

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bush Walkers,
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286

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AT OUR SEPTEMBER (HALF-YEARLY) MEETING

At the commencement of the Meeting the President, Jack Gentle, paid tribute to Bill Henley, whose death was announced in the last issue of the magazine. Jack said that Bill had been a great worker for the Club, having been the chief builder of camp fires and organiser of sporting events for many a year. Several members had attended his funeral. He also extended the Club's sympathy to Jim Hooper, whose mother had died two days before. The meeting stood in silence as a mark of our sympathy in both bereavements.

In correspondence was a letter from the Australian Wild Flower Exhibition thanking us for our donation. Our letter had come too late for our name to be included in the list of supporting organisations, or for our injunctions about the picking of wildflowers to be stressed. But we were offered an 8" x 3" poster in the exhibit, bearing the Club's name and an exhortation to refrain from picking wild flowers. Tom Mopnett undertook to see to the wording of the notice. Ron Knightley suggested that we could make our points adequately if we mistook inches for feet in the letter.

We were advised by the Fauna Protection Panel that Tom Mopnett had been appointed as a member. The Club has been trying to get a bushwalker member on the panel for several years, and the President extended our congratulations to Tom.

Jean Harvey reported that the Federation Ball had been a great success. Brian added that there had been only sixteen S.B.W. members present - our Club had the smallest party of any. It was, he said, a disgraceful exhibition. Ron Knightley expressed concern at the S.B.W. members putting on a "disgraceful exhibition", but was assured by David Ingram that the members had behaved "very decorously" - it was not the behaviour but the size of the party which should make us hang our heads.

Next, the recommended investment of Club funds in Gas Debentures was discussed. A few queries were raised. Roy Bruggie wanted to know could our investment be turned into hard cash, and others inquired about interest rates. These queries were answered by the President from the circulated report of the Finance Committee. Frank Ashdown was opposed. He thought that we were a bushwalking club - not a financial institution - that we shouldn't dabble in "stocks and shares", and that, if we needed more money, we should put the annual sub. up. The motion was carried.

The President then broached the subject of the people who sit on top of tables at the back of the hall during social evenings, and, without fail, knock one over. He said that there were plenty of seats provided, and members should abide by the resolution they had passed on 9th May, 1956 - "That members should sit on proper seats or leave the hall entirely." It was uncomplimentary to speakers, if not downright rude, to make these noises while they were speaking. In order to provide satisfactory seating the Committee had decided to call for Room Stewards, who would arrange the chairs, and put the tables at the back before our functions and replace them afterwards. Bill Rodgers, Brian Harvey and Frank Ashdown volunteered as Room Stewards for the next month.

In general business £17 was appropriated in quick time for the purchase of materials for a new map cabinet. Nor was there heard a disconsolate word. The new cabinet will be smaller and allow the maps to be filed vertically.

Brian Harvey then moved that portable radios be banned on official walks. He said they were objectionable to many members and opposed to one of the Club objects - to promote social activity amongst members. He was supported by Jack Wren, who said we went out into the bush to get away from noise and relax. Ron Knightley said that the S.B.W. were a most responsible and considerate community and he was against passing a mandatory directive of this kind. The transistor wireless was part of the modern age and the younger generation had different ideas. Jim Brown didn't like wirelesses in the bush. Once he got going on a walk he did his best to avoid newspapers, books, wirelesses, or anything else that might keep him up to date with what was going on. Roy Bruggie said he didn't like wirelesses in the bush, but that we would create a bad impression on prospectives if we told them not to play their sets. Many rowdy types, looked at askance when they first went out, later made some of the best members. Don Matthews thought we should put music into bushwalking. The greatest of composers was a walker, but not a member of a Club. The music could be fitted to the country - e.g. a Narrow Neck jig for the traverse of Narrow Neck. The motion was then put and lost.

Frank Ashdown then lodged a complaint that motions passed at meetings were subsequently ignored - e.g. the 1956 motion on proper sitting in the Clubroom. Jack Gentle said that the Committee did its best to adhere to previous decisions, and Tom Moppett pointed out that it was up to the meeting to draw the President's attention to any divergence from past decisions.

The Secretary said that it had not been possible to prepare the by-laws for ratification by this meeting, but they would be put before the Annual Meeting.

A motion of thanks to the Song Book Committee and those who did the typing and duplicating of the new song book was passed with acclamation. It was a big job - 72 pages - layout and binding were pleasing and reproduction of professional standard, if not better. In seconding the motion Brian Harvey said that Grace Wagg, who typed it, and Jess Martin, duplicator operator, deserved special mention as they had done a great job.

SNOW AHOY!

- Michael Fildes

I've just returned from a month at Mount Buller, Australia's only Alpine village at present. Buller is the happy hunting ground of Melbourne skiers, who are only four hour's drive from this winter paradise. The village boasts two chalets, a canteen, cafe, Espresso bar, about 63 club huts and the Victorian Ski Club lodge "Ivor Whittaker". The "huts" certainly don't live up to this appellation - in fact most of them have all mod. cons. such as electricity, gas cooking, running water (H & C), etc. They're comfortable, friendly places, especially at weekends, when it's said the whole of Buller lights up and can be seen for miles around. Personally, I've never bothered to go off the mountain on a Saturday night to find out.

The chalet where I stayed, "Kooroora", is run by two Hungarian brothers, Ernest and Aurel Forras, and is staffed by Hungarians and Australians. "Kooroora" is an aboriginal word meaning "the place of happy gatherings", and the chalet certainly lives up to its name. It has "atmosphere", which is definitely enhanced by the glorious reproduction of a skier in action which is let into the chimney piece over the fireplace. Incidentally, the fireplace is the point of congregation for the Buller firewatchers (the sunny day brand of skiers scorned by those who like it the hard way). The food at Kooroora is superb, cooked by "Mamma" Forras, and Fay, the Forras sister.

Names on Buller are quite interesting - there are place names well-known to skiers - like "Tirol", "Kandahar" and "Arlberg" - and unusual ones e.g. "Caribou", given to this hut mainly because the female of the species also has horns. "Moose", "Elk" and "Chamois" (with the fearsome run called "Chamois Chute" in front of its door) are some others, while "Mawson" and "Hima" recall British intrepidity in the snow.

