
THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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"At The Going Down of The Sun"

by "Skip".

Soft the sun glow, peace and calm grows
In the evening interlude.
Balm the wind blows, quiet the stream flows.
In some tranquil solitude.

As the stars down rosy clouds mourn
White the daylight slowly fades.
Hate is still-born; love from fear's drawn;
Venus walks amidst the shades.

Dark at hand is; Now the land is
Dim beneath a paler light.
Day now done is, but the sun is
Challenge by the queen of night.

Labour Weekend at Tongariro National Park.North Island N.Z. by Jack Hunter.

From our starting point, Auckland, the 300 miles to the 'big hills' were covered by special bus. At 4.30 a.m. in a grey, drizzling dawn twenty-one protesting bodies were dumped on the Desert Road with tents, rucksacs, wares and other impediments of a mountain party. Camp was soon made near the road and after a hot breakfast things took on a more pleasant appearance.

The plan for Saturday was a visit to the Oterere crater of Mt. Tongariro 6458'. After pushing through wet tea-trees one realises why the New Zealand tramping has as standard equipment a knee length storm coat and sou-wester. The very cold Pakētārāta stream was forded and soon the way was across miles of what seemed to be interminable tussock country. Gullies crossed were filled with beautiful beech forest, soon turned into a fairyland by falling snow.

Patches of snow became more frequent and it was good to follow exactly in the leader's footsteps. Finally the rim of the crater was reached and although visibility was poor it was possible to make out through the drifting clouds a great waste of snow broken by jagged lava formations. Icy wind and driving sleet did not add to comfort and after disposing of a little chocolate and cake we lost no time in returning to camp and our sleeping bags.

Sunday dawned with more low cloud and drizzle with however a few glimpses of the snowcapped Kaimanawa Range. Mt. Ruapehu 9175' was our next objective. The bus was convenient for the first portion of the trip along the desert road. The usual approach to this mountain is from the Chateau side via the Whakapapa glacier. Our approach was from the other, and less frequented side.

Alighting at the point where the Waikato River crosses the road we covered first miles of the desolate Onetapu Desert, eagerly looking forward for signs of a lift in the clouds. Smells of sulphur reminded us that much of the ground underfoot had been only recently deposited (Ruapehu is still an active volcano).

Entering the Wangachu (pronounced Wonga-ay-hoo) valley steady climbing began over lava formations and glacial moraine. By 1 p.m. we were in view of the Wanguehu glaciers and it was decided to lunch. Tea was made by primus (there being no wood above the snow-line). Shifts in the clouds permitted awe-inspiring glimpses of snow capped peaks and jagged rocks all about.

After lunch a hurried visit was made to the glaciers and a possible hut site. Unfortunately conditions rapidly deteriorated and wind and sleet drove us back. At lower altitudes the sleet changed to icy driving rain and progress across the Desert to the bus was not pleasant.

Monday, going-home day, was fated to be fine and although time did not permit an extended trip we were able to appreciate the three beautiful mountains of the Reserve unveiled by cloud. Tongariro is broken and scattered, the scene of colossal past volcanic activity; Ngaurahoe is a perfect, steep-sided cone from the summit of which usually ascends a plume of steam and last is the incomparable Ruapehu, supreme in its' majesty, crowned with several snowy peaks and also bearing its recently aquired plume of steam.

Although the weather had been wet all returned contented with a good weekends tramping in congenial company. How soon can I return, I wonder?

FIRES BURNING.

by Alex Colley.

It was midnight on Sat 9th Nov., and I was walking along the track from the Garie Road to Maynards, on my way to the working bee at Burning Palms. In the early evening there had been heavy rain and now the full moon was diffusing its soft light through the drifting clouds. Suddenly I started. Fiery eyes glowed at me from the side of the track. I stopped dead and realised that it was not a beast of prey but glowing coals I could see. Investigation proved it to be a burning log. Evidently some picknicker had lit a fire against a dead tree at the intersection of two tracks - a favourite spot for a lunch fire - I recalled putting one out in a similar spot a couple of years ago a little further along the same track. The fire had already brought down the dead tree and was slowly burning along the trunks. There was some water a few hundred yards along the track and I used it all on the log. When I left it was black and steaming, but I realised that it was unlikely I had extinguished it completely.

