

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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The roots of the trees are my roots, thrusting deep
Down through the warm earth's dark deliciousness;
And the cry of the black cockatoos in their clamorous sweep
To the voice of my spirit rising above the stress
Of the storm in triumph. Rose-tinted in their pride.
Flesh of my flesh, the hills rise, and my blood
Burns in the waratah on the mountain side.
The leap of my pulses beats through the singing flood
Of cool bush water that blazes a silver trail
Where saurjan lags sprawl evilly in the mud -
The green slime seeping like poison from each scale
Their blunt snouts darkly sunken in back-wash holes
Peering from eyenots never shuttered by sleep.
Yonder the sun spills past the crayoned boles
Of giant gums, to gild each fallen heap
Of crescent leaves until they gleam and glow
Like little yellow moons; that time has thrust
Beneath the trees to tarnish in the dust.

From Bush-Born

By Norma L. Davies.

MOUNTAIN MEMORIES

by Hec. Carruthers.

Kowmung, Kanangra, Gangerang - glamorous sounding names, especially when one hears many talks by club members who have roamed around these regions. And then, when one stands on Kanangra and looks at the fascinating little peaks of Rip, Roar and Rumble beckoning in the distance, the urge to explore is felt very strongly. But like a painting these places tend to lose their beauty on closer approach, or so John and I decided after wandering around this section of the mountains.

Full of anticipation of interesting sights ahead we struggled out from Katoomba on a glorious sunny morning that promised good weather ahead. We had grabbed a handful of everything in sight, stowed it in a couple of packs, loaded the artillery and cameras and with a twinge of regret, etc., set out to discover each other in the revealing atmosphere of the bush. At this time I was an ardent canoeist not used to carrying a pack on my back. The unaccustomed weight of 70 lbs sapped all my strength and left me in a dazed state of mind. The first part of the trip can, therefore, only be described in a hazy manner.

We managed to scramble or tottle bus out to Clear Hill and alighted at a small town called Glen Raphael. We were unable to get tea, bed and breakfast at any of the hotels so we had to pitch the tent. I should say John pitched the tent as I was incapable of pitching anything around. When the dinner bell sounded I strolled down the stairs in my tuxedo or torso or something and partook of a goodly meal, fersooth.

The next thing I remember was a voice within the tavern crying, "Awake, my little one's and fill the cup." That sounded good so John and I immediately crawled out from under the canvas, filled the cup, then crawled in again. Suddenly John remembered that we were going somewhere so with a larger twinge of regret I crawled out to look at the gloomy morn (or afternoon). Hearing a disturbance in some nearby bushes I went to investigate and saw a piece of meat waltzing around and humming. I took after it with a tomahawk (scout's note) but when caught it was too far gone to be of any use so John played The Last Post while I buried our proposed lunch. After that sad scene we packed up and sauntered off in the direction of Clear Hill.

When I regained consciousness I was sitting on a rock overlooking some valleys while John was dashing around with a camera. I began to wonder why I had brought the artillery, the camera, the films - in fact I wondered why I had forsaken my mermaids for mountain devils. My reverie was broken by John saying something about a bird of time having but a little way to fly, and so, a stone was on the wing. It missed me but I realised that I must arouse myself to avoid being a target for more stones. So I leaved meself up on me launches and wobbled unsteadily towards the ladders. Those ladders appealed to me. There was something nauti-cal about them. Ships and shoes and stockings and all that. Well I did the sailors hornpipe on top then dashed down the companion's way to where he was waiting. From there we sauntered off again, hob-nobbed with a chap called Debert before descending to the gap known as Medlow.

