Acts.

Federation will support some resolutions submitted by the W.L.P.S.A., the S.B.W. and the Caloola Club.

A WORK PARTY will be held at the Bouddi Natural Park over the week-end July 9th and 10th. Assistance is required for maintenance of tracks. Please contact A.W. Dingeldei at UA2983.

BARRINGTON-GLOUCESTER TOPS: The Dept. of Lands is moving to dispose of Crown Lands in this area. Several bodies are submitting plans for land usage in the area, including The Forestry Commission, The Northern Parks & Playgrounds Movement (incorporating work of the Barrington Club), the Fauna Protection Panel, the W.L.P.S.A. and the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs. The situation is critical as the Forestry Commission has expressed the opinion in a lengthy report that it is competent and anxious to control the whole area.

THE FAUNA PROTECTION PANEL has recommended to the Dept. of Lands that two additional areas be declared FAUNAL RESERVES:

1. Ettrema: covering the drainage area of the Ettrema Creek;
2. Endrick: covering the headwaters of the Clyde, Endrick and Corang.

The Federation has a number of Conservation Projects in hand,

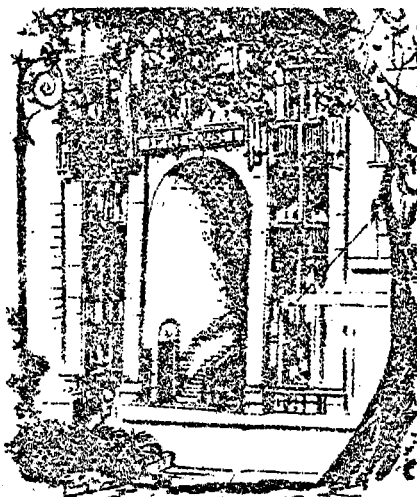
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generally in co-operation with other bodies, and most of them are under consideration by various Government Departments. Bushwalkers and their friends can always help by indicating to the Departments their approval of the various schemes. So that Bushwalkers and their friends may be familiar with the schemes, a series of colour transparencies and numerous maps and details have been prepared. Arrangements can be made for the use of this propaganda by contacting Allen Strom at WB2528.

LOST: Wrist watch, chrome, black band.
Lost between 2nd and 4th waterfalls in Davies' Canyon.
Reward. - George Grey.

SOLD: The Madden vehicle, advertised for sale in our last issue, has now found a new owner.

WHITE ANTICS

- Geof Wagg.

I must admit I'm very comfortable here and they all look after me very well, but I do find this strait jacket a little restricting. You ask me what happened? -- what could bring a determined and resourceful leader to this state? Well, I'll tell you.

It all happened when the White Ant Movement turned my walk into its annual picnic; I'm sure it was a picnic because Keith ate sandwiches all week-end. With these crafty creatures at work my trip was undermined right at its very foundations, but of course when Keith told me that he would have to catch the 2 a.m. mixed-goods-and-odds-bodikins train Saturday morning and meet us at the station I didn't recognise it for a cunning ruse to keep the party in Mittagong all night. Another thing I didn't realise till later was that the Mittagong Station Master's reluctance to let us sleep in his waiting room was probably due to his recognising some of the white ants for what they were and thinking it unwise to let them too close to his already shaky station. However, the forthright honesty in the leader's face eventually prevailed - besides, we were seven to one. So at last we slept, lulled with a soothing lullaby of shunting and shouting and hissing and dinging and clanging of milk cans.

Just in those precious morning hours when sleep is sweetest Keith arrived with a loud scrunching of hobs on gravel. With him was a new prospective, Pat, or as she prefers to be called Pot Kelly. What she and the other two prospectives, Brian Milne and Howard Ireland ("this happy weed" - you'll find him growing profusely in dark corners) must have thought of all this white anting I shrink to think, because they were so obviously delighted that they'll probably be white ants before they're members.

Well, as I was saying, when Keith arrived about sixish I thought I had better go and raise a taxi to take us out to Jelore farm, but before I was out of my bag I had been eloquently dissuaded by people pointing out how would I like to be dragged out at this hour.... cruelty to dumb taxi drivers, etc. Actually, when an hour later I did call a taxi, it turned out that, although he had a cast in one eye, the driver wasn't dumb at all; in fact, when the fare came to six and eightpence each he promptly said that seven shillings would do. But even termites are bushwalkers at heart when it comes to money, and all he could get out of us were six and eightpences.

As we made our way down the soggy track past the apparently deserted farms to the creek that flows under the steep south side of Jelore, a gentle mist of rain began to fall and low cloud gathered above the mountain top. The white ants rejoiced greatly, saying, "No good going up there, we won't even get a view," at which the leader sternly rebuked saying, "Exercise will do you good." Breakfast was getting later all this time, so we ate it quickly before it turned into lunch, and then went our way across the stream that babbled childishly up at the stern, cliffy face of Jelore. The climbs were steep and wet, but by the time we had reached the saddle the rain had stopped and the low cloud temporarily vacated the summit. This

removed one excuse for not climbing it, so the termites hurriedly cast around for another:

"Where do we go next?"