A fortnight later, on Nov. 23rd. I was on my way to Era. I remembered the log and went to inspect. Sure enough it was still burning. This time there was no water, and it would have taken many gallons to do any good. The bush around had been burnt out a few years ago, so hardly enough dead litter had accumulated as yet to make it inflammable.

Another fortnight passed and I was once more on my way to Era. Was it still burning? Yes, one of the larger limbs was smoking, and for all I know it is not out yet (Dec. 11th.). I estimate that, from the time the picknicker lit his fire until the time his fire went out it would be at least 6 weeks.

Every time a fire is started in the bush it sets alight many such logs. When the grazier, timber-getter, farmer, or wildflower gatherer lights a fire to clear out the "rubbish" he doesn't usually

bother where it ends up, or when. He may light it in cool weather, but six weeks later logs like this one are still burning. By that time there may be a strong westerly accompanied by an 100 degree temperature. All summer there are many logs like this one in the bush, glowing slowly, ready to spring into activity and become running fires as soon as the weather is hot and dry. And so long as "burning off" is an approved practice fires will become active (not "start") whenever it is hot and dry.

Sydney Belly-Worshippers or Sydney Bush-Walkers?

By a Federation Delegate.

When H.G. Wells wrote his "Modern Utopia" he pictured the country ruled by the Samurai or Voluntary Nobility, people who voluntarily disciplined themselves to take on the burdens of rulership. Among other things each year they had to go out into the wilds alone for at least a week and take with them neither maps, compasses, tents, NOR MATCHES. That is to say, during this time they had to sleep beneath the stars, and live on uncooked food. It was a test of physical as well as mental fitness.

The Regulations prohibiting lighting fires, which will be imposed from time to time for short periods during the summer, are an excellent opportunity for bushwalkers to crack hardy and show that they are as tough as any Voluntary Nobility, and certainly as keen as English and European trampers who do not as a rule light fires, but drink water for lunch, and if they have to stay overnight take a methylated stove to light inside their tents. Paddy sells solid meths!

If we bushwalkers cannot do without our cooking fires, we must admit to the truth of the taunt so often heard that S.B.W. stands for Sydney Belly Worshippers, not for Sydney Bush-Walkers.

Max Gentle really covered some country over Christmas. Pedalling for a change, he covered the roads between Mt. Hotham (Victorian Alps) and Lakes Entrance, then turned his whirling wheels along the coastal byways to Kioloa, where he staged a most timely arrival: just in time to lend a strong back for the carriage of Shirley King!

"The Fossils"

by "Shorty".

While searching round at Era beach
 For ancient abo tribe,
 We found some bony aggregates
 That we just can't describe.

With lump of rotten wood for spade
 We'd dug up bone or two,
 When June made bright suggestion,
 "Let's put darned things in stew".

But pseudo-anthropologists
 Stood gaping round about:
 "Bones mean hard cash to scientists,
 So make your stew without".

Some said 'twas dinto-saurius,
 And some asked when and how,
 And called bones funny kinds of names
 I cannot think of now.

We gave the bits to our friend, Kieth,
 Who was the first to see 'em;
 He gave us written guarantee
 To take same to Museum.

Man at Museum let Kieth inside,
 To another he gave a wink,
 To get a really strong cage ready:
 He'd caught the missing link.

Kieth then explained his mission,
 Told tale in full of course;
 But man said, "Ar, you silly cow;
 It's bit off ruddy 'orse!"

Bob Younger, Phil Hall, and the inseparable Norma and Christa spent New Year's Eve on the Sydney Ferries' "Mystery" trip. Presumably, this was a dress-rehearsal for the Tasmania journey. The "mystery", we mean--not the ferry.

