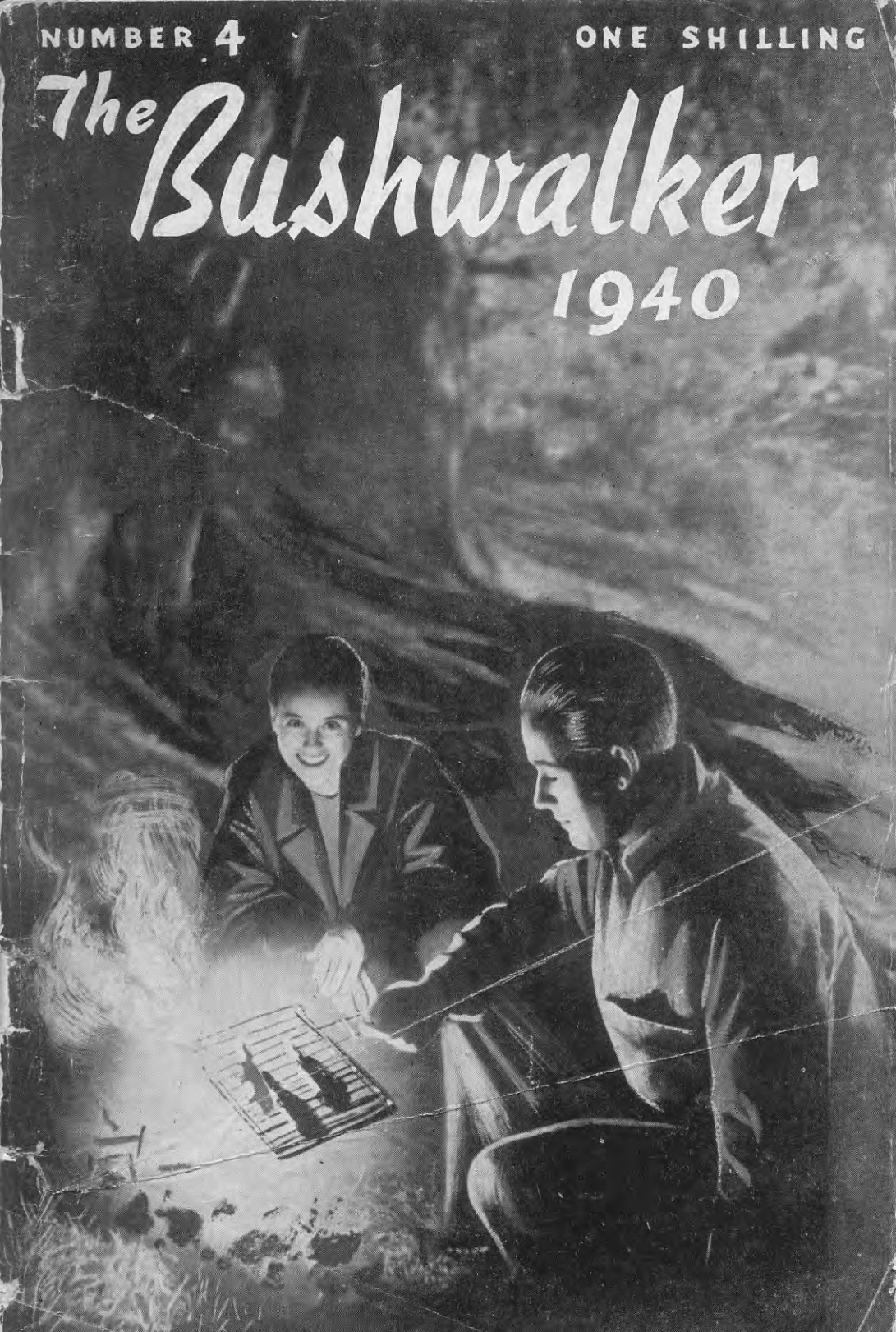
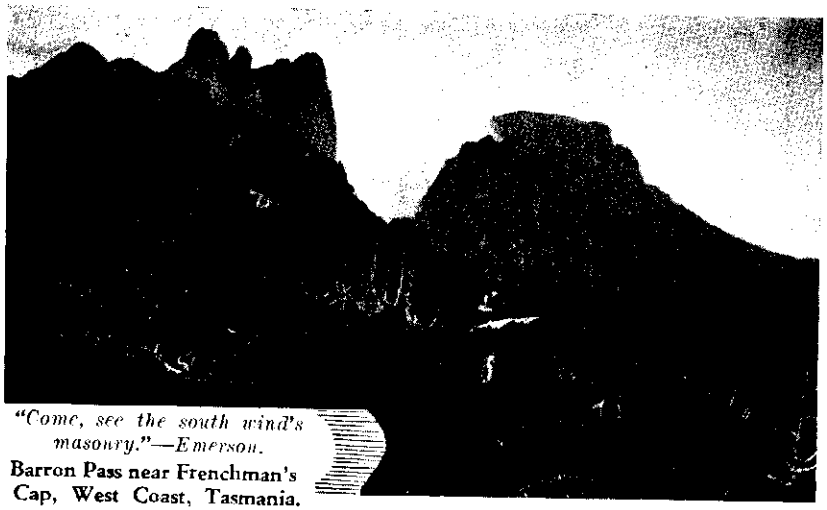
NUMBER 4

ONE SHILLING

The Bushwalker 1940





"Come, see the south wind's masonry."—Emerson.
Barron Pass near Frenchman's Cap, West Coast, Tasmania.

(Frank Hurley, photo.)

The Bushwalker

No 4 1940

Published by the New South Wales Federation of Bush Walking Clubs.

CONTENTS.

	Page
EDITORIAL	7
THE BUSHWALKING IDEAL. By Roy Smee	8
A SURVEYOR OF THE MOUNTAINS. By W. L. Havard	10
"IN PLACES YET UNTROD BY MAN." By H. P. Black	13
THE BLUE GUM FOREST	14
WINTER TRAVAIL. By D. H. McKellar	17
THE VALLEY OF THE GROSE. By R. Else Mitchell	20
TO THE HIGH HILLS. By Dot English	23
REUNION	26
NOVICES AFIELD. By "Bellbird"	27
SECRETS OF THE SHOALHAVEN. By R. Else Mitchell	31
"THE FUNNIEST TURNOUT." By Ida McAulay	34
MURRUIN CREEK AND BEYOND. By J. C. Barnard	37
Mr. C. D'A. ROBERTS	39
THE COLONG CAVES RESERVE	39
EAST OF BULLER. By Ted Sloane	41
GROVELLING. By Beryl Thompson	43
WANDERLUST. By Ian A. Malcolm	45
GARAWARRA	46
A UNIQUE RECREATION. By H. M. Whaite	50
KANANGRA WALLS ROAD	52
BOUDDI NATURAL PARK	53
WE GO SOCIAL. By Herbert and Chardon	55
REMINISCENCES OF A RUCKSACK. By Millie Horne	57
THEN AND NOW. By W. F. Reid	59

LOCKLEY PYLON,
THE VALLEY OF THE GROSE.

[See page 15.] (Photo. by G. Bibley.)

THE NEW SOUTH WALES FEDERATION OF BUSH WALKING CLUBS.

President : W. A. Hollisgrove.

Vice-President : O. H. Wyndham.

Hon. Treasurer : H. S. Freeman.

Hon. Secretary : Miss Merle Hamilton,
57 Ocean Avenue, Edgecliff.

Hon. Assistant Secretary : Miss Joyce Kennedy.

EDITORIAL.

As we present THE BUSHWALKER, No. 4, it might well be asked: "Is this journal of permanent value? Is it good merely for the purpose of soaking up the monotony of a railway journey, or is it of sufficient merit to be placed in one's book case for future reference and pleasurable re-reading?" No doubt, if we have in it articles of our own composition we will store and cherish the publication as evidence of a literary adventure. But are there any worth-while facts of local historical, geographical, or other interest arising from these upsurges of literary feeling? In some articles we hope there are, and in some we know there are.

Before time dims the memories of the pioneers of some of the walking fraternity's best achievements, we have obtained and placed on record in this issue of THE BUSHWALKER brief historical sketches of events that resulted in the preservation of the Blue Gum Forest, Garawarra Park, and the Bouddi Natural Park. Without the organisation and driving force of a handful of determined bushwalkers, these places may have long ago shed the glories of their natural beauty and lost their value as recreation areas for nature lovers.

Let it not be thought that we advocate living in the past. To do so would be to succumb to the torpor of self-complacency and result in the stagnation of the vast work of conservation that is still ahead of the walking fraternity. Rather let the past be our inspiration. Let us learn from the foresight, drive, and persistence of the men and women walkers who refused to regard any difficulty as insuperable and then proved that they were right. "Difficulties are easily overcome; impossibilities take a little longer," is a phrase that might well have been the motto of our bushwalking pioneers.

Read the authentic story of what they worked for and won, and may each future issue of THE BUSHWALKER have some "official history" of further achievement to record.

THE BUSHWALKING IDEAL.

Thoreau of Walden.

BY ROY SMEE.

(The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.)

'You know, Jack, as we lie here in our bags and gaze into the fire and beyond it to the outer, lonely darkness, I can't help picturing Thoreau doing much the same thing a century ago at his lonely camp on Walden Pond in the wilds of New Jersey. A queer fellow was Henry David Thoreau, Jack—queer, that is, by the popular standards—but one who probably deserves a better fate than to be yarned about round a fire with the tobacco pouch and the rum bottle handy. After all, you know, he was one of the masters of American prose. Let the pundits rave, however, I still like to regard him as the bush-walkers' first chronicler—a man, that is, who wrote not of the rolling moors, the roadside inn, the sylvan beauty of lake and wood, but one who heard the call of the back-breaking ridge and the precipitous gorge. Nightfall didn't find Thoreau in tavern or hostel, but stretched out, he says, 'in a kind of bag I fashioned from blankets and covered with india-rubber which enabled me to scorn a tent and the hardest ground.'

"His walks were long and arduous ; his tucker list nourishing, if formidable. He once tramped for miles across the Canadian border and down the St. Lawrence on 26 lbs. of hard bread, 14 lbs. of pork, some Indian meal, rice, coffee, and other odds and ends which he carried in a rubber knapsack. Toss over that tobacco, will you !

'When he first started on his long range trips he took along an Indian guide, but he soon became adept at ridge finding as well as an expert and an artist in describing the terrain over which he passed. As he was something of a public figure by this time, due to the published accounts of his solitary retreat at Walden Pond and articles on excursions nearby, not a few people sought his advice on walking, routes, equipment, and tucker. One excursion didn't go so well, by the way, Jack, as he completed a canoe trip with a forty-five mile portage. Not that Thoreau himself ever boggled at physical effort, for he was an expert mountain climber and a tireless walker ; he once dragged a friend to the top of Mount Monadnock (4000 feet) only to be rewarded with curses from his cobber about the 'unwashed pint-pots, the impossible shaving, the blazing sun, and the dreary state of one's stockings.' It's rather surprising, isn't it, that Thoreau died of T.B. ?

A WRITER AND A MAN.

"He was more than a chronicler of walking tours though, Jack—this Walden business is worth looking into. After a Harvard education and at the age of 28, Thoreau went into the woods near the town of Concord, there to build himself a hut beside Walden Pond, wherein he lived and wrote for two years. There, too, he studied his surroundings—every inch of them ; his knowledge of the bush and its denizens was remarkable, and his views on conservation correspondingly well based and militant. He once debated for weeks

before he took action against a rabbit which made incursions upon his bean patch, and then, having trapped the invader he gazed but once into its limpid brown eyes, released the bunny, and gave up growing beans. He was no hatter, you know, like some of the old settlers you meet on the track, nor yet an ascetic ; he often walked into Concord and enjoyed the gossip and chatter of his friends, many of whom visited him—often with the question, 'Henry, why are you here ?' to which he once replied to Emerson, 'Why aren't you ?'

"He also took up a political offensive on behalf of the slaves in the South, for which he narrowly avoided being gaoled. But in the main Walden held him from society in the woods, 'where he was better known,' and from which 'the State was nowhere to be seen.' 'Blessed are the young,' he said, 'for they do not have to read the President's Message.' Which isn't bad. Have a fill of this weed !

"Thoreau got quite a kick from the remarks of those people who thought he had a slate loose, and was ripe, as I once heard a Wollondilly stockman say, 'for the nut works' ! He begged the President of Harvard, who wrote to him, not to regard him as a charity case, and added that if any of the present students were in pecuniary trouble and cared to contact him he would give them some advice worth more than money. He went to Walden for a number of reasons, Jack, not the least of which was to show that the intellect and the wilderness were not incompatible, and he was successful in this and much more.

THOREAU'S PHILOSOPHY.

"The real value of Thoreau lies, I think, in his remarkable power to interpret the environment to which he was so close. Interpretation is quite distinct from description, though Thoreau excelled in both—as you will remember from *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*. Some later-day Socrates has said rather boldly that the power of description lay in the brain while the power of interpretation lay in the guts, which may sum up what I mean about Thoreau. His life-long study of Nature and his eloquent pen made him the master of description he remains to-day, but he added to this a profound knowledge of the purpose and direction of things. This he had gained through deep communion with the growing earth, and that which grew and thrived and fought and died upon it. This complete oneness with his natural surroundings enabled Thoreau to portray so truly and succinctly the quiet, throbbing strength of Nature, her depth and serenity, her grandeur and goodness, and her mercilessness too. His picture is true, Jack. Before you pour me out that night-cap, look out over the creek there and see how primaeval and yet how present, close, and real the Mother is ; look where you will and you will see no meanness, no artificiality there. It makes you feel at once both insignificant and complete, doesn't it ?

"Such a feeling Thoreau must have had when, on his death bed, a solicitous friend asked him if he had made his peace with God. The answer may be pure pantheism ; it is certainly pure Thoreau. 'My dear fellow,' he replied, 'I have never yet quarrelled with Him !' "

A SURVEYOR OF THE MOUNTAINS.

William Romaine Govett.

BY W. L. HAVARD.
(The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.)

William Romaine Govett, believed by many to have been a bush-ranger, whose leap over a cliff made him prominent in Australian pioneering mythology, was in reality a young and promising surveyor who came to this colony by the barque *Asia* in December, 1827.