One of the most famous ski runs in Australia is Buller's Bourke Street which is the nursery slope, and boasts a ski tow run by the Ski Club of Victoria. There is the story of the middle aged gentleman crashing down Bourke Street, rising, gazing around him at the snow covered mountains and at skiers whizzing in all directions, and saying "Wonderful! No trams!" Personally, the words "See you on Bourke Street" conjure up a vision of this nursery slope rather than Melbourne's rather congested street. There's been a campaign by N.S.W. skiers to have a run named Pitt Street, but this has been stoutly resisted - Buller for Victorians is the theme there not that interstate skiers don't go there. In the month I was there there were about two dozen New South Welshmen, several Queenslanders, many South Australians, and even three from Western Australia.

Life in the huts is great fun. Most huts have dormitory rooms, with bunks equipped with innerspring mattresses. You use a sleeping bag, and can keep it up there in your locker for the whole season. Each Friday "crazy weekend skiers" leave Melbourne headed for Buller, arriving at their huts any time between 8.00 p.m. and 2.00 a.m. Saturday morning. First in the hut lights the fires, starts the generator and runs the water down from the soak. Then, off into the sleeping bag and slumber. Saturday morning - up and out for a glorious day's ski-ing, except that the girls are ordered off the snow at 12.15 to cook lunch for the hut - definitely a man's world on Buller. After lunch, more ski-ing, and if the girls are persuasive enough, maybe dinner at one of the chalets - extra good on a Saturday night. After dinner, the mountain gives of the first glow, and the "visiting" starts - into your gumboots and off to another hut, and another, and so on, till one of two things happens - either you find yourself taking everyone else home because you are the only one who can focus a torch - or else everyone else is taking you home. Well, Sunday morning nobody seems quite as enthusiastic about it as the day before, but still nearly everyone is out on the slopes before lunch. Then after lunch you do your bit in the hut, cleaning up and packing, then a final run and off to Melbourne. If the weather's fine, the migration may be delayed till around six o'clock. Oh, ski-ing's great!

As well as ski-ing (trying to master "Wedeln") I also took up tobogganning. It's great fun, especially in the dark, and you don't have to concentrate nearly as much as when skiing. I discovered that on wet snow if I used stocks it saved a lot of labour and dismounting, and that on icy snow it was super. One morning someone complained of loud noises during the night, and I had to admit that I had been careering down Bourke Street, after "visiting" the Bull Run Canteen, over the "Pimple" (incidentally, we formed a "Pimple Jumpers' Club" dedicated to negotiating the Pimple on skis sans falling) and then on down the track, yelling "Yoicks" at the top of my voice at about ten thirty. You should have seen the eight pairs of eyes staring me under the table. Honestly, they thought I was crazy.

There was lots of fun on skis too. Have you ever skied at night on icy snow - well, if you want to sleep afterwards, don't. I did it several times, but I don't think I'll do it again. In the most slalom poles, trees, tow huts, etc. seem to leap out at you, and it's rather nerve-wracking, especially if you're by yourself. But in the last week I was there I was working in the Bull Run Canteen, and sleeping at Kooroora, and with the half mile walk downhill in front of me every night, and five minutes to dinner, I just had to ski. Working there was a novel experience, coping with a fuel stove, temperamental Victorian briquettes, blowtorches, primuses, etc. The worst thing was that the soak was dry and the water pipes frozen, and we had to melt snow for water, which, as you know is a heart breaking business as the ratio of snow to water in volume is about 8 or so to 1. This week also tested my cooking prowess - chocolate cake, "Gulash" soup, spaghetti, etc. There were also continental open sandwiches (fortunately anything goes on these so long as they look attractive and colourful). Anyway, everything sold, and within two days my chocolate cake was famous over the mountain and all "spare"??? time was spent slaving over the fuel stove cooking chocolate cake, surrounded by starving skiers with tongues lolling out.

Buller is the haunt of the practical joker (my skis were beautifully waxed with Oestbye Klist, which when rubbed off with kerosene still meant that I went "straight on Bourke Street" - straight up, I mean) and also the snow bunny. These dear little creatures are inoffensive enough. They are the bods who wear high-heeled shoes or grey flannel suits in the huts and chalets, wear their socks outside their ski pants, and bring suitcases near snow. This latter is a grave error, on Buller anyway, where you are often faced with the prospect of carrying

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PHOTOGRAPHY ! ? ! ? !

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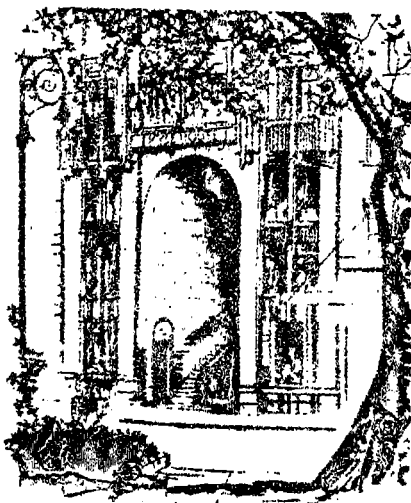
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skis, stocks and a suitcase up several miles of deep snow. Anyway, no matter what is said, the dear little snow bunny is doubtless strong enough to survive the derision poured on it by skiers.

Well, that's our mountain - glorious scenery, crazy weekend skiers (doubling bushwalkers), snow bunnies, and a few normal people. Skiing in these surroundings cannot be anything but the most exhilarating sport on earth with the sun, wind, snow and the remarkable clearness of the air all helping to give a memorable holiday.

P.S. Got so worked up I didn't give the FACTS. Buller is 5,932 feet high and from the summit you can look down on the Howqua and Delatite Valleys, down to Eildon backwaters, across to the High Plains and Feathertop, Hotham, Cobler, etc.

SUNDAY WALKERS NOTE

The train time for Thelma Phillips' walk on Sunday, 12th October, has been altered due to a change in the bus timetable at Berowra, and will now leave Central for Berowra via the Bridge at 8.30 a.m.

YOUR WALKING GUIDE

Walk No.