"Over the mountain and down the other side to Jelore Creek," says

"We could go round it," says Grace.

"We could leave our packs and climb it, then come back and go down from here," says Don Newis.

"We could go straight down from here," says Keith.

"WE WILL CLIMB WITH PACKS AND GO DOWN THE OTHER SIDE!!!!!!"

murmurs the leader. So we climb it all the way, up to the top of the top stone on the trig. The view was quite extensive in all directions, but softened by the dull sky and the drifts of mist it appeared rather insignificant. We could, however, see Jelore Creek winding its short way down to the Nattai, and it certainly didn't look far.

After a while the party was cajoled into action again and proceeded down the other side, which was exceedingly steep with slippery rocks, so that once started we were soon at the bottom where we had lunch. We discovered that Jelore Creek was narrow, muddy, a foot or so deeper than it should be, and had no bank that wasn't either vertical or covered with raspberry and nettles. In short, this was some of the Roughest Country in the State. And on top of all this it started to rain, so I must reluctantly confess that it wasn't entirely white-anting that caused us to take four hours to do a mile and a half. Pressing on regardless of pleas for "afternoon tea" and "Java time", we reached a sodden little flat on the junction just at dark. Everything seemed very miserable, but it's amazing how a few tents and a fire can transform almost any place into Home. Soon stews were bubbling and Howard was brewing himself some pints of porridge that he'd missed at breakfast. Keith, too, was hard at work cooking an enormous piece of steak which resisted him valiently while he cooked and chewed then cooked and chewed again. Eventually he had to admit that it was too tough even for a termite, so he is now wearing it on the sole of his right boot and says it would be ideal if only he could get hobs in

I must state here that Jack Perry isn't a white ant - no sir, not a chance - in fact, I suspect him of insomnia. I mean, just because a leader says he wants an early start, he doesn't expect to be roused at 5.30. Fortunately though, some of last night's embers were still glowing, and a fire brightened the outlook considerably. As soon as it was blazing nicely, prospectives felt encouraged enough to emerge, but I think you'd have to build it in the tent to get a white ant out. They've certainly got resistance! Pleading is met with scorn, harsh words have no effect, and they seem equally impervious to blows and insults, though the latter, being totally foreign to the leader's timid nature, were probably not being used to the best advantage. But the bitterest pill of all is that you spend so much time chasing them out that you're last ready yourself. Finally, when everyone was ready to start, Howard thought he might be getting a blister so had to remove his boot and investigate. This was met with jeers of approval from the white ants who had not hoped to discover such a polished technique in one so young.

At last we got away into a saturated world where every tree you touched unleashed an icy deluge, and every river crossing refrigerated

your feet. Grace, who is preparing to contest the White Ant Movement seat in the next presidential election, wanted to prove what a whole-hearted termite she was by sitting down two minutes after we started, but was most put out when it happened to be half way across Jelore Creek. "Quite numb!" she said. The river seemed to be up about 18 ins., which doesn't sound much, but it's surprising what a lot of useful bank and how many handy rocks this little bit of water can cover. Keith took the party on extensive tours of mossy grottos, I led extensive tours of awkward hillsides and dripping shrubbery, and Brian and Grace had a little paddling trip of their own along the water's edge. In one spot, as Jack was sidling a steep rock-face about four feet above a deep pool, he lost his balance and was as good as in when much to everyone's disappointment (except Jack's), he managed to grab a piece of the rock and haul himself back.

One way and another we got ourselves to Flora's Crk., which springs into the Nattai from the top of quite a pretty little fall, and as you may now expect, there were plaintive wails of "Java time!" and "Mighty spot for lunch!" and other such hints for leaders. Usually such cries die down if thoroughly ignored, but these were so persistent that there was no cure but to hurry ahead until they were mere bleatings in the distance.

Flora's Gully began quite openly, but became rapidly rougher till it was little but a rocky trough with a sheer wall on one side. The other side, however, offered a chance of escape, and thinking "white ants will never stand for this," I climbed up on to the ridge side where we could circle the rough stuff. Now, this is just to show you how unpredictable these borers are. I climbed up the ridge about 50 ft. and as the scrub was a bit thick decided to wait until the others came up. Well, I waited and waited - and waited - then I tried a few "coo's." No reply. "You beaut," I thought, "I've lost 'em!" Then I remembered that Grace had my lunch. "After all," I thought, "a leader's bound to look after his party." So I went and found them. But this is the part I want you to notice; if I'd led them up that creek they'd have been saying, "Aw, this is awful. We could walk round in half the time." But as it was, when I found them a hundred yards or so further up, they greeted me with "Isn't this mighty!"

We lunched at the place where the creek forks and then climbed the easy ridge which leads to the farm that is being re-occupied, at the foot of Mt. Flora. Looking back we could see Jelore standing right out above the surrounding ridges, appearing somewhat ethereal as its greater distance give it a lighter shade of blue.