At first, for the sake of field experience, Govett was employed near Sydney, but in mid-1828 he accompanied Major Mitchell, who was extending a trigonometrical admeasurement from the lighthouse at South Head to the Tindery Mountains in the then southern limits of the colony. The party also surveyed ninety miles of the "dividing range" as a county boundary, and parts of the rivers Wollondilly, Cookbundoon and Guineacor, as well as the lakes, lagoon and plains that bound them. In September of that year, Govett surveyed to Lake Bathurst and the Wollondilly morass. Later he worked in the neighbourhood of the "hill named Wayo," traced the upper Cookbundoon, and part of the Wollondilly from the point of junction of Paddy's River.

In 1829 Govett surveyed the country towards Wiseman's and the Hawkesbury River, and that between Broken Bay and Sydney. At one stage he reported : " . . . . in consequence of my not having a Pack Horse there will be many a day I shall have to wander with blanket on Back, and many a night to trust to the generosity of the weather for my rest. . . . ." Early in the next year he was engaged in the district beyond Botany Bay between George's River and the Cataract River.

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

Govett left Sydney for the Blue Mountains in March, 1831, and began working in the Mount Victoria district. Subsequently he camped near Bleakheath, and began the survey and sketching of the ranges towards the Grose River and Mount Hay, as well as the cliffs on the southern side of the mountain road. It was while so engaged in June that he first saw the well-known cascades near Blackheath. As for the break of rock that is such a feature of the locality, Govett had seen no other view that showed so well the character of the mountain feature and gully. At first, the falls near Blackheath were known simply as The Cascades. A promontory on the *south* side of the road was known as Govett's Point, a name that soon gave place to "Tyra Saxa Point," or the Three Sisters of to-day. Concerning the Blue Mountains, Govett wrote in 1835 :—

"The bold broken nature of the country on either side is peculiarly grand, and the streams which at first commence in swamps soon make their way into inaccessible gullies, until they arrive at the cliffs of the main channel where they fall in cascades. . . . . The most remarkable of these cascades is the one near the Weatherboarded Hut [Wentworth Falls] and that which falls into the head of the Grose River ; which the surveyor general named 'Govett's leap' from the circumstance of my first having come upon the spot when surveying with Mr Rusden."

WILLIAM ROMAINE GOVETT.
From a miniature post card in the Mitchell Library.

In September, 1831, after many attempts, Govett found it impossible "to descend the rocky cliffs in order to trace the low connecting Ridge which joins the Isolated Mountain [Mount Solitary] to the main Mountain Range ; but," he said in reporting to Mitchell, "by going from point to point, and extending my bearings both North & South of it, I am enabled to shew on my plan the main Creek on either side, as also the *connect of Ridge itself*—and I think I could distinguish the point where these creeks join Cox's River."

THE MAIN DIVIDE.

After this survey of the Blue Mountains, Govett traced the Fish River and the "great dividing range" southwards from the Bathurst Road as far as the Burra Burra Lagoon, being hindered for two days by heavy and deep snow on the heights. He then moved on towards the Goulburn Plains, where he surveyed Governor's Hill, and arrived at Bong Bong in July, 1832, spending a further four days surveying

the enclosures at Berrima. He was next sent to the difficult country north of the Grose with instructions to determine the character of the great features of the country between Mount Tomah and the Wolgan ranges. Although this task was formidable enough to daunt the stoutest spirit, Govett found the mountain ranges were not the worst of his trials, and in making out an account of his expenditure he declared : "These ounces and fractions of eatables annoy me more than the confusion of ranges before me."

HIS LAST SURVEY.

Govett's last survey in the colony took in the country lying between the "dividing range" of Werong and Cox's River, for which he was given instructions in August, 1833. In November of that year he returned to Mount Clarence, whence he reported :—

"The continuation of my former survey of Ranges & creeks south from the mountain Road to the great bend of the Cox . . . .

"The Kowmung River upwards from its junction with the Cox for about twenty miles, and also a portion of the Konangaroo Creek, a branch of wh. runs Westerly round the 'Highest land' . . . . called by the Blacks (if the word can be written as they pronounce it) Kuo-uo-gang.

"The travelling however of the bed of these creeks I found much worse than the bed of the Cox—which River is in some places rendered tolerable by wide flats of stones. The Native name of the three conical Hills, intersected from Jellore, wh. also you [Mitchell] requested me to get is 'Mouin' but they are not named separately. That part of the country where the Cascade Ck from the Weather board Inn [Wentworth Falls] joins the Cox, is called Godoomba [hence 'Katoomba'], 'the isolated mountain' Munmu [?], and the One Tree Hill 'Gindingbla' [hence Kanimbla]."

For six years Govett had explored and traversed stream, ridge and forest in the mountains, covering country previously untrod by the white man, and perhaps no one in the colony had as comprehensive a knowledge of the Blue Mountain system. It is therefore regrettable that, when a reduction was made in the surveying establishment, he returned to London, leaving Sydney by the barque *Ann* in March, 1834. He died in the 'forties, and is buried in the churchyard at Tiverton, Devon.

In recent years the Upper Nattai has become quite a resort of bushwalkers, and a number of parties have made trips from Mittagong down that valley as far as Burragorang or Starlight's Track. Its roughness, however, detracts somewhat from the pleasure of walking, or rather scrambling, along the valley, but it is of interest to notice that over fifty years ago the hillsides nearby were practically honeycombed with coal mines and drives. In the first six or eight miles of the valley, the upper coal measures which rise above river level are constantly visible, and during last century numerous attempts were made to mine the coal on a commercial scale. Much expensive plant was set up at various places along the valley, and three tramways were built from Mittagong to various drives and adits in the seam. Little public or governmental support was afforded to these projects, although the coal was of good quality, and they were eventually abandoned. In many places, however, traces of the old works can still be found, and these links with the past make an exploration of the district well worth while.

"IN PLACES YET UNTROD BY MAN."

BY H. P. BLACK.

(*Y.M.C.A. Ramblers' Club.*)

A few week-ends ago the Ramblers "did" Burralow Creek. It was an experience that will leave a memory not easily erased.

That six miles of mountain stream is as unspoiled as the day Cook set foot on our shores. It has remained unchanged for century upon century. There was an atmosphere of solitude about it that impinged on the senses, imparting a feeling that it was alive and we puny beings were of another world. The creek holds quite a supply of water, covering as it does a catchment extending to the Bilpin road, its bed being completely of rock, through which it has carved strange channels in the course of its career. This rock consists mainly of sandstone, with occasional outcrops of a brittle rock similar in composition to shale. Water-scoured boulders of different sizes, ranging from tiny pebbles to the size of a house, all rounded by the elements, are strewn in its bed and along its banks. The Creek is enclosed within a gorge, whose precipitous sides continually swing away slightly, then converge, so that the sun is seen for a short time only. The whole time we were fighting our way—through thick brush growing to the water's edge and over soft and spongy leaf-mould, the accumulation of generations. Lawyer vines in abundance were threaded across our path, while overhead tall trees of cedar, sassafras, blue gum and many other varieties obscured the sun. Occasional glimpses were to be had of beautiful groves of ferns ranging from the delicate maidenhair to the stately tree-fern, while large, cable-thick vines suspended, python-like, from moss and lichen-covered trees.

THE VOICES OF NATURE.

Rising above the sigh of the wind in the tree-tops and the soft gurgle of the creek waters in their play could be heard the music of bellbird and coach-whip, soldier-bird and magpie. Their voices were heard in song all the way, as unafraid of the presence of man as of the very canyon walls. The "noises of the night," soft, rustling grasses and scratching on tree-tops betokened the presence of other bush-dwellers. In profusion also were the tracks of wallaby, and on a small, sandy beach could be seen the story of a morning drink : the tracks leading down, an extra deep imprint on the edge where the marsupial had stooped, and then the tracks leading away—his thirst now slaked.

We pushed on still through the almost impenetrable brush, over and around huge boulders, forced at times to leave the creek and sidle on wallaby pads on a slope of sometimes sixty degrees. Contrary to expectations, the going scarcely eased as we toiled downstream, and we finally reached the Grose late in the afternoon. We had been compelled to battle all the way, and many scratches were evidence of the conflict.

Thus we left Burralow Creek. How long will its inaccessibility protect it and similar creeks tucked away in the mountains ? As we said good-bye to the creek it seemed as though we were emerging from an unchanging, ageless world into the twentieth century once more, just as the waters of Burralow Creek mingled and lost their identity in the still, cold bosom of the Grose.

This was vested in the local municipal and shire councils. Furthermore, the saving of the Forest convinced the authorities that the bushwalkers were sincere in their conservation efforts, and so made the securing of other reserves comparatively easy.

The Trustees, who are the same to-day as in 1935, charge no fee for camping in the Blue Gum Forest. They know that the older walkers are their comrades of the fight to save the trees, men and women who have earned the freedom of the Forest for life. The younger walkers are different, but the Trustees know that most of them are also imbued with the spirit which secured Blue Gum Forest, and they will carry on the tradition by doing their bit to protect it in every way from vandalism. The younger walkers should remember that the Forest is not "just another park," but very specially their own.

Although members of the River Canoe Club of New South Wales look upon the summer months as their "season," they are active during the winter with mapping walks. These excursions are for the purpose of making members efficient in compiling river maps, and keep members together while their canoes are hibernating. Under the leadership of Ted Phillips, the Mapping Committee has prepared twenty detailed river maps, and is in the course of compiling a comprehensive "N.S.W. River Guide."

WINTER TRAVAIL.

Barrington Tops Under Snow.

BY D. H. McKELLAR.

(The Rucksack Club, Sydney, N.S.W.)

During June, July, and August, Barrington Tops usually has a coating of snow which varies in depth from six inches to two feet. With winds of skin-piercing fierceness and perpetual cloud formations, this summer tourist resort presents a strangely beautiful and awe-inspiring spectacle to any bushwalker imbued with enough curiosity and hot blood to tackle these heights in midwinter.

I acquired a "walking" knowledge of Carey's Peak in December, 1938, when climbing and perspiring through intermittent bushfires which left one with memories of smoke-shrouded mountains and the unpleasantness of acute thirst. The idea then formed of a trip in the other weather extreme. I had not then had any experience in snow, and, for some now unknown reason, was enthusiastically looking forward to the trip with delightful anticipation.

After encountering a severe sleet storm at the Chichester Dam, fine days and nights followed till we were actually on Carey's Peak. Every day, while tramping towards the ranges, thick masses of jet black cloud could be seen surging up from the south-west and scudding along the jagged tops of the mountains—never coming over them or receding from them, but running as a trapeze artist along the line of mountain.

Our first sight of snow came when climbing slowly round the face of the cliff track, commonly known as "The Corker." From this position the stark rock face of Carey's Peak could be seen, and, through the flying cloud masses which obscured the peak, fleeting glimpses of the fascinating whiteness of snow were obtained. In another hour boots had begun to crunch through a crust of snow into slush on the track beneath; the icy water found its way into our boots, melting quickly on encountering the warmth of our feet, and eventually freezing again in the remote regions of the toes. Any gaiety or jubilation celebrating our arrival at the snow-line had now subsided; with every step toes jarred and stung horribly, and hobnails on our boots were useless because of the coating of ice on the soles. Strangely enough, the air was quite warm, and, though clouds hid the sun, we were walking minus our shirts and felt quite warm.

To make matters worse, thick mist began to descend through the snow-gums, and instead of the yellow smoke of bush fires which swirled through the trees in the summer a thick, writhing mass of chocolate-coloured fog descended and limited our vision to about fifty yards.

OUR HOPES DASHED.

The afternoon was rapidly advancing, and progress had been slowed up considerably by numbed and swollen feet and the drag of clumping through the snow. However, with visions of the hut on Carey's Peak, never without its supply of dry wood, we kept plugging away. Darkness had begun to fall when the corrugated iron hut loomed up out of the mist, and with almost a spurt of energy the entrance was reached. Never were disgust and disappointment more

THE BLUE GUM FOREST.

The Story of Its Reservation.

Unfortunately many men on the land seem to have only one thought—grass. There is also a popular idea, which may or may not be true, that successful businessmen think only of their money-bags. Yet the Blue Gum Forest has made successful businessmen talk of fairies! And fairies there must be who love and protect those magnificent trees—otherwise, why should the man who had taken up land including the Blue Gum Forest have chosen a week-end to start ringbarking the blue gums? In those days, when bush-walkers were few, why did there happen to be a party of M.T.C. and S.B.W. members within sound of his axe?

No, the Blue Gum Forest was not saved by the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs. Its reservation was one of the major factors that led to the formation of the Federation in 1932. Here is the story.

In 1931 two farmers, seeking more grass, secured Conditional Purchases in the Grose Valley, one on the northern and one on the southern bank of the river. They at once set to work to make a track by which they could take their cattle from the Bell Road down past the mighty cliffs into the valley. The Grose flows through a deep gash in the plateau, and grazing flats along the river are really non-existent; but the holder of the land knew of one flat area, at the junction of Govett's Leap Creek with the river—the Blue Gum Forest. That was where he intended to graze his cattle and grow walnuts, so he set off to ringbark the blue gums, but had not much more than started the work of destruction when he was halted by a small party of bushwalkers consisting of members of two of the small clubs which then existed in Sydney.

At that time the Mountain Trails Club had 27 members, the Sydney Bush Walkers about 140, none of them wealthy, and the depression was at its worst. Things looked very gloomy, as the only way Mr. Hungerford, the grazier, could be persuaded to spare the trees was by a cash payment of £130 within three months to buy him out. He had, however, agreed to refrain from ringbarking any more trees until the walkers had had an opportunity of explaining the position to their clubs and reporting back to him whether or not arrangements could be made to purchase the land.

APPEALS FOR FUNDS.

As soon as they returned to town, the walkers got busy and a committee was formed of members of both clubs. The Wild Life Preservation Society was approached, and gave £25 to pay a deposit; its President was added to the committee, and he later became the Chairman of the Trust. Club members and committeemen alike gave and obtained donations, and raised money by various means. Somehow or other the trees had to be saved.

Another meeting with Mr. Hungerford took place in the Forest on November 15, 1931, while thunder rolled and rain poured down. Myles Dunphy and Alan Rigby, of the M.T.C.; Joe Turner and Noel Griffiths, of the S.B.W.; Roy Bennett, of the W.L.P.S.; and Mr. Hungerford, the grazier, squatted on their haunches in a circle under the trees and talked business. Watching them, two visitors crouched in Rigby's small lean-to tent, and Mr. J. G. Lockley ("Redgum" of

the "Sydney Morning Herald") and Dorothy Lawry, who had driven some of the party to the start of the track from the Bell Road, sheltered in a hollow at the base of a huge fallen blue gum.