- 104 Kanangra-Thunder Buttress-Kanangra Ck-Cox River-White Dog-Katoomba. A medium test walk from the Kanangra area. Ridge walking with a nice walk along the Cox River. Cost 54/9.
- 105 Tahmoor-Bargo R-Nepean R-Maldon. A good trip into new country with a lot of river walking. Cost 18/5.
- 106 Cowan Ck-Bobbin Head-Berowra. Some rock hopping and creek walking, then good track to Berowra. A test walk in the popular Kuringai Chase. Train leaves central at 8.30 a.m. Cost 9/6.
- 107 Devil's Hole-Galong & Breakfast Cks-Glen Raphael Head-Katoomba. A medium test walk in some of the prettiest creeks in the Blue Mountains. A combined walk with the Blue Mountains Bush Walkers. Cost 22/6.
- 108 Robertson-Carrington Falls-Gerringong Falls-Barren Grounds-Woodhill. A scenic walk in the south coast area. Flat walking along the tops including Carrington and Gerringong Falls. Cost 37/5.
- 109 Waterfall-Mt Westmacott-Myuna Ck-Heathcote Ck-Heathcote. Some track walking, scrubby in parts. Area is noted for wildflowers. Cost 8/4.
- 110 Katoomba-Black Jerrys-Cox R-White Dog-Katoomba. A test walk along the delightful Cox River. Easy walking along river banks with a climb out White Dog. Cost 22/6.
- 111 S & R DEMONSTRATION WEEKEND will be on the Colo River - ideal camping and swimming spot. Demonstration will include floating packs across river, cliff rescue, respiration (artificial), rope stretcher work etc. See Jim Hooper for further details.
- 112 Cowan-Gunyah Bay-Cowan. Intimate coastal views in the Berowra area. Ridge walking with some scrub. Cost 10/2.
- 113 Hampton-Marsden Swamp-Tinker's Hill-Marsden Rock-Blackheath Ck-Blackheath. A medium walk into new country with kodachromatic views. Track and creek walking. Cost 34/-.
- 114 Admiral's Swimming Weekend. A typical Admiral trip. For further details see the Admiral.
- 115 Church Pt-Lovetts Bay-Salvation Ck-Commodore Heights-Eura Trig-The Basin. Track walking in the Broken Bay district. Good tracks with extensive views of the Broken Bay.
- 116 INSTRUCTION AND WALK - Police Boys Camp at Kurrajong. A weekend similar to that at the Barnado Boys' Home at Picton. For further details see Jim Hooper.
- 117 Campbelltown-O'Hares Ck-Campbelltown. Swimming weekend at one of the best swimming holes close to Sydney. Cost 10/10.
- 118 Rock Climbing Watson's Bay area. A combined trip with the New Zealand Alpine Club. For those interested see Dot Butler for further information.

COLO WALK

14-15-16 November - Alex Colley

See leader ten days before. Distance - 18 miles. Climbing - over 4,000'. Rock hopping - 5 miles. Rock scrambling - 2 miles. Train - 6 p.m. electric to Wahroonga. Assemble at Wahroonga. Transport from there by Land Rover and Putt-mobile. No waiting for anybody. This walk is only suitable for those who are reasonably fit, used to rock hopping and carrying light packs. It will take an hour or so to get down the last steep slope to the Colo and about the same out. There is no rock climbing but it is very steep and rough. The river must be crossed 3 times so reasonable swimming ability is necessary in case it is up. This is one of the most spectacular parts of the Colo canyon and the first official walk there.

BILL HENLEY

The passing of our old Club-mate, in his 78th year, leaves a gap in the ranks of the "old-hands" whose lines are still holding very strong in spite of the march of the years.

Bill joined the Club soon after its inception in 1927 and became one of its most constant supporters. He was a great man for the out-of-doors and few weekends or annual holidays passed during that 30 years that he did not spend them in the bush. Many prospective and new members, in the early days of the Club, were grateful to Bill for the help and encouragement he gave them, and found him a source of interesting and amusing stories of the "old members".

Always a keen athlete, before coming to Australia forty odd years ago, he represented Ireland at the 1908 Olympic Games - naturally in the walking events! For many years he was an Official of the Amateur Athletic Association and trained several prominent and successful athletes. He also trained those Club members interested in track-walking to win races. Owing to a last minute hitch, he was disappointed not to go as an Official to the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956.

His tireless enthusiasm led to his organising for many years the Club Swimming and Sports Carnivals, and he always followed the fortunes of the local sporting bodies and athletic meetings.

The Henley Cup, which is competed for annually at our Swimming Carnival, was presented to the Club by Bill to stimulate interest in the events, and it will continue to be a memorial to him in the years to come.

Perhaps Bill will be best remembered by his building of the community camp-fire at our Annual Reunions, where his skill with the axe in reducing fallen trees to sizeable logs, helped to build many a cheerful glow and may we give a thought to him in the future when each year the fire is kindled and the leaping flames usher in another blaze "like Bill Henley used to make".

MALCOLM RETURNS - 15TH OCTOBER

It was during autumn and winter that Elsa, Bobby and I visited America and at Washington, where we were stationed, more snow fell than for the previous fifty years. In fact, everywhere we went there seemed to be oodles of snow. It was very cold most of the time, and bitterly cold for the rest - at one time 50 degrees below freezing. Even when the sun came out it was cold.

Although we were stationed in Washington for the six months stay, we did manage to sneak off for a day here and a couple of days there. In this way the slides show quite a few places including New York, Boston, Ottawa, Williamsburg and Jamestown as well as Washington and besides these we popped in on seven of the famous American National Parks:- The Grand Canyon, Bryce Zion, Death Valley, Shanandoah, Rocky Mountain and Muir Woods. Some of these places look very different with snow about them.

On Wednesday, 15th October, the selection will include:- New York, Washington, Boston, Jamestown, San Francisco, Shanandoah, Grand Canyon, The Rockies, and Muir Woods.