Not feeling like following the meanderings of the road, we cut across the fields to the high col near Blatch's Trig. The weather was beginning to clear, and a soft, filtered sunlight gave gentle lighting to a gentle scene. Spread around us where we sat was first the circle of the bright green valley dotted with its farms; next was the circle of the drab green ridges, fold on fold to the hazy blue horizon, which led the eye to the skies of cloud in greys and blues and purest white higher and higher until they made the centre of the dome above our heads. Such a scene as this must soothe the eye and calm the mind and set a leader at peace with all the world - EXCEPT WHITE ANTS!

T H E C A L O O L A C L U B

.....[Founded 1945]

....

OUR SPRING GEOGRAPHY
TOUR, 1955.

.....

August 12 to 24.

.....

A tour of the Central Western Slopes.

THE TOUR will be by Club Coach visiting Goulburn, Tuena, Abercrombie Caves, Blayney, Orange, The Canobolas Mtns, Molong, Wellington, Dubbo, Peak Hill, Parkes, Forbes, Lake Cowal, West Wyalong, Temora, Cowra, Wyangala Dam, Boorawa and Yass.

THE PURPOSE OF THE TOUR will be to afford opportunities to observe the geography and natural history of the areas visited.

COST OF THE TOUR Share in the running cost of the vehicle and food

Ten Pounds (£10)

Each member of the party must be affiliated with the Club. This costs 2/6d.

The Club will provide food, cooking and eating utensils and camping gear to be included in the ten pounds.

The Tour will be under the leadership of Allen A. Strom, A.W. Dingeldei will be charge of vehicles and (Mrs) E.M. Dingeldei in charge of catering. Each member of party will be required to undertake Camp Duties which will include preparation and distribution of food, cleaning of utensils, camp cleaning and tenting.

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW INVITED: Each application must be accompanied by a deposit of three pounds (£3) plus the affiliation fee of 2/6d where such is applicable.

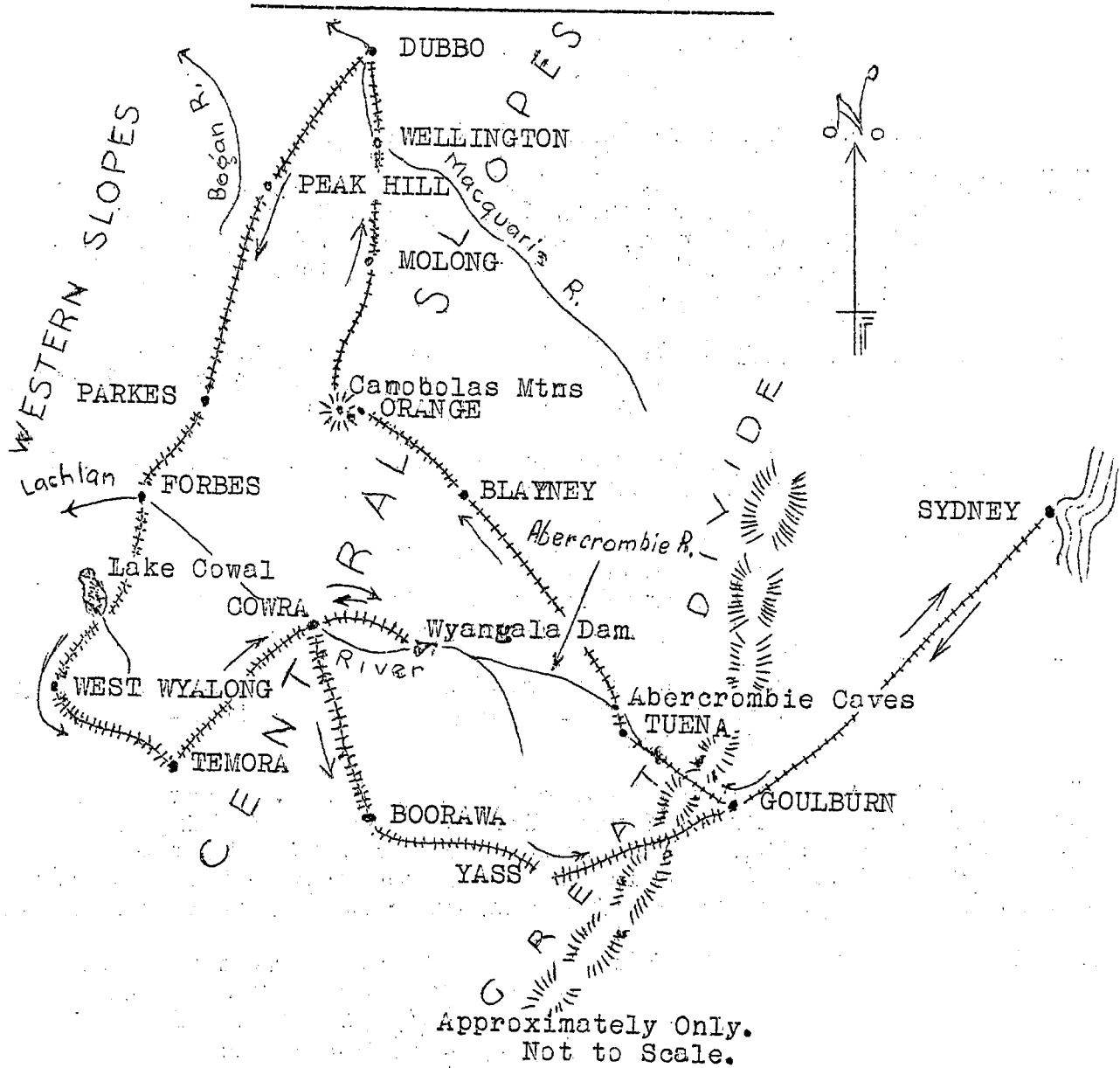
Further details and application forms from