When the storm had passed and the party broke up—some to go back to the Bell Road and the cars, others to walk through to Govett's Leap—the price was still £130, and the time for payment within three months. That afternoon Mr. Lockley commented on the "pylon" which now bears his name, and when he got back to Sydney the "Herald" gave the Blue Gum Forest and the walkers' efforts to save it a lot of splendid publicity.

With this additional help the committee renewed its efforts, and sent out a fresh batch of appeals to various citizens who might be persuaded to contribute some of that rare commodity—cash. Time was getting short, and the funds in hand only totalled £50 when one of these appeals reached Mr. W. J. Cleary, then Commissioner for Railways. He took time to consider the appeal carefully, and then anonymously lent the committee the remaining £80 free of interest for two years—not expecting to see it again, as he explained when it was repaid on December 1, 1933.

THE FOREST RESERVED.

Mr. Hungerford was paid the sum of £130, and he transferred his holding to the treelovers, who handed it back to the Crown. In this way the Government became aware of the existence of the Blue Gum Forest, and in the "Government Gazette" of September 2, 1932, the area of 40 acres was proclaimed a Reserve for Public Recreation. A subsequent issue of December 2, 1932, notified the appointment of four trustees, representing the Wild Life Preservation Society, the Mountain Trails Club of N.S.W., and the Sydney Bush Walkers, namely, Messrs. Roy Bennett (W.L.P.S.), Alan Rigby (M.T.C.), and Joe Turner and Miss Dorothy Lawry (S.B.W.). In 1935 Mr. Rigby resigned from the Trust, and Maurice L. Berry (M.T.C.) was appointed in his place, a fifth Trustee, Mr. W. J. Cleary, also being appointed.

The years 1932 and 1933 were busy ones for Bushwalkers and Trailers. Not only were they raising money by various entertainments so that the debt on the Forest could be paid, but they were working for Garawarra Park and forming the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs. There had been several previous unsuccessful attempts to form a Federation, but the tremendous effort needed to secure a small area of 40 acres showed club members the necessity for uniting all clubs so that other larger areas could be saved in their natural state for posterity.

THE FEDERATION FORMED.

The extra impetus thus given to the movement for federation came just when the mystery hiking craze was at its height, and the clubs feared that the bushwalking movement and its traditions would be swamped by inexperienced people lacking conservation ideals. Spurred by this fear, as well as by their ardent desire to protect their beloved bushlands, the federationists succeeded in 1932 in forming the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs.

Another result of the purchase and dedication of the Blue Gum Forest was the reservation of a strip 300 feet wide on each side of Govett's Leap Creek from the junction to the Grose River, up the river to Blackheath Creek, and for some distance up that creek.

plainly expressed at the conditions in the interior of this refuge! Snow waters had flowed into it, making the neatly stacked firewood completely useless and a night's shakedown utterly impossible.

At five o'clock in the evening at an altitude of 5300 feet, in the thick of a swirling mass of cloud, and possessed of feet which had almost ceased to co-operate with our bodies, we became resigned to everything. The nearest supposed habitation was a cottage three miles north-west across the many swamps which almost completely cover the Tops. These swamps present a navigating problem even in the driest of weather, as swamp leads into swamp through saddle-like inlets between low-lying hills, and to endeavour to get through them for three miles just at nightfall in the conditions described was to attempt something well-nigh impossible. However, we took a

VIEW FROM CAREY'S PEAK, BARRINGTON TOPS.
(Photo. by S. Cutter.)

compass bearing on the map to travel in a north-west direction, and began to walk round the snow-covered marshes, keeping up on the sides of the low hills which form their banks and endeavouring to maintain direction. On checking up with the compass, realisation dawned that a deviation had been made to the south, apparently through manoeuvring around the swamp systems. There was nothing else to be done but—yes, even thankfully—camp there and then on the snow under the dubious shelter of two very gnarled old snow-gums. Fortunately, enough semi-dry wood was found and not a very successful fire begun. Peeling off boots and socks proved to be a tedious and painful process, and not till after many minutes of massaging did the much-abused feet respond and begin to feel somewhat comfortable.

No matter how many groundsheets and gum leaves we spread out on the snow, it was utterly impossible to keep the intense cold from penetrating. With the tent draped round our shivering forms,

an exceedingly miserable night dragged on to a late moonrise and a mist-laden dawn two hours later. Of course, with the coming of the sun the trees above us began to shed their covering of frost and ice, and rained bitterly cold drops of water in an almost continuous downpour, lasting long enough to soak the tent thoroughly.

DAYLIGHT BRINGS RELIEF.

After the ordeal of forcing frozen boots on to sore and swollen feet, all gear was packed away, some chocolate consumed, and a start made for a hill from which we hoped some landmark would be sighted. The mist had now practically cleared; walking without shirts became possible, and some of the misery of the previous night a fading memory. On gaining the top of the hill, beyond more swamps, we sighted a line of fence posts which, according to the map, would lead us to the house we were seeking. It now remained to cross three or four swamps which separated us from at least temporary comfort. It is impossible to estimate the depth of these marshes, and their navigation is by no means a safe or easy task even in summer. Now the surface water was covered with sheet ice, but unfortunately it was not thick enough to walk on, and only by stepping from grass clump to grass clump were we able to proceed slowly across the flats.

At last the long-awaited cottage hove into sight. Unfortunately, the inhabitants had evacuated to a warmer clime, and so, after a spell of a few minutes and a ration of chocolate, plodding was resumed through the snow in the direction of Mount Barrington and Stewart's Brook. All notions of an extended trip over the ranges to Singleton were now definitely abandoned. Climbing to Mount Barrington at approximately 5250 feet the snow became deeper, and every step resulted in it coming well over the knees. Logs and rocks concealed underneath proceeded to make nasty impressions on our shins. Shortly the trig. station on the summit could be seen, and the last fifty yards of scrambling through deep snow drifts brought us to the peak. There a magnificent panorama of mountain ranges and heavily timbered valleys momentarily expelled all thoughts of numbed and aching feet.

As far as the eye could see, range after range rose up from deep, shadowed valleys. Below, and to the south and west of the "trig.," the broad, fertile acres of the Hunter River Valley and the course of the river itself could be easily picked out. With this "Promised Land" now in sight, no time was lost in scrambling down the steep track leading to Stewart's Brook. Now at last numbed and frozen feet emerged from the cold whiteness into the dust of the good, brown earth—warm, friendly, and dry!

After prolonged agitation and many representations to the Department of Works and Local Government, the River Oak (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*) has been proclaimed a protected plant under the Wild Flowers and Native Plants Protection Act. The effect of this gazettal is that this species of River Oak, which grows so plentifully along our Blue Mountains streams, will be protected from being cut for cattle fodder or wantonly destroyed by hikers, picnickers, or timber getters. It is to be hoped that the spirit as well as the letter of the law is adhered to, as this is the only way in which one of our finest ornamental shade trees can be preserved from extinction.

THE VALLEY OF THE GROSE.

Its Historic Associations.

BY R. ELSE MITCHELL.
(The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.)

Rugged and secluded, the valley of the Grose is a favourite haunt of the walker. Its attractions are numerous, and its profuse historic associations extend over a century and a half.

The lower Grose was discovered in 1789 by a party under Governor Phillip which explored the Hawkesbury, and four years later it was named the Grose, after the Lieutenant-Governor, by Captain Paterson, who made an expedition some ten miles up the river in small boats, eventually reaching a point called Canopy Cliff, near Wentworth Creek. The reports made by members of this expedition, and the description given of the upper reaches of the river by Caley in 1804, deterred the inhabitants of the colony from trying to cross the mountains by following its course. Settlement extended to the Nepean-Grose junction early in the century, but land was only occupied for a mile or so up stream, where the banks afforded opportunities for cultivation and grazing.

EXPLOITS OF THE SURVEYORS.

In the late 1820's Major Mitchell, the Surveyor-General, decided that the valley of the Grose might afford a good route for a road, and he determined to explore the river to ascertain whether it would be possible "to carry the western road along the valley of the Grose, and, by cutting a tunnel of about a mile through a ridge at the head of it, to reach the Vale of Clwydd and so avoid the mountains altogether." Before he had travelled far up the valley from the Nepean, Mitchell's party was forced to leave the horses, and the journey was continued on foot for some distance, until the huge boulders which line the stream compelled a retreat.

A year or so later Surveyor Dixon, one of Mitchell's assistants, when connecting the trigonometrical survey with Mount King George, made an excursion into the gorges of the upper Grose and was unable to find his way out of the maze of gullies for three days. In 1830 Dixon made another excursion near the Grose to Mount Hay, and ascended its summit on February 10, 1830, being the first white man to achieve that honour.

STRZELECKI'S JOURNEY.

These pioneers, particularly Caley, Mitchell, and Dixon, were competent bushmen, and it is no reflection on their ability that they were repulsed by the wild ruggedness of the Grose. Even the great explorer, Paul Edmund Strzelecki, to whom Australia owes the discovery of its highest peak, found exploring in the Grose a hazardous enterprise. He was pursuing mineralogical and geological studies in the colony in 1839, and in August of that year he traversed a substantial portion of the Grose valley above Mount Hay, eventually climbing out of the valley near Mount King George to Bell's Line of Road. His description of the valley is worth quoting. He said: "Between these ranges lie yawning chasms, deep and winding gorges

and frightful precipices. Narrow, gloomy, and profound, these stupendous rents in the bosom of the earth are inclosed between gigantic walls of a sandstone rock sometimes receding from, sometimes frightfully overhanging the dark bed of the ravines and its black silent eddies or its flowing torrents of water. Everywhere the descent into the deep recess is full of danger and the issue almost impracticable."

RAILWAY SURVEY AND BRIDLE TRACK MADE.

For some years settlers and surveyors studiously avoided the valley since nothing was to be gained by further exploration, but in 1857, when the western districts were clamouring for a railway to Sydney, a survey was authorised to ascertain whether a line could be laid along the valley to Hartley, thereby saving the gradients which a railway over the main ridge would necessitate. The Royal Engineers were entrusted with the work, and, after a preliminary survey had been made, they were instructed to make a bridle track up the valley from the Nepean to Shepherd's Toll Bar at Mount Victoria. This track took months to construct, and was not completed till March, 1860, when the senior officers of the Railway Department made an inspection. They decided that the valley presented a practicable route for a railway, and estimated the cost at £15,000 per mile. Other trial surveys were being made at the same time, however, and shortly afterwards, when the Government announced that the most suitable route lay up the Lapstone Hill ridge, the Grose was abandoned.

This bridle track was a remarkable piece of work, considering the difficult country and the necessity for quarrying for rock, making embankments and clearing the route of timber. So substantially was it constructed that even to-day parts of it are still in good condition, though landslips, fires, floods and rain have demolished or obstructed the greater part of it.

The track was used a little by local residents, and people with a scientific bent, such as Louisa Atkinson and the Rev. W. B. Clarke, travelled up it on occasions during botanical and geological ramblings.

A SOURCE OF WATER SUPPLY.

In the year 1868 a proposal was made to use the Grose for water supply purposes, and an investigation was made by members of a Royal Commission who journeyed down the Grose from Mount Victoria as far as Govett's Leap Creek. At this point they considered that a dam could be built below the junction, and with a wall fifty feet high at least one year's supply would be impounded. Ultimately, however, the weakness of the permo-carboniferous strata and the cost of building the dam and a take-off weir further downstream were found to be serious obstacles, and the Commission, while praising the quality of the Grose water, recommended the exploitation of the Cataract River system.

By this time the Grose had become fairly well known, and interest in it was increased by the popularity of Govett's Leap as a tourist attraction. The 'seventies saw members of the Academy of Art undertaking the first pleasure trip and photographic excursion in the Grose, and, after the discovery of the Evans' Lookout route into the valley in 1882, many tourists wandered into its sylvan recesses. Before the close of the century the Govett's Leap cliff track was made, and tourists often made round trips over Perry's Lookdown and Evans' Lookout and up the cliff track to Blackheath.

INDUSTRY IN THE GROSE.

At various times industrial pursuits have threatened to disturb the peaceful solitude of the Grose. Abortive attempts to mine coal and shale near Mount Hay and a few miles below Mount Victoria have been made on several occasions since 1881, and in 1925 a company which proposed to exploit the coal measures near Mount Hay made surveys for the construction of a light railway from Richmond. Financial support was lacking, however, and the project was never carried to finality. As recently as 1931, and within the memory of most walkers, commercial interests began cutting the glorious forests of blue gums at the "Junction Camp" where Govett's Leap Creek meets the Grose. Happily their depredations were stopped by the bushwalking movement and other altruists, who subscribed enough money to buy the land, and in September of that year the Blue Gum Forest was dedicated as a reserve for public recreation.

Thus the finest spot in the whole valley, a veritable treasure-house of memories and a regular haunt of the bushwalker, has been preserved for posterity. Here Nature can be seen in her most varied and brightest moods, and communion with her is the solace of a hard and bitter world.

The INFORMATION BUREAU, that most valuable adjunct to the Federation's activities, is being carried on by Oliver Wulf at Paddy Pallin's, 327 George Street, Sydney, where enquiries about trips, routes and gear are welcomed.

TO THE HIGH HILLS.

BY DOT. ENGLISH.

(The Sydney Bush Walkers and the N.Z. Alpine Club.)

There are recreations *and* recreations. For myself, I would rather walk. I went horse-riding last week-end. Next time I shall walk—you can't beat walking as an exercise. For nights I have tossed and turned in bed and groaned in spirit. Instead of drugging my insomnia by counting sheep, I recount the name of every individual muscle in my body and ascertain whether it is stiff and sore. It is! No thanks; keep your horse. I'd rather walk!

Now bushwalking, the *summum bonum* of all sports in Australia, becomes mountaineering in New Zealand for the simple reason that, to make any headway in the dense, waterlogged forests, you would need a road gang armed with axes, spades, and mattocks, and backed up by a bulldozer and a steam-roller or two, and that, to anyone other than an alderman, is clearly impracticable. But on the mountains you have clear going, even though it be nearer the vertical than the horizontal, and the despised vegetable dies before it is born rather than contend with the unsympathetic, icy vastness of a superior world.

Speaking of mountains brings me to my subject—Malte Brun, the object of our aspirations last Easter. The name "Malte Brun," while it conveys practically nothing to a stranger, save, perhaps, a nebulous groping into his elementary French grammar days, to the New Zealand climber conjures up a vision of over 10,000 feet of clean, red, reliable rock, the best of all God's stones. The fact that Malte is situated in the Mount Cook district and thus consorts with the proud, snowy aristocracy of Sefton, Tasman, Dampier, The Minarets, and even Cook itself, decided us to spend our holiday in real climbers' country.