STORY IN STONE. --- Part I.

Ancient History of the Shoalhaven.

(by Trouper)

This is the first of a series of three articles:

- Part I. Nature of the Rocks: a build-up to facilitate the understanding of Part II.
- Part II. Interchange of Land and Sea -- the changing face of the region.
- Part III. The Bungonia Limestone Gorge.

Part I.

Nature of the Rocks.

Badgery's Crossing to Bungonia Caves -- year by year, we pick our way up the boulder-strewn gorge of the Shoalhaven River, but how many of us stop to wonder at the story of the rocks over which we step? The area becomes more attractive when we know its history, so here is an exposition of the geologic build-up of these parts. Our story begins some four-hundred million years ago, when the highest forms of life were a few primitive shell-fish, and the whole area around Tallong and Marulan was a slimy ooze upon the floor of an ocean deep. Yes, the rocks of the Shoalhaven gorge are old indeed, and varied is the tale they tell.

In the beginning, a vast ocean surrounded the then-existing portions of Australia, and far from the shores of this sea were the muds which were ultimately to form a tract of land ideal for bushwalking. However, before we can understand the full story, we must know something of the rocks over which we walk as we proceed, say, upstream from Badgery's to Bungonia. Along the gorge, a brown or grey hard rock predominates, and in places we can see that it is in well-defined layers running at varying angles. Above these, we see horizontally banded cliffs with a white or grey colour. The lower rocks are slate, and the upper, sandstone: and we shall examine how such rocks are formed.

Shale, slate, limestone and sandstone: all are familiar names, and each type of rock is easy to understand. They are formed as sediments on the floors of rivers, lakes and seas. The fine, slimy muds such as those found in the banks of the sluggish Nepean, near Wallacia, may become dried and compacted to form the crumbling, powdery rock we know as shale. Where the flow is still fast enough to move the clay, but not fast enough to carry coarser particles, the river bed or sea floor becomes covered with sand; for example, the sands which at present choke the Cox R. in the regions of the Wild Dogs. When these sands become dried, they may

be formed into rock by compression or through being cemented by substances in waters flowing over them. This rock is the familiar sandstone -- scratch a piece, and you will scrape off small, rounded (water-worn) sand grains. These sandstones are usually white, but may be stained various colours -- e.g. iron oxide stains them yellow, brown or red. It must be noted that the waves of the sea play a great part in sorting the sediments washed into it by rivers: sands are dropped in regions near the coast, but the finer silts are carried far out, and dropped in deep waters below the limits of wave activity.

The deposition of muds and sands on the floor of a lake or sea takes place mainly during and after the flood periods of the rivers emptying into it. At normal times, the waters of the Shoalhaven, Cox, etc. are clear, but after the rains they are a murky brown: the waters are then carrying sand and mud, which will be deposited in the lower reaches where the current lessens, or in the sea where the waves will sort the water-borne burden, leaving sands along the coast, and the silts in the deeper, unstirred waters. Thus, the sediments are not laid down continuously, but layer by layer as flood succeeds flood; and hence the ultimate rock is seen to have horizontal bands ("strata" or "bedding")

Then what of the twisted strata in the lower gorge? When we take a pile of sheets of paper and press from the sides with our hands, the pages fold up in parallel layers; and similar has been the process on the lower rocks of the Shoalhaven -- great earth masses have exerted terrific pressure on either side of the region, and the whole countryside has crumpled and folded, with the horizontal bedding planes distorted in consequence.

Folding of the strata is not the only effect of such great earth forces: the shale itself becomes changed in nature. It loses its soft, crumbling constituency, changing into a hard flint (or "chert"), and then with continued pressure into slate, which loses the original bedding, but develops the characteristic of flaking off in layers.