We congratulated ourselves on our superb feat of walking and our timing

things so nicely that we had ample time in which to pitch our tent before dark. Our first job was to find a little stream that babbled over pebbles. Unfortunately there was a drought about this time as well as a plague of grasshoppers. The poor little grasshoppers had been very thirsty. They came across the little stream, there, and drank it all up leaving only three trees, there, there and there. After playing hide and seek for an hour we realised that we were in dire straits. It was going to be a bit tough having to go down to the Cox's River every time we wanted a drink. Then John got an idea. Why not go down the Black Dog track and camp at the Cox. I immediately phoned the Tourist Bureau for information and as the shades of night were falling fast we scurried off. I wanted to run the whole way. Fancy being out in the bush after dark. Creeping, crawling things everywhere. Things peering at me from every stump. Gosh, I'd be a hero when I got back. I stuck my chest out, busted two buttons and knocked over two trees (Committee, please note - they were dead). Well we followed the little diamonds that sparkled in the trees until we reached the edge of the ridge. There all trace of the faint track vanished and we rushed hither and thither searching for a way down. All our hithering didn't take us any thitherer so John suggested camping for the night. As I must have my cup of toddy before retiring to rest I decided to continue my search. I discovered a chimney down which we scrambled in an effort to go straight down the spur to the river. After sliding over rocks and leaves we landed right on the track and set off at a brisk pace for the Cox. By this time the worms were rather hungry and we were pleased to arrive at the river at 10 p.m. What a feed the worms had.

Next morning dawned very dull and gloomy so we just roamed around and wasted half our ammunition on a yellow rabbit. Anyway I bet the little beggar got a helluva fright.

Later on we entertained some visitors, who were walking through to the Nattai Tableland. They left us to camp further downstream while we did a bit of cooking and endeavoured to take a few photos in the poor light. After lunch we organised a big game-hunting expedition. I was eagerly awaiting my first feed of rabbit so I hastily saddled up our elephants, collected the black boys and set out for the vast unknown. We wandered down until we came to a place called Kill's Defile, but the name scared us so we turned back and on the return trip managed to bag one and a half rabbits.

The next day we were awakened by a band approaching or perhaps it was someone blowing his own trumpet. Anyway we got out the carpet, hid the wine and welcomed the new guests. Eventually, amid much blowing of trumpets they arrived - a couple who had come from Kanangra via the Kowmung. They intended finishing up at Canberra or Darwin, I don't know which. Now these people made me almost abandon the trip. The hero of their story had killed so many snakes that I straight away put an advertisement in the local paper for a snake charmer. As there were no applicants I tendered my resignation from the expedition. John pleaded with me and eventually I decided to accompany him further into the bad lands. After trudging along the glorious flats beside the Cox we reached the Black Dog Canyon. Here we slipped and slid a bit but kept our tempers despite the snakes that almost obliterated the track. About midday we arrived at the Kowmung and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves as we pushed through, over and around Kanuka trees and rocks. Now and again our hobnails skidded on the basalt and we plunged into the madly careering river. At last we reached the end of the gorge and got out of the

built-up areas. We stepped on the gas and sped along, hoping to reach Cedar Road before dark. Friend John almost had heart failure on one occasion. On a very rocky part of the track he suddenly bounded into the air with a yell. I dashed up and saw a snake lying across the track. It had been left there by our trumpet blowing friend. I made John sit down while I endeavoured to calm him. I hoped this would be a lengthy job but John suddenly jumped to his feet and dashed off. Reluctantly I followed and once again we struggled on. I was terribly disappointed when John decided that we would stop. I felt like stopping hours ago. And so the long day closed and we sank into a well earned sleep only to be awakened in the small hours by Mr. and Mrs. Clive Walker who were spending a holiday on the Kowmung. So that morning we made an early start and set out for Hughes Ridge. We began to enjoy the scenery as the river ran through better country. The sky was overcast and rain seemed very close. On reaching the Cedar Road we stopped for lunch and were joined by a party of Bush Walkers who had made a motor trip to the top of the old road. After talking for a while we decided to go on but the rain came to my assistance and we pitched our tent along with the other party.

Next morning we bid our friends Adieu and set off up stream for Hughes Ridge and Kanangra. At the bottom of the ridge we cooled off in the sparkling stream and had a good feed in preparation for the long climb ahead. We then filled our water bottles, collected a rabbit from the butcher's and began the ascent. Once we had reached the Jingery Ridge we felt in good form so hurried along past the numerous ant hills to the track junction below Scrubby Top. We swung to the right passing the cave on our ascent up to the plateau. Soon we were lost in a forest of small saplings. For many minutes we struggled to find a way through the trees and after much pushing and shoving burst out into the open heath country and on to the track that took us past Mt. Seymour and to the iron ladders that have since been removed. It was dark by the time we took off our packs on the dance floor and scouted around for wood.