Leaving Dunedin by car on the Thursday evening, our party of three travelled Mount Cook-wards all through the night. There was a brief respite of four hours when we crawled into our eiderdown bags and refreshed the body with sleep on a pile of boulders by the roadside—actually the best camp-site offering, as the whole plain for miles around was a fair representation of the Gibber Desert.

First light saw us on our way again. Mount Cook Hermitage welcomed us for breakfast, after which, loaded down to Plimsoll mark, we set out on the twenty-mile plug up the heaped moraine rocks and hummocky ice of Tasman Glacier to De la Beche Hut, which was to be our headquarters for the next couple of days. The hut reached, dinner disposed of, and the alarm-clock set in anticipation of a big day on the morrow, we rolled into our bunks by 9 p.m., and vacated them at 3 o'clock next morning after a terrible mental struggle. Soon we were sleep-walking over the half-mile or so of wrinkled epidermis of the Tasman Glacier, which flowed like a river of ice between De la Beche Hut and the foot of our "Hearts' Desire."

Uncertain weather conditions caused us to dilly-dally for some time at the foot of Malte Brun, but eventually we decided that we

CHEVAL RIDGE, MALTE BRUN.

(Photo. by F. Newmarch, N.Z.A.C.)

would be doing something profitable if we did a spot of reconnoitring, even if unable to climb that day. So we plodded upwards over tumbled rocks to the Malte Brun Glacier, from which vantage point we gazed long and lovingly at our peak, till, fired by the undeniable truth of the saying, "Familiarity breeds Attempt," we decided to make for the summit. As if just waiting for this vote of confidence, Heaven now smiled on us; the clouds cleared away, and a perfect day shone forth.

We skirted a yawning gap in the glacier ice and bent our minds and our muscles in an attempt on the steep-walled N.E. face of the western arrete, which my experienced eye judged to be as good as perpendicular. An inexperienced clinometer might have made a more moderate estimate. But, my dear readers of conventional fiction, do not imagine that the inevitable choice of a climber always rests

between an unscaleable precipice and a bottomless crevasse; sometimes there is a middle way, and on this occasion we were lucky enough to find one which led us to the skyline ridge. Of course, it was not as easy as that—it took about eight hours in all, which, like the laying of an egg (on the 40-hour a week estimate), is a whole day's work for a hen.

For another two hours we clambered over the mountain's knobbly back-bone, part of its length including the famous Cheval Ridge, so steep on either side that if you had to fall you wouldn't bother to make a choice either way.

It has been said by second-rate climbers that there are only two joys in mountaineering—one when you reach the top, and one when you reach the bottom. Well, we certainly enjoyed ourselves—but we did not reach the top; 3.30 p.m. found us still 400 feet from our goal. The heights were enveloped by a heavy mist, which thinned occasionally, revealing the summit rocks well plastered with snow, thus making quite dangerous climbing. We decided, in view of the lateness of the hour, to retreat while daylight was still with us. After all, the idea in climbing is not necessarily to get to the top of a mountain, but to enjoy life (and I say "life" advisedly), as far as you go.

THE DESCENT.

We retraced our steps along the switchback ridge till it appeared to end in an impossible drop, then transferred our attention to a steep, dark couloir which, in our happy ignorance, seemed the less of two evils. It could have been called either a frozen watercourse hung on the face of the mountain, or an avalanche chute, being both. Darkness overtook us before we had fairly started the descent, and for five solid hours we belayed ourselves every foot of the way down the sort of dark, loose, slippery corridor that you wouldn't look at twice in daylight, except to say "impossible!" As the hours vanished into the dark void of night, this concentrated progression became so mechanical that we did it unconsciously.

Just to relieve the monotony, the mountain found occasion, at irregular intervals, to launch portions of the hillside on to our heads. But what though the going was dark and difficult! Somehow we at last found ourselves at the top of a steep snowfield into which our crampons would grip. The full splendour of an Easter moon lit up the expanse of white with a radiance not of this world, and the strain relaxed.

After a little scouting about, we picked up our tracks of the day before. Then it was just a downhill trot all the way, and at 4 a.m. we lumbered into Malte Brun Hut as the foot of the mountain. Here we refuelled with two tins of iced apricots, as we hadn't eaten since the previous afternoon, and then it had only been half a bun each and a piece of chocolate. The apricots more than fortified us ; they kept continually reminding us of their presence as we crossed the Tasman Glacier to our own little hut at De la Beche.

Dawn saw three small figures moving slowly up the high moraine rocks till they gained the hut. The sun rose above the eastern bar and shouted, "Hullo ! Hullo !" to a waking world, but we tumbled into our sleeping-bags and let him shout. And all day long he called and called, but we lay fast asleep ; aye, all the day, because our need was deep. After our own fashion, though, we had enjoyed ourselves.

REUNION.

The First Federation Camp.

The Federation Camp held in February, 1940, was a new venture, undertaken with a good deal of trepidation, but carried through with much more general support from individual club members than the organisers had anticipated. The idea came from the Annual Conference of 1939, and it was translated into action by a small but very efficient committee with energy and initiative and the knack of communicating their own enthusiasm to others.

Choosing a camp site was difficult, as it was necessary to find a place to accommodate 250 campers, with good canoeing, drinking and swimming water, abundance of wood, accessible by road and handy to the railway. Luscombe's Flat on the Lower Grose River was eventually decided upon, and proved to be a very satisfactory choice.

The Saturday evening's camp fire provided a thoroughly happy entertainment, with an extremely impressive opening ceremony conducted by Mr. W. A. Holesgrove, the President of the Federation. Coming down the slope with a lighted torch, he lit each club's torch to symbolise the carrying on of the ideals of the bush by successive clubs. The main camp fires were then lit and a bright evening's programme commenced, including an address by our guest, Mr. Gordon Young, the State Director of Physical Fitness, who made a stirring appeal for help to provide outings into the bush for city children.

Although the Sunday was hot a surprisingly large number turned out for the various instructional groups, which included botany, rock climbing, ornithology, first-aid, and photography, while the Canoe Club provided an aquatic carnival.

The Camp undoubtedly contributed a great deal towards the fostering of Federation spirit among club members, as well as providing an opportunity for them to meet the members of other clubs ; and the fact that 250 people turned out for the week-end clearly indicated that there is a demand for this type of camp. There seems no reason why it should not be an annual event.

NOVICES AFIELD.

Wentworth Falls to Couridjah.

BY "BELLBIRD."

To get as far as possible from Bills Payable and Bills Receivable was mainly Sam's idea, for holidays in the bank come but once a year, and the wide open spaces offer a direct contrast to the confines of a banking chamber.

And so before we knew where we were, Sam, the leader of the hiking expedition, had the three of us at Wentworth Falls station. The afternoon had all but gone when, each with a 60 lb. pack, we left to reach the foot of Kedumba Pass before dark. We barely made it : and there we camped by the waters of Kedumba Creek.

Next morning we made along a southern winding track which in a few hours brought us to the solitary farmhouse in the valley, where we were greeted with much barking from a motley collection of dogs. Wading across a shallow creek, we made up to the farmhouse, calling "Anyone in !" knowing full well there was. A busy-looking woman, whose face was hidden beneath a wide-brimmed hat, came out, asking rather abruptly, "What do you want ? What's yer trouble ?" We courteously asked for directions. After summing us up in customary style, she became more friendly. "You see them stockyards. Go over the rise the other side, cross a paddock, and keep goin' due south. Soon you'll come to a stony bottom crick. Pick up the track again there, and don't follow them cattle tracks up into the hills, and you'll be right."

When questioned about her farm, she warmed up still more, her voice echoing through the foothills. She said what she thought of the Government for not building a road to the farm, "though we've been here nigh on fifty years !" Frowning on us, she waxed indignant as though it was all our fault—"All they worry about is them there tourists !" Beginning to learn why hikers are not over popular, we left the good woman, had a quick lunch by the "stony bottom crick," and then pushed onward, only to find the end of the trail.

OFF THE TRACK.

We kept on, picking up a trail here and there, until it petered out completely. Then we found we were bushed. We decided to turn back. It was just on dark when we found the spot where we had been originally led astray, and there we camped.

The morning sun was shining on our airing blankets when a welcome stranger burst through the bushes, and close behind him was his four-year-old son. [Frank Duncan and young Ross.—Editor.] A cheery good-morning, a cup of cocoa, and the hikers were friends, the shyness of the boy being broken down by boiled lollies. The newcomer's name appeared as a place name on the map which he produced. An experienced hiker, he showed us how

to make a compass out of a watch if we got lost, and then presented us with a compass, a spare with the glass broken, but none the less welcome.

Reluctantly we parted company, our new friends making towards Wentworth Falls, the little boy with his curly mop of brown hair and shy brown eyes following his dad. The child was no new chum. With the smallest of packs (no doubt Dad was compelled to let him carry that), he had followed in his father's footsteps from Couridjah, which they had left a week before.

Later we came across the beautiful Cox's River where the Kedumba joins it. Nearby was a small farm, and the kindly farmer's wife invited us to take our fill of oranges. That night we camped in a dried-up watercourse near Moody's, and next morning found us headed for Bimlow, a tiny village. On the road to Bimlow we, Australians all, heard for the first time the glorious ring of the bellbirds coming from all sides—music beyond description. At Bimlow the store lacked the usual stores, though for this the storekeeper offered no apologies.

THE FARMER'S BUGBEAR.

On our way again, leaving the wide Wollondilly with its none too fresh water, we made in the direction of the Nattai River. Along the side of Nattai Mountain we came across a weatherbeaten road-worker, working alone, sweating profusely as he wielded a hammer. A friendly fellow, he directed us to "keep on goin' for some distance till you come to a cornfield. Branch to the left, and soon you'll hit some old pear trees. It ain't fur from them pear trees to Murphy's, and be careful, 'cause he hates campers like poison." By this time we were fully aware that campers weren't popular with farmers.

On reaching Mr. Murphy's, we found him pleasant enough after his coldness had thawed. From him we learned the farmer's side of this camping-hiking business, and the real reason for the hostility encountered, veiled or open. "You see," Murphy said, "parties come down here—lorry loads of the cows—drinking-up and shooting everything. I've counted as many as thirty empties in my paddocks, and a day or so after they've gone I had me cattle droppin' dead, peppered with pea-rifle bullets. But youse fellers are all right!"

Bidding Mr. Murphy farewell, we made for Little River, and by nightfall reached Toppleover Peak and camped the night at a spot bearing the colourful name, Golden Moon Bluff. As if to live up to its name, especially for our benefit, the moon showed itself for the first time during our journey. It was more like a silver sickle strung high in the sky behind the branches of some stately pine trees. As a matter of fact, it looked like one of those pantomime stage scenes, only this was the real thing.

The air was heavy with bush perfume, and on our leafy beds of bracken, beneath the starriest of skies, we reclined in real pleasure and contentment, watching the blue smoke curl from a fire which delightedly popped every now and then as though sharing our enjoyment. Ledgers, tellers' sheets—these were completely forgotten. Out here there were no bundy clocks!

LOST AGAIN.

Next morning we hit the Little River with water of the purest, 'midst scenery most beautiful, below Tumble Down Mountain and the Wild Goat Plateau. A half-day hike brought us to the end of the trail. Where was Blue Gum Creek? Where did Little River

join Blue Gum Creek? Where was the turn-off shown on the map? Bank clerks aren't seasoned explorers! For half a day we searched in vain.

After wandering about for miles and retracing our tracks, we suddenly struck the crossing, which a flooded river had all but obliterated. Strangely enough it was only some thirty yards from where we had at first started our fruitless search early in the day, but if the morning hunt was futile it added to the fun. Following a good night's rest we prepared for the final stage of our journey, a dozen miles up the pass to Couridjah, and sixty miles from our starting place at Wentworth Falls.

One of us was lame, but we were all happy. Our lame member arrived on the Southern Road with one boot on and one off. And then for home—home, sweet home! What a relief! Hot bath, shave, clean clothes, good food on a covered table—isn't home better than the bush? But is it? The mattress might be softer, but is it as refreshing as the grassy couch? The food is certainly better, but does it taste as appetizing as that lump of stale bread and cheese eaten beside a bubbling stream? The music from the radio is soothing, but is it as sweet as that choir of bird music that awakened you yesterday morning? The books on the shelves! Why, you took a couple in your pack and never even looked at them. And rightly so!

Ledgers, banknotes by the million, clean and mutilated; "You wish to open an account, madam?"—back to all that. Well it must be so. By contrast of bush and city, of work and holiday, life is enriched. And so back to work until next leave. And then perhaps again the heavy pack and the light heart, the bushy gullies and the winding river; back to the picturesque glens and glades where the bellbirds sing—next year!

THE BLOCK-UP, SHOALHAVEN RIVER. (Photo. by R. Else Mitchell.)

SECRETS OF THE SHOALHAVEN.

Vale of Hidden Wonders.

BY R. ELSE MITCHELL.
(The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.)

Away in the heights of the eastern plateau a few miles from Bredbo, mountain springs and swamps form the headwaters of the Shoalhaven River, that giant of mountain streams which meets the sea near Nowra well over a hundred miles away. Foremost amongst our mountain rivers, the Shoalhaven drains a vast watershed comprising some of the finest scenic country in the State, and from its source to the still waters of its estuary the stream traverses a variety of country. It passes from upland swamps to open pastures and sunlit plains, through which its waters meander gracefully, and at length, after passing by the town of Braidwood, it plunges into a gorge below Oallen Ford, at which point the Nerriga-Bungonia road crosses its course. Henceforth its waters, pure and swift, are supplemented by the Mongarlowe, the Corang and the Endrick, streams of never-failing flow taking their rise in the coastal divide which bounds the eastern watershed.

Sweeping down the gorge, the Shoalhaven makes the little Horseshoe below the heights of Touga, and then passing around the big Horseshoe it tears headlong through the churned-up strata in which it has cut a canyon of awesome proportions. Half a dozen miles downstream the river meets the core of the hard ordovician rock which flanks the valley sides, and through which it has carved a narrow channel. At this point, known locally as the Block-up, Nature has run riot; the valley sides, rising sheer from the water like the buttresses of Gibraltar, grey and gaunt, leave little harbour even for plant life, and the river, fiord-like, glides motionless between these iron gates which are closed to all but the canoeist. Beyond this point the valley opens out a little and receives the waters of Bungonia Creek, where limestone cliffs, towering far above, form sheer walls to the valley. Here the river, thwarted in its northerly pursuit, turns almost at right angles to flow seawards, still collecting the waters of its tributaries, the Bundanoon and Tallowal Creeks and the Kangaroo River.