THE COLO

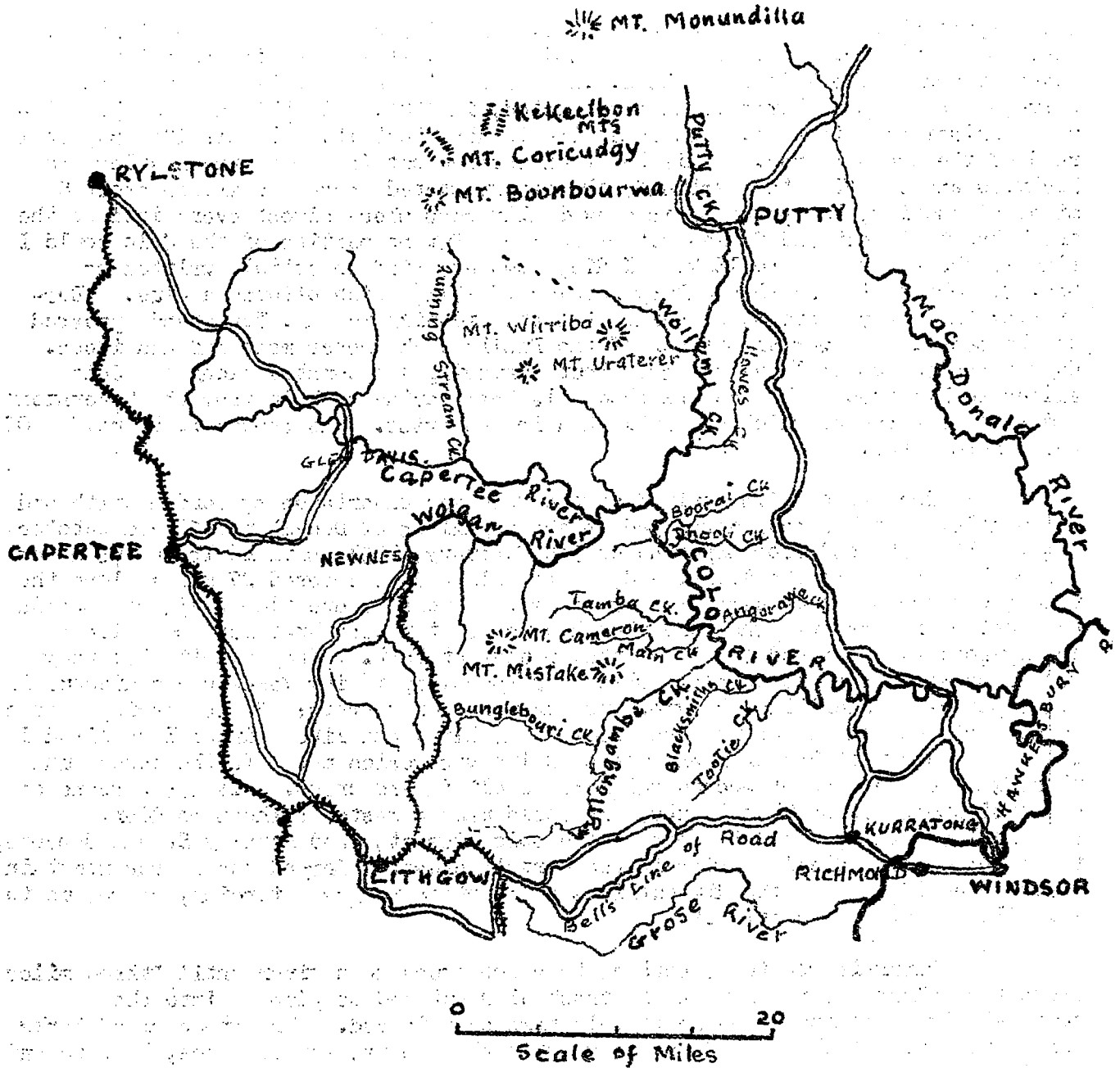
- Alex Colley

At the top of the South Eastern Tourist map there is a large, almost blank space some sixty miles square. Military maps, and a geological survey map done in 1906, give a lot of detail which could have been used for filling in the white spaces, but, as the Tourist Bureau probably considers this the last place anyone would want to go, being almost roadless, and lacking in hotels, petrol supplies, accommodation houses, and everything else that tourists want, it has done nothing to bring its information up to date. The Capertee, which flows from the middle western edge of the square towards the bottom right hand corner, and the Colo, which it becomes below the Wollemi Creek Junction, are shown fairly accurately, but there are only half a dozen tributaries, and most of them end rather hopelessly in a dotted line or tail off into nothingness, having followed a suspiciously straight course in those snowy upper reaches. From the South, however, there enter two large streams, with numerous, although furry, tributaries (the fur probably denotes steep gullies, rather than the bemusement of the cartographer). The larger stream is even named "Main Creek". All this may impress the tourists unless they happen to look at a military map, when they will find that "Main Creek" has dived clean under a long, 2,500 ft. high ridge in the vicinity of a prominence named "Mount Mistake".

Progress has flowed round this area of nearly 4,000 square miles, leaving much of it almost in its original state. It is, for the most part, still only in the first and second stages of "development", the first stage being the regular firing of "scrub" and the second the removal of all straight trees. It is still possible to walk several miles without seeing a bottle or tin, and to look over some fifty miles or so of country without seeing a sign of habitation. Most of it is not very high or very spectacular. It is something like a larger and higher Blue Labyrinth. Ridges, in general, are fairly easily negotiable, provided one has a military map, time and patience. As the ridges are fairly uniform in height, views may be restricted, but fertile volcanic necks and intrusions, covered in tall timber and long grass, lend variety. On top of the sandstone plateau are volcanic mounds rising to three or four thousand feet, such as Mounts Wirriba, Uraterer, Monundilla and Cameron, from which the views are extensive. Towards the West, in the higher country, there is harder rock, and here occur the biggest cliffs in the Blue Mountains. In the upper reaches, round Newnes and Glen Davis, the cliff faces are on the top of the plateau, as around Katoomba, but in the middle river regions the ridges drop away steeply to form a narrow "V" shaped gully getting steeper towards the bottom. In places the last thousand feet is vertical.

On a recent trip along a section of the Colo below Dhooli we were blocked by a cliff which went down to the water level in the middle of a long pool. It was perhaps half a mile back to a crossing, so I started to look for a way round. About fifty feet up I found a ledge, followed it along for some fifty yards, then turned into a little gully. There was a cutting in the side of the gully, and my suspicions were confirmed - it was a track I had several times used as far as Wollongambe Basin and traces of which I believed I had found on the mountain side further up. Any thought of discovery was dispelled by the occurrence of broken glass a little further on, but it did set me wondering about who made the track and how far up it went.

My curiosity aroused, I sought information in the Mitchell library, where I tried to find out, firstly, who was the explorer of the Colo. I found that Benjamin Franklin lead a three weeks trip which crossed the river and, surprisingly enough, came to a place called "Putty". (How was it called that in 1818, and how



did he know it?) From there he tried to go west, but was stopped by high rocks, steep gullies and lack of water. There was an even earlier trip by an unknown leader which reached "a meeting place of nine hills named Watt's Lake" - possibly Howe's Waterhole Creek. Referring to an article by Max Gentle in the October 1948 magazine I found that local legend on the Hawkesbury flats - some of the first settled country in the State - tells of a stranger entering the locality in the early days, his legs and arms bleeding and his skin torn to shreds by vines and jagged rocks. He had walked down the Colo. Max also quotes a "Sydney Morning Herald" article in 1878 (I looked it up and it appeared to be a leader) which took the Railway Commissioner to task for building the line to Clarence. The article expressed the opinion that "the zig-zags, the huge climb, the wonderful gradients, and the snake-like curves have been the admiration of the unlearned, but they have been the wonder of the skilled engineer." Whereas the line to Clarence climbed 3,000 feet in 30 miles, a practical route had been