For the next three days we stayed at Kanangra and shivered. A fierce wind was driving from the west and clouds covered the sky all day. We wore all available clothes using our towels as scarves. Our gardening gloves seldom left our hands and we were continually on the move in order to keep warm. Our trigger fingers were itching but the clouds prevented us from shooting any of the interesting country. We investigated all the vantage points from where good shots could be obtained so that when at last the sun peeped out we would be able to dash off to the spot marked X. Our intentions were to visit Big Misty and then stroll to the Boyd Range had conditions been favourable. Instead we just haunted Kanangra. By the third day we were practically blown out of the cave and had to tie our fire down in order to save ourselves from too much physical exertion. It was a bit tough having to chase the fire around the cave when trying to boil the billy. Eventually we gave the landlord one hours notice and took the cave across the street which had been empty for a week or so. This dwelling proved much better and we were able to enjoy our last night in comfort. Late in the afternoon the clouds started to break up and that night we saw the moon shyly peeping at us through the trees.

Full of eagerness we awoke next morning to watch the golden orb appear over the distant mountains. We were soon dashing around with our cameras and after scratching our itchy fingers set off for Gangerang at 11 a.m. After successfully negotiating Smith's Pass we lingered awhile on the cliffs to admire the Kanangra Gorge from a different angle. Walking was easy until we reached

Craft's Walls. Skirting these massive rocks we encountered serious opposition in the form of small saplings and vines and we soon felt the pangs of hunger. After hurried lunch we journeyed on to arrive at Gabes Gap, the oasis in the wilderness. This is a delightful spot in that rugged mountain range and provides a welcome resting place before the long task ahead. Our rest was rather brief and at 3 p.m. we commenced the arduous clump up Gangerang. The sun was still beating down strongly as we clipped and slid over the broken basalt that formed the top of the narrow ridge leading up to Rip Roar and Rumble. Hobnails were useless, even dangerous. Mountain holly slashed knees and arms while small saplings became entangled with legs and bodies. How we hated that journey as branches lashed our faces and caused us to flounder on the jagged rocks. We had endearing names for all those holly bushes and all those rocks as we scrambled up towards Cloudmaker. We wondered where was the enchantment of the distant peaks now that we were on them.

At last we reached the bend where we turned right to climb over Rip Roar and Rumble. We tripped, tore and tumbled over these three "fascinating" peaks to eventually arrive at Cloudmaker. The station master was away when we reached the big station so we hurried away in order to reach Dex's Creek before dark. At first we went too far to the right and finished up on the edge of a gorge. From here we edged our way around to the left and back on to the main ridge which took us down to the creek. Darkness had fallen by this and we felt anxious as we searched for a camp spot. After much searching we discovered a cleared spot beside a pool and in a short time had our tea on cooking.

The night was very cold as the camp spot was rather damp and misty. We were pleased to see the sun on the next morning and "enjoyed" an early morning dip much to the disgust of the frog that inhabited the pool. After more holly and saplings we saw the Cox's river glimmering far down below. Like thirst-crazed animals we ran down the mountain side and threw ourselves into the refreshing stream. We lazed for many minutes in the cool embrace of the water before attending to the needs of the inner man. John had injured an ankle and knee while coming down the mountain so we just crawled along trying to reach Breakfast Creek before dark. While still a few miles from our goal we stopped for camp and enjoyed a delicious meal of poultry. Our supplies were running low and we were forced to live on what we could shoot. We had become rather tired of rabbits and welcomed the change in our menu.

Next morning we pulled down the tent for the last time and began the long journey to Blackheath. We passed Breakfast and Galong creeks enjoying the scenery all the way. After Galong we were disappointed in the way the river broke up and ran over miles of pink granite. The last few miles of Gibraltar found us tired and cranky as we had to force the pace in order to complete the long journey before nightfall. At Gibraltar Creek we had a late lunch and ate our last food before the monotonous walk up the bridal track into Megalong. And so, our walking ended, we sank into the comfortable seat of a car that conveyed us to Blackheath.

It was with a pang of regret that I gazed at our last camp on that trip. Towering casuarinas, rocky cliffs and gently murmuring stream created an impression that made me linger in withdrawing the pegs that transformed our tent into a crumpled mass of canvas. Perhaps something warned me of things to come. That was my last walk with John. He is now a prisoner of war in Germany.

A LITTLE GOSSIP.

We feel we must congratulate the Social Committee on the dances they are putting on lately. Everyone enjoys them. Besides the sausage rolls and coffee are delicious.

Two items of news which you have probably heard about by now. Joan & Harry Savage have a daughter, the image of Harry, we hear but we will wait and see about that, and Mary Stoddart has announced her engagement.