EARLY HISTORY.

This gorge, stupendous in its grandeur and terrible in its wildness, has resisted the thrust of civilization for over a century, and is virtually still an unknown quantity. When discovered in March, 1818, by a party under Surveyor Meehan and Charles Throsby, it was described as impassable, and, although numerous attempts were made to cross it between Tallong and Nerrimunga Creek, they all had to be abandoned. As the years progressed, settlement spread to the very brink of the gorge near Tallong, Bungonia, and Inverary Park, but only the most venturesome settlers penetrated the recesses of the valley, and then only as necessity demanded, in search of straying stock. From time to time since these early days the valley has been explored and surveyed at great hazard by geologists and others, including the great W. B. Clarke and officers of the geological survey staff who confirmed the existence of gold in the district.

In the late 'fifties, after the gold rush, many miners made their way into the rugged confines of the valley seeking traces of the precious metal, and prospecting was carried on there intermittently for the rest of the century. The puny efforts of the miners, however, have never availed against the river's will, and many a miner has escaped from the valley with nothing but his life, while to others such a fate would have been a stroke of good fortune. For suddenly and without warning the river rises in flood, and camps, plant, machinery, and worldly belongings, caught in the deluge, are swept away for ever. The banks bear witness to the ferocity of these floods by the piles of driftwood, the extensive silt flats, the boulder-strewn stream bed, and the wrecked plant which can be seen at places along the river. The old timers tell of anvils, blacksmith's gear and other ironwork being swept away and located miles down-stream lodged in the tree tops, while at one place an old steam engine, rusted and battered, has been cast unceremoniously on the bank far above normal river level. No doubt the river holds gold—probably in unlimited quantities—but it guards it with a jealous care from the miner who seeks to desecrate its virgin precincts.

Apart from sporadic attempts at prospecting during the depression, the Shoalhaven has seen little activity since the late years of last century, and nowadays it is deserted—as barren, awesome and un-spoiled in its gorge as it was a century ago. Only an occasional trace of civilization can be seen—a few old huts in ruins, with scraps of old gear, tools and ironwork scattered around. There is no track—indeed there is barely a negotiable route—along the boulder-strewn banks, but a few sheep, no doubt seeking and scenting water in the dry spells, have ventured into the gorge, where their only food is scraggy shrubs, a few blades of lank grass, and the young river oaks which have grown up since the last flood.

SCENIC ATTRACTIONS.

Yet, despite its inhospitable nature, the river presents an irresistible attraction to the walker and canoeist, particularly those who seek new fields and to whom the obstacles of Nature are a relish. It can best be approached from the Southern line, Tallong and Marulan being the most convenient points to commence a trip. Several good tracks lead to the river down the many ridges which link it with the uplands, many of them having been cut and used by the miners in past years. On my first visit to the valley, many years ago, I chose one of these from Marulan down the Barber's Creek ridge and up to Tallong—a short trip, but an excellent one to reveal some of the wonders of the valley, and to introduce the new-comer to the Shoalhaven atmosphere. Those of us who revel in the valleys of the Cox's, Wollondilly and Kowmung Rivers must not expect to find open grassy flats, shady casuarinas and picturesque wild apples. Instead the ground is barren, hard even to distraction, and the soil gives life to but a few sparse shrubs; the *casuarina suberosa*, a different variety from the Blue Mountain river oak, grows plentifully, but there are few large specimens, most of them having been uprooted and destroyed in the 1926 flood. Moreover, walking is laborious at times—jagged rocks and upturned strata tire all patience when the only relief is to be found on beds of gleaming white sand in which the feet sink to the ankles.

The way out of the valley on this trip was to Tallong over Badgery's Crossing and Lookout, probably the best known of the Shoalhaven tracks, and an excellent route by which to commence a jaunt into this country. If desired, excursions can be made from

the Crossing both up and down the river, and, above all, a trip up the southern valley slope to the head of Tallowal Gully will repay the walker who wishes to see the Kanangra of the south. From Tallowal a round trip can be made over Touga Trig, where expansive views extend over broken country to a distant horizon, down to the Horseshoe and back to Bungonia.

No trip to this part of the river is complete without paying a visit to the Block-up, of which mention has already been made. On a recent trip we determined to trace the river downstream from the Big Horseshoe with this object. After two or three hours of difficult walking down the river, we rounded a sharp bend, and I beheld for the first time the magnificent steeps which make the Block-up. In

THE BIG HORSESHOE, SHOALHAVEN RIVER.

(Photo. by R. Else Mitchell.)

the grey light of the late afternoon the beetling rocky slopes and sullen waters of the river made an ensemble which held us spell-bound, and so as to relieve the mental stress with which the scene impressed us we camped up a side creek whence this giant accident of Nature could not be seen. On the following day, relieved some-what of the reaction we had experienced the previous evening, we explored the Block-up more closely and saw it in all its glory, the early sun pouring through the rents in the eastern cliff and contrasting with the sombre grey of the shaded buttresses. For over 1500 feet these solid walls rise on each side, and between them the river for half a mile is murky and silent, startlingly reminiscent of the old adage that "still waters run deep." Our excursion completed, we gazed in wonder at this scene of wild grandeur for the last time before making the ascent up a nearby ridge on our homeward journey.

The sun rose higher nearing its zenith, and ere long the dust haze and summer heat brought us out of our reverie to the realities of life. We trudged silently along the track to the old Bungonia Road en route for home with a memory, though a vivid one, of Nature's greatest masterpiece in the Shoalhaven Valley.

"THE FUNNIEST TURNOUT."

BY IDA McAULAY.

(The Bush Club.)

Imagine, if you can, the southern portion of the West Coast of Tasmania between Macquarie Harbour and Port Davey. The coast is a lee shore, wreck-strewn and windswept, where short beaches alternate with great headlands of rock ending in broken, knife-edged reefs, the whole guarded on the land side by a barrier of toughly twisted scrub. Between this barrier and the mountains behind run, in some places, button-grass plains—strips of hilly country covered with high tussocks of button-grass and broken by steep gullies choked with scrub. These orange-green plains are not so easy to negotiate as they look from the heights of the mountains, but when floundering and cutting a way through the scrub one thinks of them as a paradise of open going. To the west of this coast is an ocean whose nearest shore is Patagonia, and to the east a week or more of travel through an almost terrifying, though beautiful, desolation of mountains, gorges, and scrub.

In this large-scale setting our party of six small human beings walked in pairs, one couple being far ahead. The central pair were women, my cousin and myself, lurching with our packs between the waist-high tussocks. My cousin fell and swore wholeheartedly, expressing to my satisfaction the feelings I had not the breath to express for myself. But the West Coast, which, through the years, has taken such a heavy toll of ships and lives, does not tamely submit to the hard words of woman. The next moment, while going down a steep bank the button-grass tripped my companion, who fell again, her pack swinging her outwards while her foot remained caught between the tussocks. There were two nasty cracks and a cry of pain; the Coast had made us pay for our temerity with a broken leg. In addition to the pain, the victim was for the moment overwhelmed by recognition of our awkward situation. Our party was on the return journey, but we were still two days of heavy going from our base, a fishing ketch at Port Davey.

AN AWKWARD PREDICAMENT.

Two men in the rear hurried up, and, while two of us did what we could for the patient, one of the men attempted to halt the two who were ahead; but they were far beyond shouting distance—a mile or so away. We gave it up and concentrated on the patient. The break, as we thought it might be, was just above the ankle. We bandaged it as best we could. She said she thought she could walk. And so she did, with support on either side, for two terribly slow and painful miles. Then she could do no more. The men left us near a creek and hurried on to overtake the other two, who were to wait for us at lunch time. The pair ahead were one of the fishermen from the ketch that had brought us to the Coast and a prospector who had come with us in the hope of finding gold. They were the most experienced of our party, the one having spent his life round the coast in boats, the other in the bush.

During the next three hours I did what I could to make the injured one comfortable, and the two of us contemplated the immediate future. We had two days' food with us, and three more which we had left with a dinghy at our starting place from Kelly's Basin in

Port Davey. It would be a long and difficult undertaking for the party now to get to Kelly's Basin, for the roughest part of the journey was still ahead. We had seen enough of wrecks and wreckage along the coast to know that the fishermen would not risk the ketch near the open coast unless the conditions were very favourable, which they seldom were in those parts. The prospects were not bright, especially for the patient with her painful and rapidly swelling leg.

We had begun to think of spending the night where we were when the four men came walking at top speed into our temporary camp. They were without packs, but carried all the spare cords and straps they could muster. The fisherman whom we called "the Chief" had taken charge of the affair. He had noticed a place on the outward journey, he said, where a dinghy could be brought into a gulch in fine weather, while the ketch stood off under the lee of an island. The thing was to carry our patient there as quickly as possible, and then he and Dennis, the prospector, would go on to Port Davey and try to signal the ketch and bring her round to us, if only the weather would hold. A stretcher was soon completed with the help of saplings lashed together and covered by groundsheets and sleeping bags. When it had been tested, our patient was installed on it and made as comfortable as possible, and our small procession started. The Chief set the pace, and drove us on with his silent anxiety for speed; for he alone knew fully the risks of taking us off the open coast and the likelihood—or rather unlikelihood—of the weather holding. He had picked the place in his mind where he meant us to camp that night, and he allowed few rests beyond a moment or two between relays on the stretcher.

Dark caught us before we had gone as far as the Chief intended. Long after we had halted, and in spite of appeals to them to stop

for rest and food, the men went on cutting a track that would take us out on to the button-grass again next day. That night, in our hastily made little camp under a dome of scrub, we lay and listened to the sea. Was it making? Would the weather hold?

Dennis and the Chief roused us at dawn, and the Chief hurried us off, giving no time to break camp. Some of us could come back for two of the packs later, while Dennis and he went on to look for the ketch. We repeated the procedure of the day before. The two men fore and aft of the stretcher carried no packs. The two others helped at the sides where there was room to do so. We met a lively whip snake. Each man stamped at it with his heel as he passed, but no one stopped. At last we were at the end of a beach of heavy white sand, and had reached our objective, the rocky headland at its southern end. The Chief and Dennis left us there, not stopping even for a cup of tea, and we saw them disappear, going their hardest over the rocks round the coast. From this point on, the carrying of the stretcher would have been extremely difficult and slow—almost impossible, if the weather had changed. The other two men then turned back to the morning's camp to retrieve the two abandoned packs, and we, the two women, lay behind the windbreak of scrub that had been built round the stretcher and played the woman's game of waiting. The shrill cry of gulls pierced the roar of the waves on the shore. We watched the clouds and the sea, expecting a gale to spring up at any moment in this place where gales were the rule rather than the exception.

WAITING FOR RESCUE.

"Look out for us early," had been the Chief's parting words. So again we were up before dawn, and were on the look out for the ketch. She seemed a long time in coming. The patient had been carried to the landing place, and had caught our breakfast of crayfish and cod, which we had cooked, before the familiar white mastheads and grey hull of the ketch rounded the headland in a marvellous calm. Even so, the sea swept uneasily in and out of our gulch, like a tiger in restraint, ready at any moment for a treacherous spring. The fishermen cautiously warped the dinghy in, stern first, keeping her fended off the rocks, till first our patient, then the packs, and finally ourselves were safely abroad. No one said anything, but all heaved a sigh of relief when we felt the decks of the ketch once more beneath our feet.

Late that night, when the ketch lay anchored in a snug corner of Port Davey, we sat "down for'head" in the cabin and exchanged experiencecs. It was then that we learnt how Dennis and the Chief had reached Kelly's Basin, found the dinghy, and under a rag of canvas scudded out in her before a squall to look for the ketch. They had crossed the harbour to Whale's Head, and, climbing it, had sent up a smoke signal, the blackest and most voluminous they could manage. To their immense relief they saw the ketch put her nose from behind an island in response to their call, and, running back to the dinghy, sailed out to meet her, reaching her in the dusk of the long summer twilight.

"I known something was up soon's I seen Herb's face," said the Skipper, referring to his brother, the Chief. "They looked done in when they came aboard." It was then that the Chief took his pipe out of his mouth and made his first and only comment on the whole affair. "Well," he said, "it was the funniest turnout ever I seen on the West Coast!"

MURRUIN CREEK AND BEYOND.

BY J. C. BARNARD.

(The Bushlanders' Club of N.S.W. and The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.)

In the south-west corner of the Blue Mountains Tourist Map which walkers use so freely, a long creek, labelled Murruin Creek, is shown joining the Wollondilly near the Wombeyan Caves road. Unlike most sections of this map, however, the valley of the creek is shown as featureless—only one or two tributary streams meeting it—and apart from these there is little to give any idea of its great attractions.

The creek rises near Mount Werong from swampy plateaux where most of its bed has been turned over by prospectors in search of

MURRUIN CREEK.

(Photo. by R. Elec Mitchell.)

gold. Lower downstream the creek falls to a rocky bed and passes by the Cobra, a huge monument of granite rising from the stream-side some hundreds of feet into the air. The northern side of the valley is steep, wooded, and uninviting, sloping from Mount Shivering and the spurs of the Murruin Range. It is nasty country to travel through, but a useful bridle track leads from the Mount across the creek and over the Main Divide to Venn's holding on the Abercrombie.

A SYLVAN STREAM.

In its lower parts, Murruin Creek is vastly different and vies with the choicest of Blue Mountain streams for beauty. It has long, limpid pools shaded by river oaks, open river flats, and bare, rounded hillsides, while a cattle pad makes walking reasonably easy over the rough granite and quartzite rocks which line the creek bed.

The first trip I made into Murruin Creek was undertaken with a little trepidation, for no one seemed to have been there. At least that was the result of our enquiries. Since that time, a few years ago, some other walkers have made occasional trips into the valley, and we have again sought out its attractions in the course of long trips. On the first occasion we had reached Mount Werong during a long holiday walk, and from that village we followed the Main Divide southwards to Wombat Pinch, a difficult enough task, as there is no track, and the range makes a right-angled turn every mile, providing at each turn a false ridge to the Abercrombie watershed.

The views from the occasional open places on the rocky heights of the Divide give a complete expanse of the Murruin Valley. The eye takes in the higher points—Mount Shivering, the Big Rick, and the heights near Mount Werong—and beneath them the creek flows, well entrenched in the wide valley extending from the Murruin Range to the Divide. To the south, open clearings on the ridge tops signify settlement, but they detract little from the beautiful surroundings.

