

A BALLAD OF THE BUSHWALKERS.

2.

Tune: 'The Darkie Sunday School.

CHORUS -

Tall folks, short folks, everybody come -  
Gather round the campfire and make yourselves at home.  
Bring your rugs and ground-sheets, and laze upon the ground -  
We'll tell you tales of Bush Walkers that surely will astound.

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Oh Myles, he is the leader of the Mountain Trailer lads,  
Who stagger through the bush loaded down like ironclads.  
And Myles he thought girls couldn't walk but found that wasn't  
true -  
They and Myles now walk for miles. Myles carries Milo too.

Oh Dorman is a walker unique and known to fame.  
The way he puts his tent up is a lifework; not a game.  
And the rattle of his food-tins is borne upon the breeze.  
But he'll go down in history for his rendering of 'Louise'.

Oh Winifred and Harold are a most devoted pair.  
Where Win is seen, her Harold is just as surely there.  
When Harold leads the walkers they're never lost for long -  
He once turned up next morning - but that's another song.

Our Ernie Austen has a most aggressive chin.  
You'd better not annoy him or he'll knock your front teeth in.  
When out upon the trail he carries 'normous packs  
And always takes the longest and the roughest of the tracks.

Now Plimmy is a handsome youth, so they put him in the choir;  
They had to throttle down his voice; t'was a danger to the spire.  
When he reached the top note the people gave a shout.  
And tried to get their money back before they all rushed out.

You know of Anice Duncan and her henpecked husband, Frank.  
He is just the same as she - a vegetarian crank.  
They tried to keep a boarder, but he got so very thin,  
That when they gave him "noct meat", he tried to eat the tin.

Harold was a beach inspector who thought it very rude,  
That men when on the beach should go bathing in the -  
Laz. then said to Harold "Than this there's nothing surer,  
You may think you're pure, but there's no doubt I'm Pura".

Jacky was a traveller on a most extensive scale.  
He also was a salesman and sometimes made a sale.  
Although he is a Pommy he speaks Australian well,  
And listens to the dickybirds in many a bosky dell.

Now Gwennie as a diver was not a great success,  
She dived into the Duckhole and made a nasty mess;  
She hit her head upon a rock and how the stars did fly;  
She stayed in bed next morning with a beef steak on her eye.

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Any further contributions to the Bushwalkers' Chanty will be  
welcomed.

A Remarkable Trip.

The 16 days trip carried out by the Misses M. Hill and B. White and Messrs. R. Hewitt, A. Hellyer, J. Pettit and M. Dunphy in the summer of 1931, can be recorded as being of uncommon interest and educational value, a pioneering expedition, and altogether a great experience. Under the navigation of the last named bushwalker and trailer, the party made a grand round tour of about 110 miles, arranged to include the maximum variety and most of the points of interest in this region. The weather, patently approving the idea of variety, rang the changes in an amazing manner and presented the party with a complete record of its possibilities. All told, realization beggared anticipation; the tour proved an epic one. 1930

Leaving Sydney on the night of Friday, Dec. 19th, 1931, Cocma was reached by train, and a special car transferred the party and its heavy "right through" packs to heat-smitten Belcka, about 40 miles nearer the Paupong Snowy, via Dalgety. Weights of packs varied from 70 to 58 pounds for the men, and were 36 and 38 pounds for the girls, all correctly weighed. From Belcka the land rose steadily to the highlands of Paupong at about 3800 feet altitude. From here a far flung view extended to the south-west along the overlapping mountain ranges sheering into the Snowy River gorge, backed up in the distance by The Cobberas and The Pilot, two alpine tops, the half way and apparently unattainable objectives.