found "just where one would be looked for, following up a valley, and rising 3,000 feet in 100 miles". This was up the Colo, which, it is a pretty safe bet, was never viewed by the Editor of the S.M.H. Max said that a railway route was surveyed, and a pack horse track constructed, in 1885. If this was so the Railway Commissioner might have had something to say about it. In his 1859 report I read of the Grose survey. This had been carried out from both the Hartley and Richmond ends. "The two parties", the report stated, "are now within about 8 miles of meeting, but progress is unavoidably slow where almost every inch of the track has to be cut and formed out of rock." But no mention of the Colo could I find in the reports up to 1887. I did, however, find an article written by Geo. J. Johnson in the "Hawkesbury Herald" of 1916, which offered a clue. Describing the early surveys, he said: "In the mid-eighties Mr. Townshend appeared on the scene. He was an officer of the Public Works Department and had ideas. He got twelve months leave and set about surveying the country along the Colo valley to Rylstone. He accomplished this task having no help from the Government, and sent in a report which was published in the press. He showed it to me." Of this, more later.

The first S.B.W. trip down the Colo was undertaken by Gordon Smith and Max Gentle. It has been described in the magazines of December 1931 and October 1948. They started from Capertee on 5th February, 1931, with 40 lb. packs after a sleepless night in the train, and, on the first day, covered 27 miles along the road (no nonsense about cars in those days). Around where Glen Davis now stands they met a Mr. Masters, who told them how to get to Mount Uraterer and "with a cheery good-bye" assured them that they would get lost. They didn't, but they were impressed with the country, which was "puzzling in its make-up and hideous in its aspect". Describing the view from Uraterer, Max wrote: "I was gazing upon a segment of the most expansive cyclorama of my life, and like a dream I realised I was on the crest of Uraterer and Gordon Smith was beside me. In the foreground there was seen a maze of wooded gullies and cliffs and crags. It was a scene of great wildness rather than beauty; it would make a master bushman shudder. Practically nothing could be seen of the Colo, Capertee and Running Stream Canyons, these being perpendicular slits in the earth's crust. Beyond the nearer mountain vastness could be seen the dim outlines of mountain ranges extending, maybe, up to 100 miles in every direction."

Returning to the Capertee, they continued down river until "three miles above the Wolgan River Junction the track died out and we plunged into the roughest river walking I had up to this time experienced. The steep sided banks were strewn with boulders and overgrown with blackberry, lawyer vines, lantana and nettles. It came so suddenly that it took the stomach out of me, and after doing $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in 4 hours I suggested giving it up. However, my more determined mate knew only one word 'forward'." Between the Wolgan and the Wollemi, about 6 river miles, the going was just as bad. Max describes how "scrambling over boulders and bashing our way through lawyer vines and other creepers, alternated with short stretches of sandbank, treacherous quicksand, blackberry and wild raspberry." But there was a silver lining. "It was", writes Max, "good for all round muscular development."

This stretch of river was then called the Jolo. In the Mellong military map, however, it is shown as the Capertee as far as the Wollemi junction.

Max describes the Wollemi gorge as "hemmed in by towering precipices" and he doubted "if its profound depths (were) ever disturbed by mankind". I felt much the same about the Capertee when I emerged from these "profound depths" last Queen's Birthday weekend. By this time they had been disturbed by mankind

at least twice, as we had followed footsteps down the river. I walked a little way up the Japertee. Very soon the banks closed in till the river flowed at the bottom of a narrow, rock-girt "V", heavily covered with dark, prickly-looking undergrowth. There was little soil on the enclosing mountain sides - they mostly comprised tiers of purplish-black rock. A more sinister and forbidding gorge I have never seen.

Below the Wollemi they came upon "wild ducks in droves", while the river "teemed with perch and eels". On the first day below the junction they did eight miles, but the next day they were reduced to four miles. "The going was frightfully rough and consisted of hauling one another over boulders and through rock crevasses." It took them three days to reach the Wollongambe.

Gordon and Max completed their trip from Japertee to Kurrajong in 11½ days. Though they were two of the strongest walkers in the Club, or anywhere else, they were pretty done in by the time they finished.

In a footnote to Max's 1932 article Myles Dunphy writes: "The Smith Gentle Golo trip holds the distinction of being the fastest known traverse of the Golo, notwithstanding that two days were occupied in the Gosper's Mountain (Urateror) side trip, also the smallest party. Two previous successful attempts are known, and one, at least, partly so. Apparently the going is so discouragingly difficult that only the able bodied and most sanguine could ever hope to win through - and the penalty for failure in this aloof canyon could well be the most extreme."

The next and, I believe, the only other trip down the Golo by S.B.W. members was done in 1934, and the experiences of this party proved that Myles hardly exaggerated. The party got through, but only just, and, on several occasions, members of it narrowly escaped injury. For a description of this trip I am indebted to Win Duncombe (Dunk), who lent me her neatly typed diary, parts of which were published in the magazine. There were seven in the party. It was led by Ninian Melville, founder of the Coast and Mountain Walkers. The rest of the party, besides Dunk, comprised Wallace Melville, Ben Fuller, and S.B.W. members Rene Browne, Iris Roxto (Roxy), and Ray Boan. The first item recorded is the cost - fares 18/5, food 17/7, total 36/- - those were the days!

Rene Browne had a 41 lb. pack, Roxy 32, Dunk 43, Ninian Melville and Ray Boan 51. They left Sydney at 2.28 p.m. on Saturday, 6th January, 1934. On arrival at Lithgow at 6.30 p.m. they climbed into a lorry of "ancient origin" in the midst of a thunderstorm, causing "quite a stir" amongst the locals (as all walkers did then). The driver estimated that it would take four hours to cover the 25 miles to Newnes but, in fact, they didn't make it, becoming stuck six miles from their destination in the flooded Wolgan River. Next day they walked the six miles to Newnes, where the whole population was on the dole. The local publican did his best to talk them out of the trip, saying that they should have a gun because you never know what you might meet in a place like that. Another local resident warned them that they couldn't get past the Japertee junction. Nevertheless they went on a side trip that afternoon to the top of the divide between the Japertee and the Wolgan. The next morning (Monday) they found that nearly all of their 3 lbs. of bacon was fly-blown and a number of eggs broken. This, and a later disintegration of some 2½ dozen eggs carried in a cardboard box by Ray Boan, added greatly to their hardships later in the trip.