Allen A. Strom,
The Teachers' College,
Smith Street, BALMAIN.
WB 2528

(Mrs) E.M. Dingeldei,
42 Byron Street,
CROYDON.
UL 2983.

SKETCH MAP OF ROUTE FOR ...

THE SPRING GEOGRAPHY TOUR, 1955.



Route shown:

THE CALOOLA CLUB

.....[Founded 1945]

.....

A VISIT TO MADGEE

August 28th to September 8th (or thereabouts).

.....

THE TOUR will be by Club Coach via the Princes Highway (South Coast) to Womboyne (south of Eden) from where a walking trip of several days will be undertaken. To round the tour off, the Club Coach at the conclusion of the walking trip, will travel south to Bairnsdale (Vic.) and then via the Omeo Highway to Albury and the Hume Highway home.

THE PURPOSE OF THE TOUR: Primarily to show members of party, the fascination of the coastline from Womboyne south to Cape Howe (Victorian border) ... map attached. The area has been proposed as a Faunal Reserve and visitors are asked to accept the responsibility of supporting our overtures to authority for the dedication of this reserve.

The remainder of the Tour will afford an opportunity to see parts of North Eastern Gippsland and South Western N.S.Wales.

COST OF THE TOUR: Share in running cost of the vehicle will be ...

£ 8. (No food provided.)

Each member of party must be affiliated with the Club. This costs 2/6d.

The Tour will be under the leadership of Allan M. Fox and A.W. Dingeldei will be in charge of vehicles.

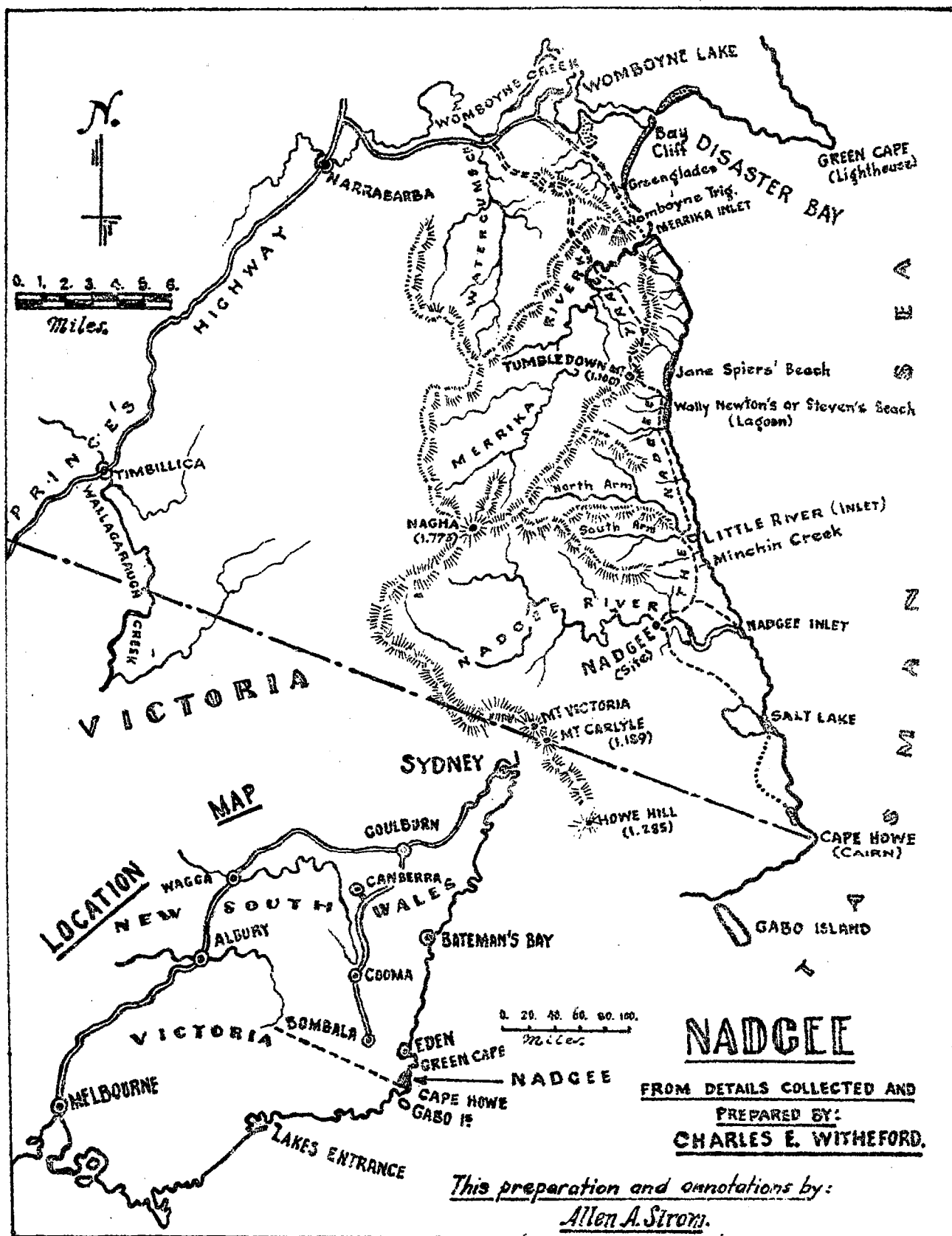
APPLICATIONS ARE NOW INVITED: Each application must be accompanied by a deposit of four pounds (£4) plus the affiliation fee of 2/6d where such is applicable.