By a steep and little known pass the broad Snowy River was reached, and its western bank followed for several days without much difficulty except for the Sahara-like drought condition prevailing. This greatest of Australia's mountain streams flowed evenly and 200 yards wide for miles, fringed by ranks of willow-like acacia, tea-bush and large sandy beaches. Like the Nile, the latter showed the daily difference in its levels. All around stood up the characteristic rock-capped and peaked ranges, clothed from base to summit with the dark foliaged, straight-masted southern pine, this being the dominant forest growth of great areas of the Black Jack and Big Byadbo massifs. For 20 miles this beautiful river wilderness was travelled, mainly in brilliant sunlight, but uncannily still and intensely hot, especially on the sandy beaches and flood spills of enormous area below the mouths of dry side gulches. An impending something was in the air, and beyond the Jacob's River (the first of the alpine streams of this section) the drought broke in roaring wind and following heavy rain, the party being caught between the Jacob's and Pinch Rivers in heavy flood. The latter being a particularly steep river, racing along at an astonishing speed, quickly rid itself of the worst of its load, so that after a wait of only 36 hours the party was enabled to make a risky crossing successfully. This was followed by the steady ascent of the terrific Pinch Mountain or "Nine Mile", a rough track

pass up into the elevated Ingee-goodbee country. From the humid heat of the Snowy gorge they rose to the chilly height of 5200 feet in strong wind and rolling banks of mist, and were greeted at the summit by gusts of icy sleet. There followed an easy and short descent into the lush Ingeegoodbee clearings, where the flooded river and adjacent flats under water spoke eloquently of recent heavy rains. Here were stock-yards and huts, but the absence of dogs, smoke and horses indicated that the Freebodys, who run this big cattle holding, were away for the holidays. All was loneliness; only cattle and rabbits relieved the remote and melancholy aspect of this green hollow surrounded by ranges all shrouded in mist. A day was well spent exploring the prairies and parkland mazes of the upper Ingeegoodbee. Once the ice-faced Pilot loomed out of the tantalizing mist but as quickly withdrew itself, this being their first glimpse of it since leaving Paupong.

Next, the intricacies of the route towards The Cobberas were tackled, at first in pouring rain. This stage across the heavily forested and lonely maze of uncharted streams and big ranges was a problem of great tracking interest (too quickly done, perhaps) accentuated by the heavy fog which shut down over the land, but luckily allowed of fair visibility in the immediate surroundings. Travel was only possible by feeling and judgment. Watercourses were crossed and ferny soaks ascended, until near the close of day the party ascended a high, unknown mountain (which turned out to be Forest Hill) and dropped down beyond it into a system of beautifully grassed little flats, hemmed in by invisible, high mountains. Here were running streams, brumbies and half-wild Hereford cattle, together with the ancient ruins of several huts and fences. Blinded by the fog, the fact that they had driven straighter and farther than anticipated and that Pilot Creek, the extreme head of the Murray, had been reached, was not discovered until the fog lifted 36 hours later, disclosing camp right between The Cobberas and The Pilot.

At these Quombat Flats the course was changed to north and the ramifications and intricacies of the Main Dividing Range between The Cobberas (6030 feet) and Mt. Kosciusko (7328 feet), an airline distance of about 25 miles, were searched out. After a tricky and heavy bit of tracking The Pilot (6002 feet) was ascended about four o'clock one afternoon. From this conspicuous peak a magnificent and complete cyclorama along radii varying from 40 to 80 miles depth spread out in every direction. This enormous area consisted of nothing else but tangled country, but what a tangle! On the west, from south to north, stretched the yawning blue-grey depths of the Great Indi Gorge (Murray head), stupendous and awe inspiring in its immensity and primitive wildness. Undoubtedly this is one of the world's great gashes. In length about 40 miles, it is flanked on the Victorian side by the great Gibbo Massif, nearly 6000 feet in altitude at its highest point (Mt. Gibbo, 5764 ft.), and on the N.S.W. side by the Main Dividing Range and its high Alpine tops: Cobberas (6030 ft.)

and the Pilot (6002 ft.) at one end, Mt. Kosciusko (7328 ft.) and Mt. Townsend (7260 ft) about the centre, and Big Bogong (5478 ft.) and the Dargals (5661 ft.) at the farthest end. Some idea of the tremendous depths of this great rift can be gauged from the vertical depth between the river level at Tom Groggin crossing (1800 ft.) and Mt. Kosciusko (7328 ft.), which is 5528 feet - over a mile. That between Geehi (1340 ft) and Kosciusko is still greater, being not less than 5988 feet. No gorge or canyon in Australia is of greater depth and few can compare with it for grandeur and extent.