It is half a day from the Main Divide at Wombat Pinch across the upland valleys of several small creeks to the edge of the valley, where the track leads to the end of a bare quartzite ridge standing above the creek in pinnacle fashion. There is a track down the fifteen hundred odd feet to the stream, but it is precarious, as the boulders, easily dislodged, bound down the hillside, and occasional slides where rocks have accumulated often give a crack and send a few of their excess number to the valley below.

WOLLONDILLY COUNTRY.

The character of the country is unmistakably like the Wollondilly. The steep hills with peak-like tops and smooth grassy slopes rise from the creek, where open flats provide ample camping grounds for a multitude. Sheep and cattle graze along the creek, and an occasional stockman's hut with deserted orchard and cultivation patch adds to the picturesque scene. Evening in this country is the finest time of the day. The bare hills merge into indigo with the fading light, and while the valley is shrouded in twilight the sun's last rays paint the eastern hillsides and their myriad of dead trees with liquid gold. When at last the gleams of day have gone, the flicker of the camp fire and its silhouetted figures lend a touch of life to the scene.

For bend after bend and mile upon mile downstream the creek opens up new attractions, until it reaches the Wollondilly near the scattered settlement of Barrallier. Here its waters mingle with those of the great river, and our trip, like Murruin Creek itself, is at an end.

The recent proclamation of the Kurrajong District as a Sanctuary for Birds and Animals comes as very good news to the bushwalking movement, particularly in view of the extent of the district. The boundaries as notified in the "Government Gazette" run from the Grose River on the south to the Colo River on the north, and on the west the highlands around Mt. Tomah are included. The eastern edge of the area is the Nepean River from near the Grose junction downstream to the Colo. In this vast area a great variety of birds and animals is to be found in their natural state, and we can look forward to the preservation of much of our wild life in one of the most attractive parts of the mountains.

MR. C. D'A. ROBERTS.

At the last Annual Meeting of the Federation Council held in July, Mr. C. D'A. Roberts, who has been Honorary Secretary of the Federation for the last two years, relinquished that position, it being his intention to enlist for military service.

Mr. Roberts has without doubt been one of the most efficient and capable executive officers which the Federation has had within its ranks since its formation, and his intimate knowledge of bushwalkers' problems, his legal training, and his thorough understanding of administrative methods have at all times stood the Federation in good stead. Moreover, Mr. Roberts has succeeded in placing the conduct of the Federation affairs on a logical and methodical basis so that they may be carried on with greater efficiency and more harmoniously in the future.

In company with Miss Agnes Miller, who has been an able assistant to him, Mr. Roberts has built up a remarkable administrative system well nigh to perfection, and bushwalkers generally, and delegates to the Council in particular, regret to see these two lion-hearted workers for our cause severing their active connections with Federation affairs. The bushwalking movement extends its heartiest thanks to them both, and hopes that they may some day return to executive positions on the Council and again carry out that excellent work for which they have become so noted within the movement.

THE COLONG CAVES RESERVE.

Some time ago steps were taken by certain commercial interests with a view to exploiting the limestone deposits in the Colong Caves district near Yerranderie. These deposits are within a reserve for the preservation of caves proclaimed in September, 1899, and the caves, although unattended and unimproved, have for some time past attracted many walkers and other tourist visitors. Applications were made for leases under the Mining Act so that the limestone could be quarried commercially, but the Federation raised objections, and the Land Board, being of opinion that the area should not be interfered with, refused to sanction the granting of leases.

Within the last few months, and in consequence of the possibility of the recreational value of the caves area being infringed, the reserve has been converted into a public recreation area under the control of trustees, and complete regulations have been gazetted for its administration. These regulations are stringent and comprehensive, as they restrict the free use of the caves and camping within the reserve, but are necessarily so, as the caves have suffered severely from the depredations of vandals during the last few years.

Since 1930 hundreds of visitors each year have made trips to Colong, and stalactites and other souvenirs have been broken and taken away. Moreover, walls and formations have been disfigured by the wanton scribbling of names and ugly charcoal designs, and some of the unique limestone formations to be found there are in danger of being ruined for ever. It is hoped that the new regulations, though they restrict the freedom of walkers, will do something towards preserving these caves, so that they may be a source of enjoyment and wonder in future years.

EAST OF BULLER.

Skylining in Victoria.

BY TOD SLOANE.
(The Rucksack Club, Sydney, N.S.W.)

It was a kindly gesture of the caretaker of the Mount Buller Chalet to ask me into his private sanctum to hear the war news on his wireless. I went in and heard it, because he was an amiable old chap, and he was interested in my having come all the way from Sydney to his high mountain. But I did not want to hear the war news. I was going out East of Buller with the Nineteenth Skyline Tour, out where there were no wirelesses, no roads, no houses, and I wanted to be on my way—I wanted to be out in the forests and up on the great bare peaks. And here was the occupier of a last outpost clinging desperately to the world that I wanted to leave behind!

So the Nineteenth Skyline Tour went out on Christmas Day, 1939, along the high snow-grassed ridge between the Delatite and Howqua Rivers and over the massive summit of Stirling. Here we looked back at the sharp spike of Buller, the Chalet, and the winding road leading to it. No doubt the old caretaker was listening to the war news or for cars coming up the road, still attached to civilization. We stepped out joyfully away from it, with our fifteen walkers, five riders, a leader, and a cook, not to mention the pack-horses which carried all our gear; and we didn't see a road again or smell the burnt petrol fumes of a motor car till we encountered another outpost of civilization on New Year's Day. We did not, of course, travel in a column like an army, but went along in separate groups, the walkers and riders uniting at lunch times. The pack train travelled separately between camps.

THE GIPPSLAND MOUNTAINS.

From Stirling, with its big patch of snow left from the great winter snowfields, we saw our friends, the other mountains, further east. The best known of these are The Bluff, Magdala, Howitt, The Cross Cut Saw, Speculation, and Cobbler. Howitt is the highest of these peaks, rising to 5715 feet above sea level. I had been on two previous Skyline Tours which went there—the first in rain, sleet, mist, and disappointment, the second in glorious sunshine; and here was my friend, old Howitt, this Christmas Day again bathed in sunshine. From Stirling we went down over many hills and dales to a stockman's hut, where we were to spend our first camping night. The cook took possession of the hut, and we slept beside it at the edge of the forest, some in tents, some under the stars.

And so the Nineteenth Skyline Tour went on its way into the wilderness East of Buller, into that great highland massif which civilization will never penetrate and where peace and silence reign supreme. For a week we saw dawns and moonrises, climbed high peaks, acquired glorious high altitude tans, wore as few clothes as possible, caught trout in the Upper King River, killed snakes and took fine scenic photographs, got off the tracks and on to them again, sang great choruses around camp fires, swapped all manner of yarns, went botanizing with Dave Matthews, swam in the Dondangadale pools below the heights of Buffalo—and didn't shave!

BUSHWALKING AND SKYLINING.

"All very nice," you may say, "but it wasn't bushwalking." You cannot visualise bushwalking which does not entail carrying all your gear on your back and doing your own cooking. But with an organisation like Skyline Tours you can be taken over long train and car journeys to some gateway to the bush, and for a week or more they carry all your gear and provide all your food. You wouldn't have to make up food lists and think out how little you could really live on to get the weight of your pack down ; you could walk longer distances and enjoy yourself far more. The Skyliners even put up a tarpaulin at camps to eat under if it rains. These things can be done with pack-horses, and such services cost surprisingly little. Moreover, you needn't be afraid of degenerating and becoming soft ; a Skyliner must be in fair training. Last Christmas we climbed six peaks of more than 5000 feet where there were no trees because of the heavy snow which lies on them in winter, and between these peaks were rugged ridges and rough country. On another tour we walked 120 miles in eight days, and during still another we did three separate days of twenty miles each over steep ranges and rugged valleys. In Skylining there is plenty of the hard work which makes bushwalking worthwhile, but the discomfort is minimised. You see the real bush and the real Australia, and there is never a road or wheeled vehicle to detract from the beauty of the surroundings.

The Nineteenth Skyline Tour sojourned seven days in the wilderness East of Buller. Then we came out of the forest at the last outpost of civilization on the Rose River and re-met the grim world.

GROVELLING.

Adventures in Tuglow Caves.

BY BERYL THOMPSON.
(The Trampers' Club of N.S.W. and The Coast and Mountain Walkers of N.S.W.)

"Men only in the party," the boys of the Club said when they announced a trip to Tuglow Caves at King's Birthday week-end. The girls were downcast, and, after some discussion, it was agreed that if they could negotiate the first thirty feet descent in one piece they could go the whole way, and three of the fair sex were included in the party.

We drove beyond Jenolan Caves, along the Oberon Road to Edith, and thence through Ginkin to Dennis's "Tuglow View" farm, which stands on a windswept crest overlooking the valley of the Tuglow River. Leaving the car just after dark, we shouldered our packs and walked in bright moonlight to a camp site on the river a mile or so distant. Here we pitched our camp, dined, and slept well, a light rain keeping the night moderately warm.

The following morning, having squeezed our torches, candles, magnesium, matches, and lunches into two small packs, we set off, the boys groaning beneath the burden of two coils of rope—one 300 feet length of one-inch rope, and a 100 feet of half-inch, slung around their necks. We followed up and along a ridge and descended suddenly to the entrance of the Tuglow, or Horse Gully Caves, as they are known locally. I half expected to hear an "open sesame" from the leader, and was disappointed when an uninteresting space between two rocks was indicated as the starting point of our adventure. The thick rope was secured to a nearby tree, and turning our backs on daylight we took the plunge down the first chimney.

We descended slowly, only one being on the rope at a time, to avoid unexpected slackness. Showers of loose pebbles falling on the heads of the lower members, and torch bulbs failing at awkward spots, did not improve matters. The most uncomfortable section was a right-angled tunnel, through which we wriggled in snake fashion and promptly assembled on the other side to see and hear the effect on the stoutest member of the party. I heard him declare with some feeling that he had again lost those portions of his anatomy which he had taken such pains to replace since his last trip into the caves several months before.

UNIQUE FORMATIONS.

On the first floor, 135 feet below the surface, we sidetracked and, by magnesium light, admired the beauty of the Pink Lampshade, numerous stalactites and stalagmites, and a marvellous miniature pine forest. Here we viewed the scene of the adventures of the first bushwalking party to descend to the lowest level of the caves some years ago. They eventually succeeded by making a ladder from rope and saplings, and the relics of their handiwork still adorn the walls of the caves. Very faintly rose the sound of the underground stream running 130 feet below, where it tumbles noisily over a series of basin cascades.

We returned to our stout friend, who had decided against all unnecessary grovelling and was usefully employing himself in untangling the rope, which had become twisted into an intricate series of knots. The last striking formation we encountered before the last lap was a magnificent angel's wing about twelve feet in length, which we admired from cramped niches in the cave passage.

One of the party, with visions of his previous trip into these depths still vivid, nobly decided to remain at this point to haul us up out of the jaws of death after we had seen the lower cave. His was an unenviable position, alone with the bats in the darkness, while we revelled in the beauties below. It was definitely worth the effort of sliding down the last 35 feet of slippery limestone, with footholds few and far between, to see the Grand Shawl Canopy, the Organ Loft, the glistening Diamond Walls, and to drink the water from the underground stream which flows through at this spot. It is fed

THE GRAND SHAWL CANOPY, TUGLOW CAVES.
(Photo. by O. Moriarty.)

from Horse Gully Creek and ultimately enters the Kowmung, probably some distance below the limestone bluff. We lit our candles and lunched at 260 feet below the surface, but the masterpiece was yet to be seen—Mount Vesuvius, a perfect, glistening, white miniature mountain complete with crater, and surrounded by a forest of slender columns, stalactites and stalagmites.

THE CLIMB OUT.

Then came the ascent. The smaller rope which had been carried from the top for this purpose was lowered for use as a life line, or rather was hurled down with a stone tied to the end by the member above, while we dodged under a convenient ledge for safety. We

tied the rope round our waists, and, while pulling ourselves up on the heavy rope, were helped from above by means of the life line. Being first to ascend, I was unfortunately deprived of the cheering sight of the others struggling up that section, but had it not been for the efforts of the life liner, who fortified himself with bites of apple between pulls, I am convinced that some of our bones would now be fossilizing on the floor of the cave.

The story is related, and authentically I believe, that one of the earlier visitors to the caves had attempted this section without a life line, but, when half way up on a ledge, decided he could manage more safely with it. We are told how he clung to a stalactite with one hand, held the thick rope with the other, and tied a bowline with the other—just as well he was ambidextrous! The rest of the ascent was uneventful, although more strenuous, I thought, than the descent, especially as we knew and could see in advance what we had to climb. After being in the inky blackness underground for more than six hours, the first pale glimmer of light was a welcome sight, and we were soon strangely dazzled by the bright afternoon sunlight.

Grovelling is great fun, but stick to bushwalking if you suffer from claustrophobia!

WANDERLUST.

BY IAN A. MALCOLM.
(The Sydney Bush Walkers.)

If you have seen the bushland breathe
When it blossoms after rain;
If you have heard the lyre-bird call,
And have not heard in vain:
Then why do you walk the pavements grey—
You, who the call have heard?
For the hills call, and the winds call,
And oh, the call of a bird!

If you have watched the wood-smoke curl
Among the river-trees;
If you have felt the soft caress
Of the grasses on your knees:
Then why do you walk the pavement grey—
You, who have heard the cry?
For the trees call, and the rivers call,
And oh, the call of the sky!

If you have trod the mountain track
At breaking of the day;
If you have climbed the craggy peak,
And watched the stars at play:
Then tarry you not in the city street,
But answer the call as you must;
For there's no rest like the hills and the sky
To the man who has Wanderlust.

GARAWARRA.

Something of Its History.

The origin of Garawarra, so far as bushwalkers are concerned, can be traced as far back as the years 1910 to 1913, when walkers, having exhausted the possibilities of the National Park coastal scenery, sought conquests further afield. For much of the information contained in this "history" we are indebted to that doyen of the bushwalking movement, Myles J. Dunphy. It was in July, 1913, that Dunphy footed the narrow trail from "The Posts," now the entrance to Garawarra Park off the Garie Road, and for the first time in his experience made the acquaintance of that lovely primitive paradise. Prior to that the beaches had been used by occasional fishermen from Helensburgh and Lilyvale, but we have no records of the place being frequented by walkers.