They had pleasant walking at the start along a track which "wound in between grassy foothills over ground lovely and soft with fallen leaves". There were big trees and striking cliff views on either side. During the afternoon it got rougher, but they arrived at Annie Rowan clearing - "a beautiful big grassy flat on the bank of the creek, all covered with fine green grass and shaded with kurrajongs, quandongs, black wattles in flower and lovely big gum trees with big mountains and tremendous rock cliffs all around" - about 6 o'clock, not too tired to enjoy a sing-song after tea. During the next morning a tiger snake rushed down a bank at Ninian Melville, and sticks became the order of the day. They had lunch at Permanent Water Creek. That afternoon they fought their way through blackberries, lawyer vines and stinging nettles down to the Capertee. The best camp site they could find was "up the talus, on a steep slope, about fifty very rough prickly feet above the river".

The next two days they spent negotiating about five of the six map miles to the Wollemi (which they expected to reach in one day). The river was in flood, and had been up another ten or twenty feet, leaving mud where it had fallen. During their struggle over landslides and cliffs - if there were any banks they were under water - they came across "an old survey traverse much overgrown with scrub". This proves that the track probably went right through to the Wolgan or Capertee valley, since it is unlikely it went so nearly to the open country and then stopped. On the second day from the junction (Thursday) they had to climb some 500 feet on crumbling rock to get round cliffs, while a lot of the time the undergrowth was over their heads. That night they camped on a rock ledge five feet wide where they had a good night's rest, despite the fact that they couldn't put up the tents and their legs were "hanging in space". Being convinced that the Wollemi was round the next bend they declared Friday a day of rest. That day they caught two eels and a 2 lb. perch.

Reconnaissance later in the day failed to locate the Wollemi, so next morning they climbed out and across what they thought was a bend in the river. After walking across the tops for some two miles they started down - a difficult undertaking even with the aid of a military map, and a pure gamble without. After two and a quarter hours of scrambling and ledge crawling they made it, but not before Dunk had stopped a rock on her head, leaving, in her own words, "a horrible bloody mess all over me and the landscape". A little further on Rene was nearly knocked off a cliff when Ray Bean inadvertently lowered a pack on her from above. How they would have fared had there been a serious accident here doesn't bear contemplating.

Next day the blackberries and raspberries were over their heads and the boys, in front, bashed their way through with a thick stick. The girls, while waiting behind, ate large juicy raspberries, which would have been pleasant enough had not the bull and jumper ants, agitated by the bashers out front, attacked them. There was also a "luxuriant growth of stinging nettles", but wrote Dunk, "we had so many ants, lawyer vines, blackberries and raspberries to contend with that the mere fact of stinging nettles brushing round us up to our necks didn't worry us". For some reason they started that morning to look for the Wollongambe, though, judging from their walking times, and previous rate of progress, they were fourteen miles above it.

That night, Dunk records, her head felt pretty sore. She had given it another good crack on a rock the night before and bashed it again on trees during the day. Whereas most girls would have been only too thankful to lie down as soon as they hit camp, Dunk baited her line with a bit of the fish from the Capertee and landed a "walloping big eel" 2'-6" long and weighing about 6 lbs.

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Just after this Roxy caught another, weighing 5 lbs. Being Sunday they decided to be "real good and sing a few hymns", but instead fell into a deep sleep straight after tea. Next night, after another rough day, they camped on rocky terrain well above the river, near a creek they thought was the Wollongambe. It was, in fact, most likely an unnamed creek about eleven map miles above the Wollongambe. More rough going and another rough camp site on Tuesday. On Wednesday they camped on their first good site since leaving Annie Rowan's clearing. They believed they were at Tootie Creek, but were probably at Tambo Creek, five miles above the Wollongambe. It was not until Thursday afternoon, while following the old survey track, here some 250 feet above the river, about 18 inches wide and sloping towards the cliffs, that they came to "a tremendous hole with cliffs rising about a thousand feet straight out of the water", which must have been the long-sought Wollongambe Basin.

By this time food was running low - they were out of meat and flour, and down to the remaining dried vegetables and dried fruits. Roxy's patched sandshoes gave out and she went on in a borrowed pair three sizes too large. There seemed to be several schools of thought as to where they were. Some thought Upper Colo was just round the bend, others that they had sixteen miles to go. But they passed what they believed to be, and probably was, Tootie Creek, and after a difficult river crossing camped again on sand and rocks. "Tea consisted of dried vegetable soup, plain, with tea and saccharine tablets. Ben and I dug worms and I caught one only eel. The boys were all knocked up and as I was just about dead beat too I didn't fish for long. Ray had a couple of bad falls in the afternoon, and his shoes were worn completely through and parted company with the soles, he was just about all in, besides which they were all hungry. We slept on the sand and were too tired to feel how hard it was,

we also had to wrap ourselves round the rocks as there was not enough clear space for us to lay on".

Next morning they breakfasted on eel and potatoes. Ray Bean and Ben Fuller left early for a dash to Upper Jolo to return with food should the rest not get through. Another difficult crossing, also nettles and lawyers, but the track was becoming plainer and the hills drawing away from the river. Lunch consisted of tea and brandy and a piece of chocolate. At 2 p.m. they sighted a cow and had but one thought - could it be caught and milked - "You catch it and I'll milk it", said Dunk. Then they came to "another Tootie Creek". Soon after they came upon a man who worked for Mr. Armstrong, but "as he didn't seem likely to give us anything to eat we bid him good day and went on till we saw two packs outside a house on the road", and found Ray and Ben within. Those doughty foragers had already enjoyed tomatoes, bread and butter, peach dumplings, tea and oranges at Armstrongs. "Then they passed on to Mr. Mailles place and were steadily eating their way through there when we caught up to them." However, Mr. Mailles' daughter had tea, hot yeast bread and butter and jam waiting for the roarguard and they put away two or three loaves before leaving by motor truck for the last train from Kurrajong. Back in Sydney, Rone, Ray and Roxy made straight for the then S.B.W. supper cafe, the Montecroy, and went right on eating. They caught a train home at 10 p.m., and, writes Dunk, "thus ended a real tough trip and I'm glad I went".

As far as I can estimate, this epic trip covered some 65 map miles. The river from the Wolgan-Caportee junction to Upper Jolo (a distance of 23 miles direct) can be measured accurately and the length is 36 miles. This took them ten days (not including their rest day). The average was therefore about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles a day, and, as far as I can judge from the times recorded, their average speed was about two-thirds of a mile an hour over this part of the trip.