Details from

Allan M. Fox,
National Fitness Camp School,
P.O. Brooklyn. Pat. 13.

Application Forms from

(Mrs) E.M. Dingeldei,
42 Byron Street,
Croydon. UA 2983.



PANIC EVERY AFTERNOON

- Jim Brown.

I make no apologies for the title, which refers to only one feature of our trip. At least it was a diverting feature, if it didn't always seem to be at the time. Also, there wasn't a panic every afternoon, really: only most afternoons. As you will learn.

We came by various ways to Melbourne, and assembled on the 6.5 train for Sale on a Saturday evening in February. There was Edna Garrad, pleased that she could get away for 9 days in the Alps with only 35 lbs; Dorothy Hasluck who seemed delighted to have even less weight; Frank Ashdown, carrying a frame rucksack for the first time, and about 50 lbs., and perturbed about it; and myself with 45 lbs., and glad to think the rest of the party was out of condition too.

We had counsel both written and verbal from Stuart Brookes of the Victorian Mountain Tramping Club, and copies of the admirable maps turned out by that Club. Our objectives were Lake Tarli Karng, Mt. Wellington, the high plains north to Mt. Howitt, the Cross Cut Saw, Mt. Speculation, Cobbler Plateau and down to Rose River - walking distance about 95 miles. Our way out was to be via Whitfield to Wangaratta.

After the steamy heat of Sydney the air was decidedly chilly as we changed trains at Traralgon at 9.30. It was quite as fresh when we left the rail motor at Heyfield, about 120 miles from Melbourne, at 10.45. To complete the long day there was the car trio of 32 miles to Licola, and it was well after midnight when we camped on the bank of the Macalister River, two miles up from Licola Bridge, and just outside the fence of Bill Reeves' property.

With such a late night, and the "easy" stage planned for the following day (over Mt. Margaret to Dolodrook and Wellington Rivers, about $12\frac{1}{2}$ - 13 miles), we permitted ourselves the luxury of a 9.0 o'clock start, after yarning with Mr. Reeves, who told us the track to Tarli Karng should be clear underfoot as walkers and scouts to a total of nearly 200 had passed that way over the Christmas-New Year holidays. He appeared to think we were ambitious in trying for Wellington River, and suggested camp at the Dolodrook. As there was only a matter of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles in it, I still secretly hoped we'd make the Wellington.

The beginning of the track isn't self-evident, but if one turns up the second creek north from Reeves' homestead one finds a track which presently heads up the ridge quite conclusively, and goes on up the ridge -- and goes on up -- and goes on -- and on -- up.

We started the climb shortly after 10 a.m., and at 12.40 halted for lunch in a little saddle, making do for water with the few pints we'd carried in our buckets. On and up at 1.40 in a warm, dry afternoon, and presently the nature of the country changed, with taller trees and some grasses, until an hour's walk brought us to a top near Mount Margaret. I reconnoitred ahead, and was happy to see that the

trail dropped away towards the Dolodrook River, skirting the highest part of the mountain, which was still at least 500-ft. above us. Ahead we could see the main tops, the Sentinels and Spion Kop, overlooking Tarli Karng, and they looked alarmingly distant in the afternoon haze. Between us and those bare summits was a jumble of ridges and a low, low valley. In fact, there were two, but it was hard to sort out the courses of the two rivers.

Mr. Reeves was right, and we camped at Thiele's Creek, just where it flows into the Dolodrook, after losing a swag of laboriously gained footage. It was 4.30, and we'd had quite enough for the day. Another three miles up and over to the Wellington was unthinkable, however desirable it may be to camp at the very foot of the big pull up Riggall's Spur. We were very snug in our little wattle grove at Thiele's Creek, though a larger party would have been better off by the Dolodrook, a few hundred yards onward.

We were off before 8 on Monday morning, another glorious day but promising heat, and crossed the spur to reach Wellington River by 9.1. A most attractive place, the Wellington, and a pity we hadn't been able to press through the previous evening.....However!