"BURNING PALMS."

It is interesting to record that Dunphy's photograph of what he later named Burning Palms Beach was taken in 1914. It shows a wealth of coastal brush, including cabbage tree palms, clothing the steep slopes in places right down to the terraces overlooking high-water mark. He contends that there could not be a fairer camping place than Garawarra as it then was. Here it may be placed on record that "Burning Palms" derived its name from the lighting by Dunphy of a number of dead cabbage tree palms and hoisting them aloft. The result was so impressive, it being a very dark night and the "beacon" attracting a reply from campers further north, that the name seemed to come naturally—"Burning Palms."

As the area became better known, the many vicissitudes to which it was subject made the preservation of its beauty spots an urgent necessity. Considerable damage was being wrought by cattlemen, timbergetters, shooters, and hunting dogs. Bushfires were deliberately started and, to add to its troubles, it was the happy hunting ground of wild-flower gatherers. In this area there once grew in profusion mats of flannel flowers, Christmas bells by the thousand, and waratahs by the hundred. Wallabies and other wild creatures existed unmolested, and it was a common thing for marsupial rats and lyre-birds to come right up to the camp in daylight.

The Mountain Trails Club of New South Wales (of which Dunphy always has been the indefatigable honorary secretary) made the first move for the reservation of Garawarra, and was closely allied with the proposal until its accomplishment. The name "Garawarra" was used when such representations were first made to the authorities, being derived from "Garie" (Gara) and "Illawarra." It may be added that the private property adjoining the Era beaches is the Gara Estate.

To the suggestion that the area should be reserved and added to National Park, the Under-Secretary for Lands wrote on September 18, 1925: ". . . . I am directed to inform you that your suggestion has had consideration but it has been decided that the circumstances do not warrant any action being taken. . . . ." The M.T.C. was strongly supported by The Bush Tracks Club, and, although unable to succeed with the authorities, members of both Clubs applied themselves to preserving the scenic beauties of the place. Week-ends found them quelling bush fires and otherwise more or less patrolling the area.

FIGHT FOR RESERVATION.

Then into the picture came the Sydney Bush Walkers, with whose foundation the M.T.C. was actively associated. By the nature of its constitution in permitting both sexes to be members, this new Club quickly grew in numbers, and was an addition of considerable importance in the fight being waged by the other two Clubs. The battle went on.

New Clubs were being formed, the walking movement having received a great impetus from 1930 onwards, and when The New South Wales Federation of Bush Walking Clubs was formed in 1932 it was able to impress upon the authorities the importance of this type of conservation. The reservation of Garawarra was made the first plank of the Federation's platform, whilst next in importance came the betterment of facilities at Lilyvale Station and the vicinity.

And so came about that monster petition to the Minister for Lands, signed by nearly 5000 members of the walking fraternity in the State, the majority of whom were personally acquainted with the area. What a wealth of time and energy was put into that petition! Circulars were printed, committees formed, trains canvassed, and all stations from Waterfall to Stanwell Park received the attention of enthusiasts eager for the signatures of all interested, and for financial assistance where possible.

The presentation of the petition to the Minister, the Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw, was largely responsible for the reservation of the now famous Garawarra Park. The Crown reserved approximately 1300 acres which, with the exception of some small leaseholds, was the only Crown land available. The original scheme was designed to embrace about 5000 acres, including privately owned lands, and,

although grateful that the Government acted as it did, many bushwalkers regret that the Federation did not keep hammering away for the lot.

It should not be forgotten, however, that what was obtained entailed hard and difficult work on the part of a great many people. The walking organisations received valuable assistance from The Parks and Playgrounds Movement of New South Wales, The Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia, The Forest League, The Boy Scouts' Association, and many other kindred bodies and individuals. The herculean efforts put into the work by Myles J. Dunphy are worthy of the highest praise. His name must be forever honourably and gratefully remembered in this connexion, as indeed it must with the bushwalking movement generally. Also, the task of the Federation's Honorary Secretary, Theo. B. Atkinson, was a prodigious one. Perhaps he still has nightmares of files of correspondence, handbill distributions, attendances on the Minister, etc. Another stalwart of the walking fraternity, Joe Turner, gave splendid service to a cause which was always dear to his heart. However, Garawarra Park can fairly be claimed as a monument to the work of the bushwalking and kindred organisations.

The Reserve of about 1300 acres was dedicated for public recreation on August 17, 1934, and was named "Garawarra Park." Efforts to have it officially recognised as a primitive area were unsuccessful, but Mr. Buttenshaw publicly declared at the annual dinner of The Parks and Playgrounds Movement on October 17, 1934, that so long as he remained Minister for Lands, Garawarra would remain roadless. Two things, however, which militate greatly against maintaining the area as a primitive one are (1) the presence of the settlement at the head of Bola (or Black Gin) Creek and (2) the shacks at Burning Palms.

Subsequently two small areas totalling 25 acres were added to the Park, and on November 4, 1938, a further addition of 140 acres brought the total area to 1465 acres. A small picnic area near the Otford Railway Station has been leased from the Railway Department.

The first Trustees of Garawarra Park were appointed on January 25, 1935, and were as follows:—The Hon. H. W. Whiddon, W. F. Leighton Bailey (members of The National Park Trust), E. J. Ryan, A. H. Fackender (members of the Bulli Shire Council), J. V. Turner, W. J. Roots (members of The N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs) and G. F. Allman (Under-Secretary for Lands). At the first meeting of the Trust on May 10, 1935, Mr. Whiddon was elected President and Mr. Turner Honorary Secretary. On the resignation of Mr. Roots, Mr. Theo. B. Atkinson was appointed, and later, when Mr. Turner resigned, Mr. Tom Herbert took his place, becoming Honorary Secretary, which position he still holds.

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE?

It has been suggested that the Federation should publish a quarterly magazine. What do you think of the idea? Such a magazine can be published if bushwalkers in sufficient numbers contribute to and buy it. You are invited to give your opinion on the matter, and also to submit criticisms favourable or otherwise on this present issue. Any comments or suggestions will be a valuable guide for the future. Write or 'phone the Editor, T. A. Herbert, 48 Burra Road, Artarmon (JA 6097).

A UNIQUE RECREATION.

Mapping the Blue Labyrinth.

BY H. M. WHAITE.

(The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.)

But for the interest which has been displayed by so many walkers I would have some trepidation of writing about the mapping work which Jack Gibson and I have been doing in the Western Blue Labyrinth. The limits of the area are formed by the Liverpool and Katoomba military sheets, Kedumba Walls and the high cliffs above the Warragamba, and most of it is very rough and inaccessible.

To facilitate our work we have divided the region into seventeen sections, each designated by a letter and defined by natural features such as creeks and ridges. Within these sections each hill is catalogued with a distinctive symbol, consisting of the section in which it is situated and a double number. Thus Mt. Gibson, the eighteenth point taken on Warrigal Range, in district W, is W18. Spurs to creeks and ridges have also been given special symbols, relating them to the main hilltops and other features.

TOPOGRAPHY OF THE AREA.

At the outset we adopted the 1000 yards square grid of the modern military map for our system of co-ordinates, and in order to align our grid to that of the maps we took several "ruling points" which could be measured on the latter. These are well-known landmarks, such as the Carrington chimney, 2KA masts, and Woodford water tower. From them, by triangulation, were obtained secondary ruling points, which may be described as the most prominent points in a rather uniform landscape. It would not be amiss to mention them more fully, as they give complete coverage of the whole area. Most walkers know the conical Eagle Rock (CO7) south of Nott's Swamp, but fewer know Moroka (NO7), one of the three hills a mile north of the hut. In the great bend of Erskine Creek lies Mount Erskine (MO6), most prominent point on the Massif, and only two hours' walk from the Wheel or three hours from The Oaks. North along Woodford Range are the "Circles" (FO6) near St. Helena Ridge; west of here and south of a point between Woodford and Hazelbrook, Pear Tree Knob (KO4) lies in the shadow of flat-topped Mount Bedford. Lastly, in the far south is Rocky Knob (EO1), first and highest top on the Main Erskine Range.

Incidentally, I might mention that the whole area has not the V-shaped arrangement indicated on the tourist map, but actually consists of a series of four main creeks flowing from the tableland into the north-south Erskine (or Bedford) Creek.

All reading stations, whether hilltops or not, have been marked by a few small rocks. In addition, some thirty cairns, each containing a note, have been placed at strategic points. Although we do not approve of cairns in principle, they are necessary for our work, and one day might see us doing the rounds to demolish the lot.

EQUIPMENT AND METHODS.

The compass we are using—plane tables and theodolites being too heavy—is a liquid prismatic correct to about 0.1°. We keep a close check on this instrument by readings taken from Woodford Trig to Mounts King George, Hay, etc., as well as the 2KA masts. Knowing from the military map what the grid bearing should be in each case, we can therefore measure the amount to be added to compass bearings anywhere in the area to convert them with inappreciable error to grid bearings. At the present time the amount is 12°, consisting of 8½° magnetic variation and 3½° compass correction, the latter of course individual to the particular compass. Careful attention has to be paid to these checks, not only at regular intervals, but immediately after any repairs or readjustment.

Magnetic variations are experienced in small amounts, but they are probably due to magnetic storms rather than diurnal or annual changes. But as we have taken a large number of check readings during the last fifteen months, this factor is not very disconcerting. As may be expected in sandstone country, local magnetic variations peculiar to a small region are apparently absent. The obvious way to check these is by "backsights," which should show a reading differing by 180° from the forward sight reading. Small differences are often observed, but these can usually be accounted for by the fact that the highest point of ground on a hill is not always under the highest point of the trees to which we sight.

Another important influence on compass accuracy is the presence of iron articles nearby, and aluminium gear is therefore used wherever possible. Surprisingly enough, trouble due to steel-framed rucksacks is relatively small, combined experiment and theory having

shown that the maximum effect of one such rucksack on the ground occurs about six feet east or west of the observer, and is approximately 0.1°. This is almost negligible, but we take the precaution of keeping all packs at least twenty feet away.

TRAVERSES AND HEIGHTS.

Traversing spurs and ridges in both directions has largely been completed. This has been done by taking "spot" readings to the nearest degree at regular intervals and at each change of direction. Since during these traverses we are carrying packs, a correction curve, sinoidal in form, has been determined, and is applied to the values obtained as an additional correction. Distances are taken as proportional to time walked (except in steep climbs where height factors are involved), and a small sketch to scale made of that part of the ridge travelled. This is fitted by reduction into the general triangulation, which is an easy procedure, as almost every hill has been mapped by readings from station to station.

To ascertain heights, we use an aneroid barometer and take railway stations as datum levels. Corrections for temperature changes are easy, as we carry a thermometer, but changes of pressure present greater difficulty. The method used is to plot graphically the rate of change of pressure against time, and the area under the curve gives the total change of pressure. The result is only an approximation, though if several readings are taken on different trips a figure can be obtained which is correct to thirty feet or less. In addition, a number of photographs have been taken for record purposes, and on many occasions they have served to resolve doubts about ridges or creeks.

That in short is an outline of the more technical aspects of our work. To-day we have a total of 172 reading stations and over three hundred intersected points. Observations from the former total several thousand ; those from traversing run into some thousands more.

Mapping in the Erskine country definitely has its excitements and experiences. Since compass bearings are limited to daylight hours, we have developed quite a night sense, dependent mainly on compass and barometer, in order to cover a reasonable amount of ground, and on occasions may not camp until several hours after dark. Unbelievable to many walkers, there is an attraction about the place, especially at night, and I think I can safely say that our experiences there have been as happy as, if not happier than, any we have had elsewhere during eleven years in the Blue Mountains.

KANANGRA WALLS ROAD.

The road to Kanagra Walls from the top of the Jenolan Hill is nearing completion, and the Walls will shortly be accessible by car in an hour or so from the Caves. The construction of the road has been viewed with concern by some walkers, but it will at least enable trips to be made into the Kanangra-Thurat district with little delay and avoid a hard day's tramp over uninteresting country to the Walls. It is questionable whether the road will become popular with motor tourists, as the introduction of petrol rationing will no doubt deter many motorists from venturing so far from Sydney. In any event, it is hoped that all campers will respect the place and try to preserve its natural attractions from vandalism.

BOUDDI NATURAL PARK.

Until the end of last century probably no one had thought much about Maitland Bay. It was merely one of the many "boat harbours" marked on the map, differing only in being bounded by a headland called "Bouddi," which is probably synonymous with Bondi, and means a "nose."

Then on the fateful night of May 5, 1898, Captain Skinner steered his paddle steamer, the "Maitland" (880 tons), out of Port Jackson into a black and stormy ocean. The ship steamed north in a blinding south-easterly gale, which hid even the red light of Barrenjoey. But no lighthouse would have saved the "Maitland." Waves mountains high hurled themselves upon the ship, tearing away the starboard paddle box and pouring into the engine-room so that the fires went out. The ship was soon tossing helplessly on the inky waters and drifting impotently towards its doom.

BOUDDI HEAD.

(Photo. by Marie B. Byles.)

With an inevitable crash the boat struck the bombora off Bouddi Head, and many were thrown overboard to be seen no more. That the loss of life was not heavier was due to one Russell, who eventually got ashore with a lifeline, and two by two passengers and crew were taken across the roaring waters. The task was all but finished ; there were three on the line, and only four left on the boat, when the line broke. The three on the line perished. The captain, the mate, a fireman, and a baby girl were marooned on the gradually disintegrating vessel. For a day and a half they lived on biscuits and water, and tried in vain to quell the wailing of the child. At length, on the second day, those on shore got a fresh lifeline across to the ship, and first the fireman, then the mate with the baby strapped on his back, and, lastly, the captain, were taken safely ashore. One can imagine the feelings of the mother as the baby was restored to her alive. Thirty-nine people survived the wreck,

but twenty-four lives were lost. And that is the story of those ancient boilers that have lain rusting on Bouddi headland for more than forty years.

After the wreck the bay and its environs passed into oblivion, and fishermen alone knew its beauties.

The first recorded bushwalking expedition there was that of Miss Marie Byles, who struck into those unknown hills in 1922 accompanied by three other girls and an enormous Coults automatic pistol! The party did, in fact, have quite a lot of adventures, but it is not suggested that the pistol played any part in them.

The bushwalkers proper came on the scene in February, 1930, with Miss Dorothy Lawry, who originated the name Maitland Bay, pointing out that there were many "boat harbours," but only one near which the "Maitland" was wrecked. The name has stuck.

WORKING BEE, 1940.

(Photo. by Marie B. Byles.)