Their host at Upper Jolo gave some interesting, if tantalising, information. He had, he told them, been one of the survey party who went through the Jolo in 1887. The railway to Mudgoo was opened in 1884, so it is unlikely to have been a railway survey. Why on earth then, was it surveyed? Perhaps it was Mr. Townshend, plodding doggedly on, trying to prove his way was the best.

Since the thirties, time, or more accurately, man, has wrought big changes to the river. When the Glen Davis oil works were established the river was used, as rivers usually are, for the disposal of waste. It became dark, smelly and undrinkable. Meanwhile over-clearing and over-stocking in the upper Wollom and Caportee valleys and over a century of burning (the first recorded trip towards Putty was turned back by bush fires) were taking their toll. There was a lot of mud in the river by the thirties, and by the end of the forties the rate of erosion, which accelerates rapidly as ground cover diminishes, was stepped up rapidly by the succession of wet seasons. I first noticed the change in 1950 when I looked down on the flooded Wollongambo Basin. When last I had been there, about 1940, kanukas and other trees and shrubs grew right to the water's edge. Now the river flowed in the middle of a broad strip of bare rocks and mud, the vegetation swept clear by the floods, or perhaps, smothered in oil waste. Three years later, during a trip up Putty Creek, farmers described how the recent floods had carried away their river flats, something that had not been known before. Further down, on Wirriba Creek, timber getters had cut down every straight tree along the creek and the banks had carried away, leaving the stumps on a high spidery cone of bare roots.

Though the shale oil works have been closed since June, 1952, the banks are still barren and lifeless. There are no ducks now, and no evidence of any other animals except dingos and an occasional wallaby. Birds are few. There may be a few fish and eels left, but it is not likely. There is no taste of oil in the water, though there is a suspicion of an oily smell. In still backwaters the mud has been deposited to a depth of several feet. As it dries it forms cracks up to six inches wide. Sandbanks have been formed along the side of the big pools, which are much reduced in size and depth, though the volume of river flow may prevent the Golo going the way of the Macdonald and becoming a river of sand. The fierce undergrowth of the thirties, and much of the rocky banks, are overlaid with sand and mud. The process of natural erosion too, continues as it has over the ages. There are rock-falls, big and small, every few chains along the river. Max says that, in the narrowest parts of the gorge, he could hear rocks falling at night, though I haven't, as yet. In places the burning of huge piles of driftwood has shattered large areas of rock.

Once the mud has dried and cracked it is easy to walk on, and a good deal of the walking now is on mud or sand instead of loose rock. Some blackberries, lawsons and raspberries have raised their stalks again for a few inches above ground level. The going is therefore much easier than it used to be. But it is still rough enough to be "good for all round muscular development". In the five miles below the Wollemi, something over a mile an hour can be covered by reasonably fit rockhoppers, though, over most of the river, it would not be wise to budget on more than a mile an hour. There is no doubt that a strong party, bent on exertion, could considerably better the times of the original parties, though I think they would still be extended to better Max and Gordon's time over the same route. Walkers, particularly the inexperienced, could easily strike serious trouble, as there is a lot of loose rock lying at steep angles; while it would be almost impossible to cross the river in a high flood. Should a party be cut off on the wrong bank they would, in places, have a lot of difficulty getting out at all.

This country is not everybody's dish - even the aboriginal names themselves - Bunglobouri, Boorai, Angorawa, Uratorer etc. have a rough warning rumble, suggestive of its barren, lonely depths. But for those who are not deterred by the symbols "RH" and "RS" on the walks programme, and who are prepared to raise their vision beyond the mud flats, it has its appeal.

PREVIEW

The South West of Tasmania is considered a pretty rugged kind of place at the best of times, but in winter when the dolerite mountain caps are packed with snow and coated with ice and the shelterless button grass plain lashed by rain and sleet, most people would rather stay at home by the fire.

In these conditions three of our members spent eleven days and succeeded in pitching their little tent at the high camp on Mount Eliza, and by the favour of magnificent fortune, climbed to the top of Mount Anne, Queen of the South West, to receive the reward of their labours in one superb day.

But this is not the whole story, it isn't even half. This has still to be told in a series of articles by Mick Elfick, commencing next month.

QUEER TYPES

- "Bull Moose"

Have you ever looked at a bunch of rugged up tourists on a mountain railway station in mid winter? Watched them form two circles - the outer one of golf sticks, tennis rackets and huge suitcases, the inner one a human circle of shivering bodies, huddled together to conserve their warmth by their nearness to one another? Even though they are peering out from beneath great piles of overcoats, scarves and gloves, they all appear half frozen. Queer that they should leave their suburban homes and make a trip to some odd out of the way place when they know they will be leaving many home comforts behind. It's odd too, the way their heads turn as though on a common pivot - the queer way their eyes goggle three quarters out of their sockets as a band of walkers tramp onto the station clad in boots, pack, shorts and jacket.

Their behaviour can probably best be explained in that crowding together not only warms them, but in a group of friends one usually feels happy due to the gregarious nature of people. This happiness develops, in some, a feeling of self-importance and so any odd person outside their group who is at all different is a target for their queer stares.

So you see from their point of view, we could appear rather queer. Bushwalkers (let's face it) do seem to come in a mixture of odd shapes, sizes and types. Moreover, we are usually at our lowest ebb at the end of the trip, so maybe it isn't so queer that we get those odd stares. Our condition could be the result of the jolting of one's boots along the track on a tough "bash", being transmitted from the boots up the leg to the spine, the jolt on the spine is transmitted, in turn, to the base of the skull, which, I believe, after eight or so hours has a numbing effect on the brain and so produces a type of minor hypnosis. This becomes most evident as a party, jolting up a steep pinch, eyes half closed, breath coming in short gasps, their legs in low gear and their brains in neutral, come to the top. Then a noticeable tremble runs through each in turn as the mind pulls itself from its induced trance back to reality. The eyes click open wide, hands grope for a camera, there are a few sighs of "Whataboutview" - then back into the trance to bash on again.

This hypnosis could produce an insensibility to stares and the feeling of our queer appearance and odd behaviour is not so evident. What I'm trying to get at is, with our dirty big packs, dirtier shorts and usual unkempt appearance, we must appear queer to the odd bystander.