The ascent of Riggall's Spur begins in a modest fashion, but the grade appears to become steeper. This may be because it goes on so long, and because of the growth reaching out across the trail at higher levels. The day hotted up as we clambered slowly over a succession of knolls and down into little saddles. Twenty minutes or so putting one foot resolutely before the other, ten minutes rest, then up again, repeated many times.

Three hours up the spur, at 12.30, we halted for another "dry" lunch, relying on a few cups of water in our buckets. One began to feel that the upward grind was unending, that we'd forever plod over a rising track, pushing past shoulder-high scrub. Oh, we were out of condition all right, and one marvelled that the poor old legs could continue to push us upward with our nine-day loading. A few days later all this assumed a slightly nightmarish quality.

On the way again at 1.30, and now coming to patches of snow-grass between timber with a more Alpine feeling. A little thicket, a skyline beyond which didn't appear another false crest: Dorothy and I, a few hundred yards ahead of the others, stopped and looked disbelievingly into the valley of Tarli Karng. What a pity - only a quarter of an hour for lunch! The others came up, and we talked it over. Had we made this point for lunch we should certainly have gone down to the inviting water, a blue segment of which was visible over the brow of the ridges running down. Delectably blue it looked, with the grey buttresses of the Sentinels sweeping up to bare summits on the far side, and the sunlit wilderness of the Valley of Destruction leading out of it. Now, with lunch over, with the big dipper of the past day-and-a-half behind us, the thought of losing more height was unendurable. We didn't go down to the Lake. I can just bear the shame!

We looked at it for some time, a little awed, then climbed again, skirting the western flank of the valley without further glimpses of

the Lake. The track was sometimes obscured by fallen timber, but we picked up prominent blazes which led us to Nightingale Creek, one of the two main streams flowing into Tarli, and camped a few hundred yards back from the creek at 4.30, on a patch of ground soft with leaf mould and bark. (We actually reached the creek about 3 o'clock, but were so dehydrated we waited to brew tea before retreating a short way to camp.)

One of our lesser troubles was that we had no real idea of our elevation. The first spot height given on our map was Mount Wellington, 5,355-ft., and it looked as though we must still go up, and the land appeared to rise towards the north. Also, we were still in country not truly Alpine in character. Around us were the woolly-butes normally found at about 4,500 ft.

All this proved pretty right when we pulled out early next morning after a mild, comfortable night. It was quite a slug up from Nightingale Creek, about an hour of it on a good track, before we came to snow plain dappled with highland flowers near the ruins of Riggall's old hut. So easy the walking now, with the top of the unending grade. We breezed along to Nigeethoruk Creek, the other tributary of the Lake, and dumped packs to call briefly at Miller's Hut.

Now we turned north again to follow the side of a gentle valley up to Moroka Gap, Spion Kop poised like a wave breaking across to our left, the ridge of Wellington swelling on our right. Packs were set down again near the signpost in the green paddock in the Gap, while we spent a well-worth-while hour to see the view from Wellington trig. The day was fairly calm, warm and clear, and our only regret was that our map didn't identify the many peaks and valleys which marched in untidy ranks into blue distance to north and west. The Lakes of south-eastern Victoria were clearly in sight, and perhaps the soft colour beyond was the sea.

This was the true high plain stuff. Lunch was taken on Big Plain, a wonderful lunch complete with cups of tea and no hill to take the place of sweets. The track was well and truly with us for the next two miles or so, until we reached the ruins of McFarlane's old hut, on the head of a creek flowing west, but when we entered the timber on the ridge above, we had to watch for blazes. Bushfires had been through, probably a year before, smaller vegetation had almost vanished, trees had crashed in dismal ruin, and the new blazes were red scratches on the charred boles. It was consoling to have them with us, though the ridge was pretty obvious.

Objective for the night was Surveyor's Creek, four or five miles on, a good camp site according to the map, on a stream running east into the Moroka system. We headed towards it, over a few low tops, with the track becoming a little better after we left the fired area. Shortly before 5 o'clock we were on a little plain, golden in the long afternoon light, with a melting blueness in the brilliance to the west, and there the track turned suddenly into the sunset, heading into a swamp which certainly drained towards the Macalister. Alarm bells rang in my head, and the first afternoon panic was on.

We retired to the clearing and made a long beat out to the east - no track! We doubled back; the party sat down in the plain while I walked a big circuit back along the trail, then east, and round to the party. No track. I confessed bafflement, - the only thing that looked like the trail went down the wrong side of the range. Frank suggested we follow it and see. A little reluctantly I agreed, hating the thought of losing direction and height so late in the afternoon. "Well," argued Frank, "If it doesn't look any good we'll see if we can pick up water and camp up here."

We left Edna and Dorothy on the plain and, almost airborne without our packs, followed the path into the yellow glare of sundown. Well, it went on beyond the swampy patch where I'd baulked before, and there were definite old blazes at frequent intervals, and look! There was a saddle away down, with the trail quietly sneaking over the watershed into a gentle grassed valley leading north-east. It must be Surveyor's Creek after all. There were tents there - four young chaps - a Forestry Commission timber assessment team. They gave us tea....offered us bread and jam. "Thank you," we said, "but the women are waiting patiently about five hundred feet up." "Women!" they cried. "Women!" We've got to shave. Wait a bit till we've had a shower!"