The outlook from The Pilot takes the breath away. Here one has the inestimable privilege of viewing an area of about 5000 square miles of country as primitively wild as it ever was. Nowhere can the handiwork of man be perceived, except for some grey and distant smudges which proclaim how cattlemen destroy wide belts of upland forest growth when burning off the tall and clumpy snow grass.

From the Pilot the route forward to the ice fields of the N.S.W. Alps was worked out. It could be seen that the first third of the journey consisted of a broad elevated shelf of country upon which the actual divide is problematical. To the east of it the Ingeegoodbee highlands slope easily away; but the heads of the Pinch and Jacob's Rivers beyond are gorges that cut into it nearly at right angles. Peculiarly contrary to this system is the Murray River, which parallels the Divide; and at the same time the bench edge overlooking it is extremely precipitous and clothed in a continuous mantle of thick forest growth, in which lie stands of great sticks that may yet prove to be the highest trees in Australia. The rippling foliage cascading down the terrific declivity into the great gorge resembles a series of great green waterfalls and is a distinctive feature of the view from The Pilot. The middle third of the stretch consists of higher land, a great, stony, winding range sending off master ranges between the rivers flowing eastward. The farthest third of the 25 miles covers the highest country of all - the treeless, barren, ice-girt heights of the Australian Alps themselves.

All through these wild and cold highlands wild horses roam free in innumerable small mobs, matching their horse-sense against their deadly enemies the Freebody rifles. There is a scheme afoot and started, to wire fence the summit of the Great Divide; so soon the poor, harried beasts will be unable to change their grounds to accord with the seasons, and henceforth icy winds, deep snow and that awful barbed fence will spell the doom of the thundering mobs. It ought not to be so; it does not seem right that the last of the Monaro brumbies be wiped out because of some sheep and cattle. Surely posterity would care to view them running free in land which has been theirs for so long. The "Man from Snowy River" will never die, why, then, the horses?

Moving onward, the party engineered a course along beautiful prairies and wooded park lands, all smiling now in genial sunlight.

The old tin-mine workings on Tin Mine Creek were investigated and the amount of work done marvelled at. Along the next section a trail of a sort allowed of better speed through flat, green swamps with lagoons and bogs, and belts of fair timber, a deal of the footing being wet. Next, the gorge heads of the Pinch River were taken switchback fashion, until the party arrived out on the summit of the twisted length of the Great Rocky Range (or The Cascades Range), an inhospitable wilderness of rocky summits, sparse and twisted vegetation and steep declivities. Bad weather roaring up forced a camp, eagles' eyrie fashion, in the lee of a great stony cone, high up in a double gap of the range above the head of Jacob's River.

Half way through next day, when the half blizzard had moderated somewhat, the summit of the here well defined Divide was followed up and down for some miles, until the party gazed astounded into the 1000 feet deep Grogans' or Crackenback Gap right across the course, completely severing the Divide. A descent into this geological freak was imperative, followed next day by the 3000 feet ascent up to the Ram's Head, Lake Cootapatamba and Mount Kosciusko, monarchs of a treeless, shrubless waste of rocks, water and ice. Some time was spent about Australia's highest peak, disporting on the steeply inclined slabs of old crystalline snow or soft ice, the later snowy-white fall having almost disappeared.

Messrs. Pettit and Hellyer, due to resume work at a certain date, set off at full speed for the Hotel Kosciusko, 17 miles away, the mail car and home. The others hit an easy pace along the wonderfully graded and surfaced alpine road, but because the snow-grass going and watery bog-hopping of the main route had softened and limbered all feet, the roadwalking lamed the party in one act and thoroughly. Camps were made at Charlotte Pass (6000 feet) and Saw Pit Creek, and the walking concluded at Thredbo, after a journey of 16 days. So ended a wonderfully interesting trip through magnificent scenery. The route must ever remain one of the finest possible on this continent, and is recommended to all who have some skill in tracking and trailing and ability to rely upon themselves for awhile, but should not be attempted in winter or spring.

We have it on good authority that the ladies of the party are the first to carry packs into the Middle Snowy and the first women to traverse the Main Divide between The Cobberas and Ram's Head. In addition this is the first attempt by recreational walkers on the complete round route Beloka to Thredbo via Snowy River and The Pilot.