It's just as well if we can recognise those queer streaks in ourselves and realise that the other person has his own environment and personality. When we realise this, he will not appear so queer to us. Since we are able to notice this queerness in others, we should be able to correct our own odd behaviour. In doing so, we will find the others not so queer as they were. Perhaps they will think we are not so queer either. Since they are less queer we may rather like them. I rather hope they will begin to like us a little - Queer.

"PEDDER TO FEDDER"

If you were enthused, interested, (or horrified), to read of Paddy's experiences in S.W. Tasmania published last month, be sure to arrive at the clubroom on 22nd October and see the whole trip immortalised in coloured celluloid. (Slides are genuine Paddymade, of course.)

FOR ALL YOUR TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

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WE WILL BE PLEASED TO QUOTE SPECIAL PARTIES OR TRIPS
ON APPLICATIONNEWS FROM THE BLUE

From Alan Hardie -

R.M.S. "Highland Chieftain"
En route to Rio de Janeiro,
BRAZIL. SOUTH AMERICA.

Dear Editor,

This letter serves to keep informed any who are interested in my foreign travels. Tomorrow this boat reaches Rio de Janeiro, which is supposed to beat Sydney for being the prettiest harbour in the world. Whether it is or not I shall endeavour to establish with my two cameras. Here too, will my trek overland commence to Montevideo in Uruguay, Buenos Aires in Argentina and Santiago and Valparaiso in Chile.

The day before yesterday we stopped at Recife, our first port of call in South America. There I noticed a most mixed population consisting chiefly of Spaniards, West Indians and Negros. On the wharf my first view was of some "darkies" sleeping between jobs. They reminded me of the negros in the operetta "Showboat", who alternated between sleeping on a bale of cotton and singing "Ole Man River". I soon became acquainted with the South American love of rythm. A band of uniformed schoolgirls marched to the ship to the accompaniment of drums and kettledrums. They were led by a "big buck nigger", the only male in the party. He gave the commands and supplied the only music other than the drums on a bugle, which he played with great skill. They were welcoming a teacher on board.

On the "Highland Chieftain" I am meeting rural Spanish and Portuguese migrants. They are going to South America to work on farms there, and it is plain to see that they are not used to the ordinary amenities of civilised life. A scotch cabin mate calls them "human cattle".

Before I left London in the "Highland Chieftain", I had to sign an undertaking not to protest against third class conditions. I now understand the reason why.

Yours,

Alan Hardie.

From Keith Renwick -

The last three weeks have been twice as hectic as usual and no one has had a ghost of a chance of getting any correspondence, but I am now encamped in the middle of Copenhagen gathering my scattered wits before I sally forth up north.

After I arrived in England in April I went caving in Yorkshire - walking in the Cairngorms, Isle of Skye, Ben Nevis, etc. - more caving, then Snowdon, Wales and Worcestershire.

To Belgium - more caves and the fabulous Exposition. You could spend a month non stop there and still not see everything. In the science halls alone I spent eight hours in the atomic section and still didn't see everything.

From Belgium - Luxemburg, Rhine, Zurich, Interlarkin (climbing lower peaks with views over the Jungfrau etc.) Two weeks of fantastic, super weather in Switzerland. Then to Montraux, back to Zermat for some high level walking. Camped at 9,500 feet with tent opening framing the Matterhorn - up at 4 a.m. for a fabulous sunrise - more super weather.

Milan, Venice, Trieste, Postjna (Yugoslavia) - tourist and other caves three days, north to Villoch (Austria), Gross Glockner, Innsbruck, Germany, Salzburg - ice caves in the Dackstein Mountains and some super fantabulous ice cave exploration with Salzburg Spelio Society in the Eisvesenwelt Caves at 6,500 feet, ice axe and crampons etc. Back to Innesbruck. Two weeks climbing in the Austrian Alps with the Austrian Alpine Club - one peak over 10,000 and two over 11,000. Back through Switzerland to Geneva - caving with Swiss bods.

A week then in Southern France caving. Padirac, Laseaux, Avin Armand, Pêche Merle, Les Eyzies and many others. A day in Paris, but couldn't get into the Folies (curses). Then got out of France as fast as I could because it is the most expensive country I have ever been in. Back to the Brussels Exposition for a few days. Saw over a diamond cutting factory in Holland as well as getting some minerals in exchange for Australian ones I have yet to supply.

From Holland through Hamburg to Copenhagen, then to Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki and north through the lakes to Lapland. Hope to do some walking here, then up to Tromsø and south to Mo, Norway, in the Arctic Circle. Here I've been invited to join a four weeks Cambridge University Expedition on glacial cave work but financially I may only be able to stay two weeks. South then via the fjords and Bergen to Oslo.

Boat back to Newcastle, up to Edinburgh, then down the centre of England (Autumn) to Worcester and London to work. By this time I think I may even be glad to.

Well, that is a very brief summary of the main places I have been to in the last few months. I've had a mighty time and been very lucky with the weather.

Regards,

Keith.

CRACKED CORN

Now the 31st of October
Is a night you will want to stay sober,
Yes, this first weekend of November
Is the one you ought to remember,
And recite (to yourself) the fine slogan -
"I must do this trip with John Logan".
The train is the 6.26 one
And the seats will all go to the quick ones.
From Blackheath it's a car out to Hampton
To the spot that is usually camped on,
Then down the creek from Marsden's Swamp
It may be just a trifle damp.
Up Tinker's Hill, if it's there still.
On Blackheath Creek you could camp for a week
If the leader'd let y'
But he wont, I bet y'
Any way, next day -
To Blackheath.

And remember the slogan -
"SEE JOHN LOGAN"

MARK I

Congratulations to Norma and Eric Rowen on the arrival of a son on the 2nd September. He's going to be called Mark.

Also to Georgie and Peter Antonides - a baby girl known as Anastasia.

The Commonwealth Bank may soon have another staff problem. Mary Walton and Bob Abernethy have just announced their engagement. The very best wishes to you both.

As Taro remarked, "The next generation of Sydney Bush Walkers is already assured."



PADDY MADE

THE TIDE REVEDES

Spring is here and Paddy's shop is back to normal again. No longer do skis, stocks, ski boots, mitts, langlauf bands, skins, waxes and so on dominate the scene. Walking gear now takes charge and there's plenty of room to display the many lines that mean so much to walking comfort. After last year's fierce summer, we look forward to a few mild months when walking will be a joy to all.

Don't forget to come and inspect the new rubber soled boots!

* SPECIAL FOR ROCK CLIMBERS

Due to arrive any time now - supplies of Commando soles and heels. Also on the water is a large shipment of Carabiners and Pitons.

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