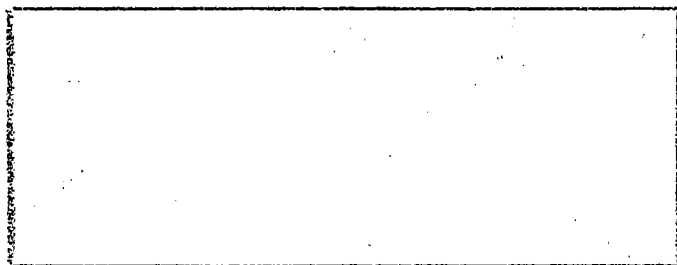
The consequence of the First Panic was that we actually settled in at Surveyor's Creek in failing light, past 7.0 p.m. The day, including "detours" had been about 18 miles, and we weren't equal to the social round with the Forestry boys after we'd made camp a little upstream, and prepared tea in a fresh night. We had a yarn with them in the morning, and found they had a road-head 8 miles out, and packed in stores by the Moroka track. We lodged letters and telegrams with them for despatch, and they promised to look for a cardigan which Dorothy thought she'd left up on Panic Plain the previous afternoon.

Weather had changed overnight, the morning was grey and drizzly, and the next two hours brought us over the shoulder of timbered Mount Arbuckle down to Bennison Creek to inspect Kelly's Hut, set in a verdant snow plain. The way was simple whilst it followed up the plain and through the "gorge" where the Bennison charges down from a still higher swamp. Hereabouts a vital piece of leatherwork on my pack failed, and I was in some strife till Frank pointed out we must secure the shoulder strap direct on to the frame with the wing nuts.. and then burnt a stick to my joss that the rather cracked leather didn't fail higher up.

We lunched on Bennison Heads, and shortly after lost the trail. No, this doesn't count as a panic, although I'm now convinced we were off the proper track for nearly two hours, paddling along parallel and east of it, until we rejoined the thing on Racecourse Plain. Sure, we lost some time, but we did get some fine views to the east....just as well, for the clouds blew up gently out of the south-east so that we walked the rest of the afternoon in woolly vagueness.

In the notes given me by Stuart Brookes was the caution, "By the way, on the section from Wellington to Howitt, it is not uncommon to run into misty weather...it is best to stay put until the weather improves..." Well, I ask you, who would stay put while the track is

six feet wide, striding away before you? Then, if there were a real change brewing, we hoped to have shelter in Guy's Hut on Bryce's Plain. The mist thickened, but the approach landmarks all tallied well - the little stream running west, the fences and sliprails. Time 5 o'clock, and ahead was the vagueness of the snow plain. Bearing to hut about north-west. Distance 500 yards. So the Second Panic. Below is a picture of what we saw during the next hour:-



Some time past 6 p.m. we groped back and settled thankfully under a couple of large trees, at a point fairly close to our original entry to the Plain. There was water below in the creek. We had written off the hut - look for it in the morning.

Despite a certain dewiness in the air we spent a cosy night. Once or twice I aroused enough to look out at the mist, and it was the same in the first light. Voices in the other tents fetched me to life at 5.50, and through the rift at the tent door I could see a grey light and trees across the plain. Fancy all those trees, only a quarter of a mile off, and we couldn't even see them last evening. Almost fearfully I crawled to the foot of the tent and stuck my head out. Guy's Hut was five minutes walk distant at the fringe of the forest opposite!

The day promised well, and mists continued to clear as we left Bryce's Plain, over the ridge to pretty Conglomerate Creek, and finally back to the main range near Minogue's Lookout. This occupied us till 10 a.m., and the aspect of the mountains was undergoing a change; the ridge became narrow and steep-sided, we had views north and west to the Divide from Howitt around to Mount Clear, and Buller was over in the north-west. A deep saddle, then a wider, flatter stage with the track holding very well, and we came to Howitt Hut for lunch. It was only six miles to Macalister Springs, the spectacular country near Mount Howitt which I'd traversed two years earlier. Target for the night.

Howitt Plain is the best part of two miles long, and the map gives a formula for picking up the beginning of the track at the edge of the forest. We weren't dead on it, but very readily merged our trail into the main one, and a good one it was. We saw the bald dome of Mt. Howitt a few times before mist closed in again, and we crossed a series of pocket-handkerchief snow plains. Always the path popped up again, clear as a highway, and that was what tricked us.

Towards four o'clock, a couple of miles from the Springs, we crossed another clearing and selected a good trail sidling the east face of the ridge. It was soggy in spots, and finally we climbed

back to the top after outflanking the highest ground. With the track becoming rather obscure in some burnt-out scrub we halted after a time the mist blew apart for a moment to reveal a timbered ridge where the bare top of Howitt should be. I dragged out the compass, all suspicious like. Our north-bound ridge was now bearing 80-degrees. The stage was set for the Third Panic, but this time it was a well-organised one. There was, I considered, only one place we could have erred, back at our sidling where we must have diverged to a ride ridge which gradually veered east, while the track went on north over the highest ground. Back we went, staying with the crown of the ridge all the way, till we came to an extensive open top, the sort of place which usually marks the junction of spurs. We swung west, and in three minutes intersected the (obviously) main trail. The moisture I rubbed from my forehead at that moment was not entirely from the mist or my exertions.