We are now in a position to understand the development of the area, but one other rock will figure largely in our discussion, and that is limestone. This, too, is a sediment, but not a sediment in the ordinary sense of the term, for it is really an accumulation of the remains of animal organisms. Animals, fish, shell-fish and even some plants have skeletons which are composed of calcium carbonate -- and limestone is calcium carbonate which has been formed from an accumulation of such animal and plant skeletons. We have today a well-known concentration of these remains, which in future ages will form a limestone belt such as now runs in broken stages through Yarrangobilly, Bungonia, Wombeyan, Jenolan, etc. -- this present-day

example is the great Barrier Reef, the calcium-containing remains of corals which even today are still building the limestone belt of the future.

Something of the history of the area is now familiar to us -- the laying down of muds and sands, and the building up of a coral reef-- all of which are now raised high above the waters under which they once lay. Thus, in the next article we shall see how land and sea have changed places in this area on the Shoalhaven River.

An Adelaide Club:---
The old (?) hand views the new.

Thanks to the hospitality of Mr. O'Loughlin, Collector of Customs for S.A., I recently spent a day with the newly-formed Adelaide Bushwalkers at their Christmas camp near Mount Crawford in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

And what a day it was. The menu ran from fresh fish to ants' eggs, and the day's activities from hacking down a real live sapling (amidst my mental remonstrations, "Oh! what would Marie say!") to an afternoon's play at archery.

As it is a new club, I expected all the manifestations of gadgetosis which betray the novice: big knives, big billies, extraneous heavy clothing, hatchets, trenching tools, and so on. I was pleasantly surprised. Admittedly, I did see two heavy knives, one hatchet and one trenching tool, but these were excusable as they had motor transport right to the camp site.

Their President, "Bill" Lindsay, is an expert on bush survival ("living off the land" if you will) and it was he who turned over rock after rock in the search for ants' eggs, which seem to be almost a delicacy thereabouts. They may be boiled, fried or poached, but are best if taken raw. This saves the labour of cooking and there is no washing-up. Ants' eggs are quite palatable, and may be compared (remotely) with cooked, unsweetened rice. Edible yuckas ("blackboys" to us) offer another food to the lost, hungry walker. Oh, yes, I know!--bushwalkers don't run out of food. But I know of at least one party who spent two days with empty stomachs, and on the Grose at that; and surely you have heard of the party who breasted Hannel's Spur on saccharin and milk?

It was amusing to see them building their fires in tins and for a moment I tried to visualise kerosene tins on Cloudmaker. However, I was assured that we in N.S.W. have not the bushfire risk that they have, and their action probably arised from the fact that their

country is grass country, an inflammable tinder in their dry summer.