The Melbourne Walking Club are printing their Walks Programmes these days. Similar to ours in set-up but much more encouraging than our formal affairs. For instance who could resist this, "A pleasant, easy walk for the more sedate" which you must admit does call one, more so than ours which bluntly state more often than not "Rough" and is usually a gross understatement. Another one brightly insists that "we hope to see lots of Wattle". Well we ask you !! We feel a definite call to Melbourne.

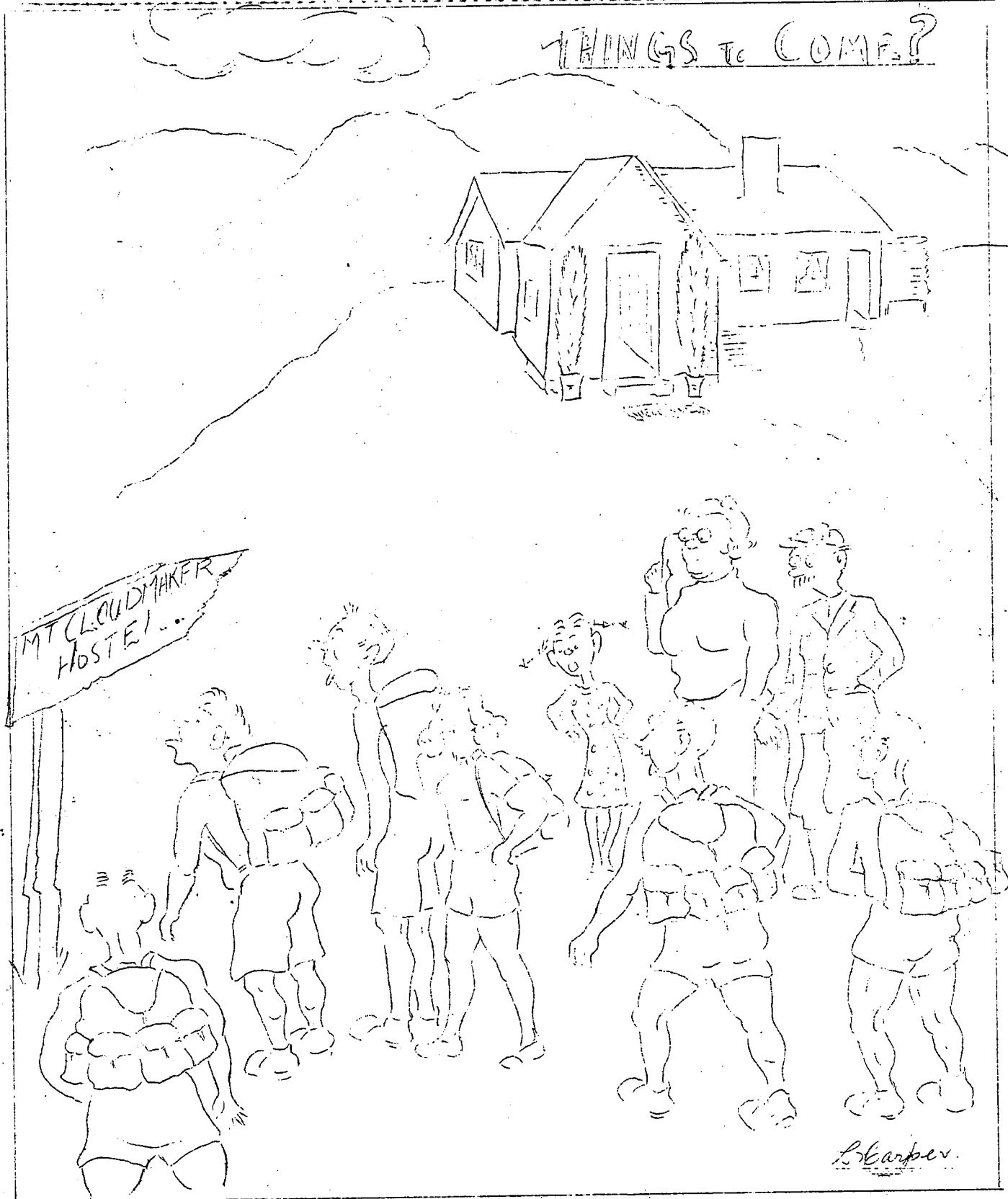
Speaking of Melbourne, there is a rumour that Ira and Dot are returning to Sydney. Fur coat and all. We don't really believe that Dot has bought a hat though, Do you?