It took less than half an hour to the Springs, a very haven after the afternoon of shifting obscurity. I hadn't been impressed with the place (except its scenery), two years before. Now, even with Howitt and Cross Cut Saw carefully wrapped in cotton wool, it looked the nicest place to camp. It gave us a very snug night.

Friday morning was clear, though grey, and the stirring of wind could be heard in the trees up on the ridge. We ran up the knoll to see the Cross Cut while breakfast cooked; there were the crooked fangs with dribbles of white cloud caught on its eastern face. That was our only view of the Saw. When we moved off at 8 the Terrible Hollow with its fantastic mountains was filled with cloud, which was breaking like surf against the Saw and spilling through the gaps. The wind pushed us as we climbed Howitt.

Between driving clouds we had fine views west down the Howqua Valley, to Mt. Magdala and the tilted Bluff, to Sterling and Buller. We started out over the serrations of the Saw. The animal pads made our way reasonably easy for a time, especially when we skirted the sheltered west face, but the wind was raving against the other side, cold enough to keep us wrapped in sweaters. Rarely we glimpsed the Thurat-like spires which form the shoulders rising from Wonnagatta (Terrible Hollow), but mostly we were stumbling, wind-tossed, in moist, fleeting cloud. We travelled over the narrow rocky middle section, climbed Mount Buggary, and dropped out of the mist for the first time into the 4,600-ft. saddle. We could see the terraced slope of Speculation looming ahead, its upper 700-ft. spiking the racing clouds.

Still wearing sweaters for the 1,000-ft. ascent, we beat up into the driving mist. We went quite well on the hill, and there was almost an Everest-ish touch when we paused, bent against the gale, peering into the obscurity, waiting for the party to close up. At 2 o'clock we assembled by the little summit cairn, and for the first time it occurred to me that it would be fun and games finding the camp site below the mountain in all this, considering our battle to pick Guy's Hut and Macalister Springs. Well, the valley was north east of the mountain, so out with the compass again. Try to steady oneself against the wind, so that the needle settles; pick a ghostly snow gum in the right direction, and march for it. Some time later I realised this particular panic existed in my mind only - just as well. We walked almost straight to the camp site and the track north past Koonika.

The camp below Speculation was a bit breezy, but we passed a reasonably good night - with the exception of Frank who seemed to be obsessed with a multitude of anxieties. Loud cheers for the brilliant morning! Louder cheers for the superb view from Koonika when we reached the crown after climbing several other knobs which looked similar from the south approach. Cobbler Plateau was by contrast a drab place. We took lunch at the track junction, halting by the Cobbler "lake" in early afternoon, then plunged down into valley of Dandongadale River, leaving behind the high country. Near the foot of the big descent there was our final panic, when the track simply vanished just beyond a creek crossing. It must have been nothing more than a huge downfall of timber, but it cost us half an hour of climbing and slithering on precipitous shale slopes in the considerable heat down at 2,000-ft. in an enclosed valley before we spotted the thing some fifty ft. below. A couple of miles further down we camped in the only place where the dense small growth yielded some miserable turf. Frank didn't believe we could camp there, and the presence of bull-ants made him nearly frantic.

Sunday was again fine, clear and warm, while we trekked on down the Dandongadale, the trail sometimes rising high above the stream, then swooping down to it again. As our way out to Bennie's Farm on Rose River was over a Gap, our hopes rose conversely with the track... and fell in the same way. Never have I seen party so keen to tackle a rising grade! It went on for a long time, so long that Edna and I feared we'd followed the river too far and missed the track into the Gap. There was no true map of this section, and it was difficult to assess distances.

The Dandongadale is quite a pretty stream, and once we were out of the dense growth which has followed fires it was really lovely in the same way as the Howqua. When we'd practically given up hope of getting over to Rose River, the track began to rise again, and this time it went on gaining height, until at 11.15 we were on the gap, and could see the ridges over on the far side of the Rose.

It was just after 11 a.m., and I still had to make my way into Whitfield to join the bus next morning. The case was not quite so urgent for the others, who planned to camp a few days by Rose River close to Bennie's place. Edna suggested I push on. We shook hands up there on the saddle, and I started to run down the long slope towards the Rose.

Well, it proved to be 19 miles from the Rose into Whitfield, instead of the expected 15. I did the lot of it on my poor plates of meat, and when I camped just out of town towards 10 p.m. I was almost crippled. Five a.m. saw me opening huge blisters by torch-light before venturing on to the cobbled roadway again for the last half-mile.

There was nearly an hour to wait for bus departure, and as I sat on a rickety bench in the deserted town, the sun broke through the cloud and touched Mount Cobbler with pale yellow. I found I could forget the tired and road-seared feet, and wondered when I'd again look on the High Bogongs.

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