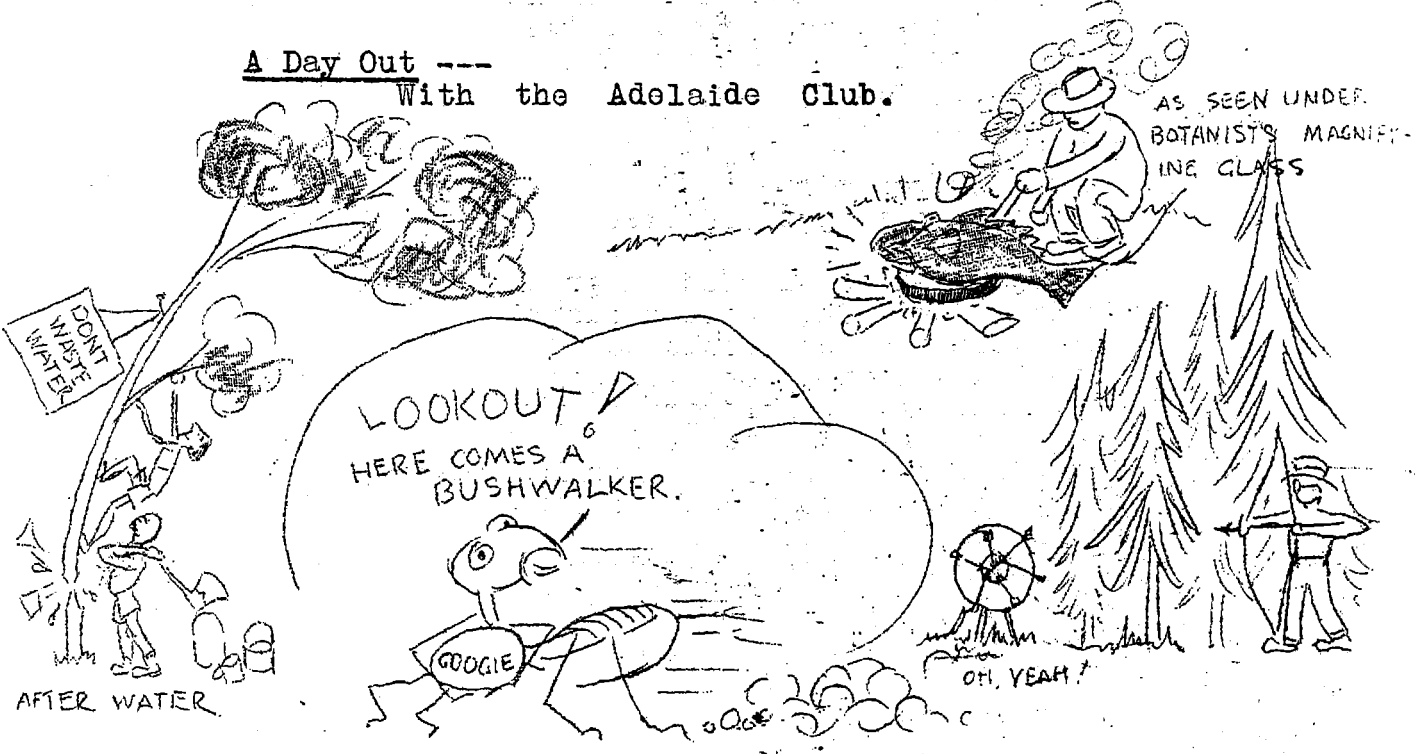
They have an amazing tree in S.A.: the "red" gum (a botanist called it "eucalyptus thistledownia", but the title is viewed with suspieion). They warned me never to pitch my tent beneath one of these giants. On a clear, calm day the red gum will suddenly drop one of its largest and greenest limbs! These appear to snap quite cleanly near the trunk, with no warning and no apparent reason.

In Adelaide, there appears to be none of the controversy, heavy boots versus sneakers. They seem to consider that boots and gaiters are the rule for all country. However, this failing is not universal, and boots will probably become almost non-existent when they realise the greater comfort of sneakers on easy ground. They will probably never become so ardently lightweight as some of ourselves, due to the easier nature of their hills - the Mount Lofty Ranges terrain might be compared with the Megalong Valley, without the background cliffs - but it was indeed good to see a common-sense approach, and to compare their efforts with the laughable exploits of many N.S.W. "hikers" of equal experience.

At Easter, the Adelaids club plans to "do" the Grampians, where they will join forces with the Melbourne bush walkers. Whilst we may consider that a guide robs new ground of half its glamour, would not inter-state, inter-club walks be an interesting innovation on the walks programme. in, say, Christmas week?

Every success to our South Australian confreres in what seems to be a new form of club in their state.

A Day Out ---
With the Adelaide Club.



EXTRA! EXTRA!
Big Bushwalker Boilover!

Carousal at Cusa! High-jinks in Hyde Park!
The walkers at Christmas -- whew! did they spark.
(We print this in defiance of decorum,
Without the fifteen members for a quorum.)

Read all about it!
EXTRA!

"Ah, me! my head! my aching head.
I really wish that I were dead!"
So goth the walking multitude,
Who rent the air with curses rude
That awful Wednesday morn,
As, moaning and forlorn,
They gasped, "Oh, gee!
An A.P.C.!"
Off drink I now have sworn."