MYLES J. DUNPHY.

Vice Pres. S. B. W.

May, 1931.

A MORSEL PRESENTED TO THE RECORDING ANGEL.

7.

by Walter Tarr.

Official Trip - Leumeah to Sutherland - 18th, 19th April, 1931.

Leader, as per programme, Mr. F. Duncan, who succeeded in passing it on to deputies.

The walk was very efficiently and very occasionally led by Messrs. Wif and Taro, and thus with youth and beauty at the wheel, all went merry as a wedding peal.

Leaving Leumeah at 3.5, eastward sailed the noble nine. About a mile on came a crossroad at a very peculiar angle and some memories broke into words. The three roads in sight all appear possible for the river - some river - BUT - for posterity and the rapidly increasing swarm of Junior S.B.W's, the middle one is the O.K.

The road wound a bit right, and a bit left, passing a few cottages and a vineyard or two, and let posterity again note: when the very last and solitary fence post is reached, strike off to the right. Two wheel tracks will be found merging into a single track, which leads unerringly to the little bluff overlooking The Basin. The track down is well worn and good.

Tents and tucker kept the firm busy until dark - camp fire for an hour or two - some yarns - many stars - and so to bed.

The morning broke dull, but ideal for walks, cool and still. Some mighty breakfasts, no names given. Off at 9.15. The road we were to fall on easily eluded the nimble nine, so a halt was called - strangely enough by a half leader - scouts were sent out, and the lost dirt was discovered. So on again. A pleasant break was meeting two S.B.W's, male and female of the species, Buster and his winning friend. They reported little water, and they were right.

At 12.30 we were still marching with an eye for a friendly gully. None came - that way, anyhow, with water. Shortly after we had plenty, but it was all in drops and we did not wait to catch it. The country was not ravishing thereabouts, just a road, with the bridge sometimes showing up. Then it began to rain really. Nearly everyone had equipment, so on we plugged. Came a spot where Engadine was sighted, and a bee line was to have been taken to it. We thought it no bee good in such rain, so stuck to the road, not knowing where it led.

Somewhere about 1.45, everyone a bit cold, bit wet, and a bit (very big) hungry, we came onto a good road at right angles, the Liverpool-Sutherland road. So, with noble disdain for tucker, Sutherland, about 8 miles for us. Passing an allotment

we espied a rough iron shed that seemed to promise a bit. Scouts into it, and their wave drew us in.

It was small - half filled by a cart; it was windowless; dark; dirty; doggy; but it had a rough fireplace and meant a home, sweet home, for us, till either the owner or the smoke. chucked us out. It was then well after 2 p.m. We roosted (actually) on posts, sticks, bricks, tins, nails, got a fire going, boiled all the billies, dried nearly all the clothes, sampled a variety of sock-drying odors, had a royal feed, a big rest, and then knocked off the remaining 7 miles with a toss of the foot.

And to the last tearful parting at Central it rained - rained - RAINED.

The names of the Noble Nine

a r e

Brenda White

Marjorie Hill

Wif Knight

Taro

Jim Gunning

Frank Mort

Victor Thorsen

a n d

Two others.

ABORIGINAL HAND MARKINGS.

9.

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A very interesting talk was given by Mr. Thorpe from the Museum to members who attended the Red Hand Cave walk on Sunday, 10th May. The handmarks found in caves were really stencilled on by the blacks. Filling the mouth with a mixture of red ochre or white pipeclay, they placed the hand flat against the wall of a cave. The mixture was then violently blown from the mouth onto the hand, so that when the hand was removed, its pattern was left in the colour of the native rock, but surrounded by red or white.

These markings were made in caves used either as permanent or temporary camps. The stencil of a hand in red prevented the camper in the cave from being given the "evil eye" by any of his enemies, while a white stencil warded off death.

The cave at Glenbrook contains both red and white hands. What a haven of refuge it must have been for the harassed black!

M.H.

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Austin's "Appy Annual" was as 'appy as ever last Boat Race Day. Forty-five members were attracted to the fast and furious fun. Interesting competitions were held, the masculine game of "Moriaty" indulged in, and an excellent tea and supper eaten. Mr. and Mrs. Austin have installed themselves more firmly than ever in the warm spots of members' hearts, and to them are due the thanks of all. - Editor.