Shortly after the Federation came into existence in 1932 it took up the task of procuring the dedication of the Maitland Bay District as a reserve for public recreation, and files show insistent newspaper propaganda, including an article in 1934 which assumed that the park was all but dedicated when few outside the Federation had even heard of it.

In 1935 the District Surveyor was taken over the area by representatives of the Federation, and in consequence of his report the land north and south of Maitland Bay was dedicated as a reserve for public recreation in 1936. The Federation was asked to nominate three of the Trustees, the other three being representatives of the Erina Shire Council, but it was not until the control of the Administrator in that Shire came to an end in 1938 that all the Trustees met. It is good to record that the happiest of relations have always existed between the Shire representatives and the bushwalking members of the Trust. The first Bushwalking Trustees were Miss Marie Byles, Hudson Smith and C. D'A. Roberts. The last two were later succeeded by W. A. Holesgrove and O. Wyndham.

The original dedication was an area of 650 acres, which has since been increased to 930 acres by the addition of 235 acres in 1939 and 45 acres this year. The Trustees have hopes that other adjoining lands may become available in the future.

The most recent milestone was the working bee this year organised by the Trustees and the Federation, in which over sixty bushwalkers took part. As a result of their voluntary labour, tracks were made through the Park and a shelter shed erected at the Bay with a tank to provide fresh water for drinking.

During the last few years Bouddi Natural Park has become increasingly popular in the bushwalking movement. Though it is only a small area compared with reserves like National Park and Kuringai Chase, it holds great attractions for nature lovers. The Trustees have done a great deal to improve the Park without jeopardizing its attractions, and intend to make it bigger and better, at the same time preserving its natural beauties as they were in the days of the wreck of the "Maitland."

WE GO SOCIAL!

(From an Old Log Book of the Canoe "Joy"—

HERBERT AND CHARDON.)

Nine days after leaving Penrith on a canoe trip to Pittwater, we found ourselves at Dangar Island with still some time to spare. A glance at the map and we decided to call on the village of Patonga, on the northern arm of Broken Bay, and explore Patonga Creek.

The "Joy" arrived at Patonga's jetty on Friday morning, and, clad in singlets and shorts and broad-rimmed hats, we wandered up to Patonga's store and decided to re-provision. Behind the counter rows of attractive biscuit tins proclaimed a wide choice, and we had a little difficulty in deciding what to buy. At length we decided on an assortment, and proceeded to name the varieties of biscuits we wanted in our assortment. In turn each tin was promptly taken from its shelf, and the good lady apologetically proclaimed that she had sold out of that variety. Having nearly exhausted the list, we asked what tin really contained anything, and ended up with buying a couple of pounds of wheatmeal biscuits—the stock line!

Unperturbed by the exposure of her "untrue-to-label" tins, the good lady invited us to play tennis that afternoon. We laughed, stroked our grubby beards, and told her gently that we were two river wanderers and hardly equipped for such social recreation. But she insisted that all difficulties could be surmounted—we would be given racquets, and our sartorial shortcomings would be overlooked;

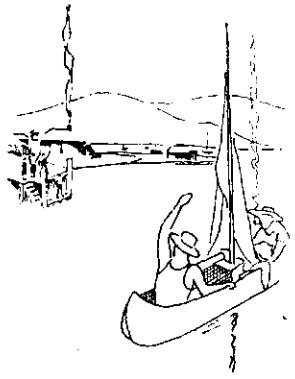
besides she wanted us to play for Patonga against Brooklyn. Brooklyn was sending a team across to challenge Patonga, but Patonga was short of men and we were to be "rung in" as true-blue Patonga men. Faking apparently was not confined to biscuit tins!

As the good lady did not enquire at all into our tennis ability, we agreed to "rep" for Patonga, and then left with the promise to present ourselves in the afternoon. We paddled up Patonga Creek and started the long and painful process of removing our beards and generally sprucing up. Old grey slacks were dug out from the bottom of packs into which they had been jammed when we left Penrith nine days previously. They were shockingly crushed, with creases running in all directions. Dark white shirts were also brought out and donned, and we even attempted to dress our hair. Sand shoes, battered and dirty as a result of river work, completed our dress, which would have shamed a down-and-out tramp, and which each described to the other in profane but true words. However, we were committed to represent Patonga, and we would not let the village down; so after a hurried meal we paddled off to the village and presented ourselves to the lady of the store. She was gentle and kind and made no comments on the obvious, but took us off to the grass court of a private home, where quite a number of people had assembled for the tournament.

We performed quite creditably for Patonga, and thoroughly enjoyed the bright company, the afternoon tea, and the cake-eating. Having been told that we had open, honest faces, we were invited to have tea at the home of some kindly people. We readily accepted, and, after having enjoyed the warm hospitality of the people at dinner, were told that we were expected to attend a dance at the store to be given in honour of the Brooklyn visitors. Still dressed in our tennis togs, we protested that "we had nothing to wear." Protest was overruled, so off we went to the store. The self-consciousness arising from our unbecoming wear soon vanished as we shuffled around the floor in sand shoes with some of the nice girls from Brooklyn. That the orchestra was a pianola and we danced on a floor meant for anything but dancing mattered not.

The hour of parting arrived. The Brooklyn people had to catch the last launch home, and we bade them a reluctant farewell. Harold and I intended to camp along the creek, but our good friends would not hear of it, so we slept in their home amid the luxury of snow white sheets, mattresses, and pillows.

Next day we prepared to depart, and down to the jetty came a crowd of our new friends to wave us farewell. To show how versatile was our little craft, we hoisted the small sail; but the wind was very unfair, and it was due more to the efforts of an ebb tide than to the wind that we eventually got well away and headed for Lion Island, our next destination. In the meantime our friends kept waving as we moved away at about half the speed we could have paddled the craft. Farewell, Patonga; and thank you for the happy interlude which was thoroughly enjoyed by two river canoeists who just "blew in"—and drifted out!



(Sketches by S. V. Chubb.)

REMINISCENCES OF A RUCKSACK.

BY MILLIE HORNE.

(The Rucksack Club, Sydney, N.S.W.)

The other articles in this book are about everything but ME. Now I'll endeavour to give you the inside (and outside) story of a pack's life.

Of my coming into being I know little; it wasn't a hard trial, so that is all that mattered. For two or three days I sat on the floor of a certain shop along with several of my fellows. Then a woman came for me. I was overjoyed to be in the hands of the fair sex. Little did I know of what five feet nothing of woman was capable. She didn't seem proud of me then. She had me wrapped in paper for a start! I was parked under the tram seat; then, I've discovered since, she took me home via the darkest streets.

On arrival home, off came the paper and on her back I went. She turned this way and that before the mirror. My, was I all new and bright! A voice sounded in the doorway, "What's that damn thing?" "I've joined a bushwalking club, and this is a Rucksack in which I carry my gear," said she. "Tut, tut!" said the voice and went out mumbling.

The first day was exciting for both of us. I had a light load with plenty of space, so things slipped and banged in my inside. All eyes were on me, and everybody in the party looked in me and over me and mauled me and tried me on, and hoped I'd soon get dirty. It was a beautiful walk, but I felt sore with the bumping around inside; but those cushiony hips and shoulders were more sore than I was. When we arrived home she looked in the mirror again. I didn't look much different, but SHE—heavens! I didn't think she'd take me again.

MY FIRST WEEK-END.

Then came the first week-end. I didn't think I could live through what that woman did to me. Her gear consisted of complete house and furniture apart from food. Well, she waged a war on every part of me. Things were pushed here and there and, if something wouldn't go in, out came the whole lot and the pushing and cramming started all over again. My objections were waived till I thought I'd burst. At last she was ready, and it took all she knew to lift me.

The camp was beside a beautiful river, and when the tent was up the remainder of my inside was outside, and peace reigned till morning, when the horrors of packing started again. That day I was bumped and banged over rocks, through bushes and nettles, and then some bushfire stuff. One moment I was earth and sky, then east and west, north and west, and east and south, and neast and sorth, then—oh, what does it matter! My only revenge was to slither this way and that on those fleshy hips. After all that she put rubber pads on the shoulder straps, said she was going again—and she has!

In the three years of my experience I've suffered nobody knows what. There was the day she dropped me over a cliff and then found an easier way down for herself, so by the time she had lunch I'd broken her new mug and plate! There is the uncertainty of

never knowing when some fool will bring out a rope—to lower Rucksacks only. There are times innumerable when she slithers over rocks and down hills, and I just slither after. Now she has to get the holes in me covered with leather. Once when she fell down I sat on her head till somebody lifted me off! May be I have treated myself to a large dose of self-pity!

However, I've never yet had to carry myself up-hill, or wade through ice cold water. I saw one of my fellow creatures hurtle down into a creek with a body attached to it, and when they got it out water poured from its pockets. I've never been gnawed by a rat, or had tomatoes, persimmons or bananas squashed inside of me! I have been used as a stepping-stone by a short-legged beauty in getting over a fence, and often as a pillow. Of course, she didn't take me away every week-end like some do, although I did get some fairly rough times on one-day trips.

So now my growls must end, and I should be thankful for the few blessings which have been mine. But, I'll let you in on something. Judging by the puffing, panting and creaking of a certain She, I can safely settle down to a fair amount of ease in my advanced age, even if she does do one or two "tough ones," as she calls them.

Despite a falling off in bushwalking during the present year in consequence of the war and the drought, the Federation is continuing its publicity programme, and has recently produced a fresh pamphlet with hints to prospective walkers, under the title "Walk for Health and Happiness." Copies are obtainable from the Hon. Secretary. Give some to your friends!

THEN AND NOW.

BY W. F. REID.
(The Bush Club.)

The pioneer of the great health and recreational walking movement in New South Wales was the late William M. Hamlet, Government Analyst. The Club which he founded, the Warragamba Walking Club, flourished in the nineties of last century and the first two decades of this century. H. J. Tompkins, secretary of the Club, was the author of an excellent book, "With Swag and Billy," published in 1906 by the Government Tourist Bureau.

Professor J. Le Gay Brereton was also an enthusiastic walker in those days. He published a book called "Landlopers," giving an account of a long tramp about forty years ago from Sydney to the Jenolan Caves, thence south to Moss Vale, across to Bulli and the

"THE LADIES WORE THE DRESS OF THE PERIOD."
(Reproduced from "With Swag and Billy.")

South Coast, and so home. The book was instinct with a sense of kinship with Nature and the open road—or rather the track, because much of the country through which he and his companions passed was unsettled.

The late W. A. Holman, one time Premier of New South Wales, was also fond of walking. He and D. R. Hall, Attorney-General in his ministry, used to walk together from Bell to Richmond via Mounts Wilson and Irvine.

The great metropolis has expanded since those days. Then we could walk through the bush from Bondi Junction (known then as the Tea Gardens) to South Head, a favourite Saturday afternoon walk. A week-end walk was from Charing Cross, Waverley, to La Perouse through scrub and bushland, with numerous lakes and swamps on the way. We could gather five-corners (an edible native berry) in

profusion, and enjoy fishing and camping on the Saturday night before returning across country on Sunday. On the country tramps there were no motor cars to render walking hazardous, and the roads had a rural atmosphere, winding through ferny dells and shaded with overhanging trees.

The Warragamba Club's walks were around the Warragamba basin, the Burragorang and Kangaroo Valleys, Moss Vale to Nowra being a favourite walk with the ladies. In those days the walkers had an itinerary. They notified the boarding houses and farms ahead on their route, to ensure that they would have somewhere to stay each night. They carried only a few items of clothing and sufficient food for each mid-day meal, the other meals being supplied en route.

CONVENTIONAL DRESS.

The ladies wore the dress of the period—bodices, long flowing skirts, and enormous hats with veils. Their belongings were strapped in a swag carried perpendicularly on the back. The men wore caps, knee breeches and long stockings, and carried over the left shoulder a bushman's swag and tucker bag, or improvised rucksack. A billy or water bag was carried in the hand. There was not the dress freedom of nowadays; no comfortable shorts and athos; no exposing of the skin to the sun and healthy encircling breezes.

There was no Paddy Pallin to solve our walking problems and cut down the weight with light-weight gear; no light tents that you could put in your pocket; no modern rucksacks; no concentrated food products, or warm sleeping bags. When camping, we had to carry a heavy calico or duck tent, the smallest 6 x 8, three or four blankets, and a lot of weighty food. We were so overburdened that we could go only a few miles a day until we had eaten down our food stocks, and then we would travel a little faster. Our equipment then was certainly a problem; nowadays, with gear and dress reduced to a minimum, real benefit and comfort on a walking trip is the rule rather than the exception.

Now there is a camaraderie between the sexes that did not prevail of yore; there is the spirit of equality abroad in all their sports and recreations. In those far-off days, to carry a pack to the station rendered you an object of curiosity, and in walking long distances in country places you were looked upon as a crank.

Little did we think when we indulged in our favourite pastime at week-ends and holidays (for we were so few then) that the time would come when walking and camping in the solitude and natural surroundings of our great bushland heritage would become a great movement, when thousands in their week-end leisure time would seek the delights of the coast and the heights and valleys of the mountain lands, and the ever moving natural panorama of the bush and byways.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The Publications Committee wish to thank Miss Dorothy Hasluck for her valuable assistance with the blocks, and Messrs. Ian Malcolm and S. V. Chubb for the sketches made by them. The Committee also conveys its thanks to the following donors of blocks: The Coast and Mountain Walkers of N.S.W., The Sydney Bush Walkers, and Miss Dot English. The front cover was photographed and prepared by Jack Cavill.

THE NEW SOUTH WALES FEDERATION OF BUSH WALKING CLUBS.

Affiliated Clubs.

The Bush Club.

The Bushlanders' Club of N.S.W.

The Campfire Club.

The Coast and Mountain Walkers of N.S.W.

The "Gumleaf" Hiking Club.

The Mountain Trails Club of N.S.W.

The River Canoe Club of N.S.W.

The Rover Ramblers' Club.

The Rucksack Club (Sydney, N.S.W.).

The "Sun" Bushwalkers' Club.

The Sydney Bush Walkers.

The Trampers' Club of N.S.W.

The Warrigal Club of N.S.W.

The W.E.A. Ramblers.

Y.M.C.A. Ramblers' Club.

ADVERTISERS.

No advertisement is accepted for "THE BUSHWALKER" unless the advertiser is personally recommended. Therefore, please give the advertisers your patronage and mention "THE BUSHWALKER" to them.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by D. S. Ford, 44-50 Reservoir St., Sydney.