Okay, okay! you thought me merry.
Perhaps I was, but sober? Very!
At ten o'clock you said to me,
"Two (ground) sheets in the wind, I see."
"Hooray!" you thought, "the gossip scout
Has got too tight and passed right out.
So here I go upon a spree;
He'll never get the print on me."
But you were wrong, my cherubrin,
For though I made unholy din,
Pretending not to see,
I chuckled loud with glee,
For in my brain
This wild refrain
Was running fierce and free.

A racy red-head dressed in green,
Ex-President; Oh, quite a queen!
Got amorous as she could be
With Roley Cotter; oh, tee-hee!
I'll mention not her name to you
(as if I really needed to!)
Her face, of course, was highly flushed,
And even Hallstrom deeply blushed
As in his list'ning ear
She whispered, "Clemmie, dear --
They gave me gin!
Oh, what a sin,
In future I'll take beer."

The Harvey gang burst into song
 And raised their glasses short and long;
 Then placed them back upon the table,
 To go and dance (those who were able!)
 And as the dances waxed and waned,
 Non-drinkers looking highly pained,
 The clamour slowly grew,
 And some were saying, "Whow!
 I think we oughter
 Stick to water,
 In lieu of this vile brew."

A singing contest pleased the crowd
 (Although offstage was just as loud)
 When Dorman soft the scales trilled,
 And to his notes the critics thrilled.
 He added octaves to the scale,
 Just like the operatic whale,
 And would have added more;
 But stayed he from it, for
 Our human ear
 Befogged with beer
 Would not appreciate his score.

"God Save the King" found Billie Burke
 With many tankards still at work.
 As with great impropriety
 And disregard for piety,
 He swayed before the vast array
 Of empty bottles on his tray,
 Regardless of his balance risky
 But feeling still quite gay and frisky:
 "No, that I think is sherry,
 And this is brandy, cherry;
 And this, I fear,
 Is doggoned beer.
 Gawd! shave the King, where is the whisky!"

Federation Reunion.

The year's big event will be at Burning Palms on February
 7th, 8th, and 9th. Bring the wife and bring the kids. For
 details refer to the top notice board or at Paddys.

EXTRA! EXTRA!Christmas At Batoman's Bay.

A participant spills the beans -- and the gossip scout lends an ear.

India may have its Fakirs, but we have our own real-life fire-walker! Shirley King, no less. And a really fine job did she make of it: right on the very last day, with nothing more to do than be carried home!

Fishing -- yes, fishing. Dennis Gittoes on one end of the line, with fifteen pounder (Oh, yeah!) rock cod on 'tuther.

Colin Lloyd, Bill Cosgrove and George Dibley turned their camp into a first-class restaurant. Seventy pounds of food in five days! This, by a slight amount of mental arithmetic, works out at just under 5 lbs. per man - day!! A plum pudding every night, and a tummy ache every morning.

Eric Rowen may be a Prospective, but he knows all the tricks. He can persuade a woman to carry the tent! "Ah, yes," said the hardened sceptic, "Betty's only a Prospect. Wait 'til you can put that over a woman Member!"

Maureen Taplin and Hannah Shibuya must be true bush walkers. They really believe that a short-cut is the longest distance between two points. Their latest effort is: Lilyvale-Era-Lilyvale, via Wollongong and all stations north! All this, mind you, on a ticket to - Waterfall?

And whilst on the subject of Maureen -- She planned a fourteen-day trip to Kosciusko with a mere fourteen pairs of socks!! A change-daily girl who hasn't heard of lux?

Whither When Lost?

One of the journals regularly received by the club is the the magazine of the POTOMAC APPALACHIANS TRAILS CLUB, and a recent article included the statement that: Adults and children old enough to reason go down when lost, whilst children under five or six go up. "This sentence might well be memorised by bushwalkers, particularly in the Blue Mountains. If one were lost, and kept resolutely to a downward course, one would always have water, and would almost certainly find habitation in three or four days under normal conditions. Going up, one might end up on Cloudmaker or Guouogang -- or on a hot, dry ridge, from which the only view was higher ridges on every hand. But I forget -- bushwalkers don't get lost.