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FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD.  
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The number record for any walk which club members have attended, was made on Sunday, 10th May. After an enjoyable evening at Mrs. Austin's, 33 members still had sufficient energy to get the 9.5 train the next morning. Such a crowd must needs go down in the annals of the Bushwalkers, but more were yet to come. Alighting at Glenbrock, the platform groaned beneath the crowd (it was a stone one luckily, the platform I mean) for on it stood 85 of the intellectual species of the world (we include the Bushwalkers). The University Newman Society had descended upon us, and their leader appeared to be missing. Thus it was arranged that they should accompany us. Tom Herbert was with the Newman Society.

We were bound for Red Hand Cave, in company with Mr. Thorpe from the Museum, and Mr. Bunyan, the discoverer of the cave. As the Bushwalkers know, this walk includes crossing Glenbrock Creek, which was not dry. Here an amazing incident took place. It was indubitably proved that chivalry is not yet dead among us, albeit she often wears a disguise. On this occasion the disguise was suddenly cast off, and one of our members suddenly became the very flower of chivalry. The Bushwalkers, arriving first at the creek, crossed in their usual manner. Then came dainty damsels in long frocks, who hesitated, and looked inquiringly at the water-covered, slippery rocks. Then appeared our chivalrous one. Taking firmly into his mighty arms one maiden at a time, he nobly bore her across the rushing torrent, even disdainingly to doff his own pack while he did it. But alas! during one passage, was heard a mighty splash. All shuddered, fearing for the chivalrous one. We breathed again, for it was not he who had caused the splash, but one who aspired to emulate him. Hastily dumping the fair one who occupied his arms at the moment, our hero dashed back, grasped the distressed other fair one, and bore her to the opposite shore, leaving the emulative one to struggle in the same rushing and raging torrent. His (the emulative one's) pants were considerably moistened by this time. I must add that even he eventually reached the opposite shore.

At that moment appeared a gentleman bearing a copper covered by a lid. We were at once startled into the belief that the Newman Society intended to have long-pig boiled in that copper for lunch. We wondered which tender fair one was to be the victim, as packs were very small, and very few among our visitors. However, to relieve our awful apprehension, the bearer of the copper, who turned out to be the mislaid Newman leader, declared it only to be the largest billy can obtainable in Sydney. It was destined to contain tea (liquid) for the assembled company, and took only ONE hour to boil.

Without further mishap, except an occasional fall in a passing creek, resulting in many wet skirts, the party arrived at Red Hand Cave. Here a substantial meal was eaten, by the

Bushwalkers at least, and Mr. Thorpe gave a short talk on aboriginal hand stencils. The eating and the talk finished, in one never-ending line we proceeded down Red Hand Cave Creek to Glenbrook Creek where we again ate, some in the true Bushwalker fashion, and others otherwise. It was noticed that the chivalrous one and his emulator were neither of them conspicuous for chivalry while eating.

Having climbed to Glenbrook Station we again discovered that chivalry is not dead, but walketh among us. For there appeared on the train several engaged carriages, for Newmanites and Bushwalkers only. The chivalrous one had once more exerted his chivalry.

But who is this mighty man? Would you not like to know. I greatly fear to disclose his identity, least he be overwhelmed with requests for further chivalrous deeds. He once earned a title other than Sir Galahad, or should I have said Sir Launcelot, on account of the many articles he carried slung upon his person. If you would very much like to know his name ask Tom Herbert, but be ready to duck, and remember, Tom has a long arm.

Marjorie Hill.

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Do you know the hefty maiden in our midst who holds the club championship for falling over? If you have walked with her you will remember her.

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### S O C I A L.

A most enjoyable dance was held on Thursday, 30th April, at Miss Bishop's New Ballroom in Bathurst Street. Altogether 85 members and their friends attended. Although the floor was a little heavy, the dance was not. The "light fantastic toe" worked overtime. Our S.B.W. pennants looked very well in the new room.

Thanks to the hard work and unfailing energy of our Social Secretary a profit of £2.10.0 was made, a very acceptable amount considering the state of the G.S.B. which involves our finances.

Editor.

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