The life of an OLD MEMBER is not a happy one. It is these poor unfortunates who must always be a beautiful example and practically regulate their lives with an eye to the effect of such lives on the innocent Prospective. You can tell an OLD MEMBER, at once, (not everything, of course, some of them are on the committee) by their apathetic look, and their tendency to lie down under vile accusations. The OLD MEMBER is accused of plenty, such as holding opposition meetings on the landing outside when the rest of the members (the really serious ones) are looking after the welfare of the club inside, speculating in land and spending our savings, at the general meeting. They also say an OLD MEMBER is very rarely, if ever, seen on official walks and altogether it seems that to be an old member is a term of reproach. Which all leads up to the inescapable fact that a recent official walk was LED, ATTENDED, SUPPORTED and FOLLOWED purely (?) by OLD MEMBERS. Thirteen of them. Of course they may have wanted to talk about someone, but still, they were there.

Tim Coffey is fit to be "tied". He unfortunately brought a girl along to "Old tails retold", the first time he has brought one along he says and they put photos on of him surrounded by girls and looking thoroughly at home with them, too. In fact he was so annoyed that he came in next Friday night without his TIE.

An attempt to rob a member of his carefully hurtured upper lip fungus, on Friday night, was unfortunately a complete failure. He defended the growth so valiantly, the mob were frightened of cutting him. Better luck next time, we hope.

THINGS TO COME?



A WAAAF LOOKS AT WAGGA

By Francis Stoddart.

Geologically speaking, the Murrumbidgee at Wagga Wagga is a rejuvenated river; that is, it flows swiftly but along the winding bed of an old river. It is cutting down its banks along the outside of the wide bends and lovely old trees are falling to a watery death. At one time (they say locally) it was navigable from Wagga down and paddle boats used to thrash up and down to and from Mildura. Nowadays there are too many obstructions; logs and sandbanks and small islands, and of course the river flow is regulated at Burranjuck Dam.

Near Wagga the Murrumbidgee takes a turn westward. Having circled the mountains round Canberra and deserted the foothills of Gundagai, it commences its devious course over the gently descending tableland toward the centre-line of Australia, changing its direction where the Lachlan joins it, and turning towards the great Murray. It would be one of the most wonderful rivers imaginable to canoe along. Its quiet reaches are alive with nature fauna. Running through paddocks where mild-eyed cattle or contented sheep have their residence, and where guns are seldom heard, snares seldom set, it pursues its untroubled way past lovely river gums, green wheatfields, lush meadows and thicketed islands.

Walking along its banks one may startle into flight a flock of sulphur crested cockatoos. Against the sun they wheel and turn again, flying round and round with raucous cries, their yellow underwing feathers glowing in the light and their wild freedom a thing of halcyon beauty.

Once we came upon a lamb new born. Wet all over and sweetly weak it lay on the dew-heavy grass with its anxious mother beside. It was a silky gleaming white, with the most adorable nursery-book tail, liquid eyes and tiny sooty nose.

Often on these walks one may startle a hare from the high grass. Like a brown bolt he will scoot off across the flats and if one waits quietly and patiently he will eventually come back again to the same spot. The black swans are the greatest beauty of all. With dusky symmetry of action in repose, or repose in motion, they drift silently along the gleaming surface of the water, aimless, untroubled and remote, their red bills pointing forward and down and the lovely curve of their slender necks grecian in perfection of balance. When they fly they are magnificent. Their wings are tremendous, heavy and powerful and tipped with snowy feathers which are invisible when they are on the water. Usually, on a quiet bend, one finds seven or eight of them. They will fly off if disturbed and sail by with a wary eye even when one is sitting quite still on the bank.

In spite of the beauty and attraction of the river - strange how water calls to something deep in one -, lovely days can be spent away from its magic in the outlying country. Days on horseback, with the wind boisterous in the ears, the sun burning the face, and every muscle elastic in response to the vigorous movement.

There is an experimental farm about five miles out of the town - a government affair - and at present skeleton-staffed. They have been pleased to welcome exercise-seekers and to encourage them to muster sheep or horses and ride all over their lovely wide domain.

One such day was spent branding in foals and separating them from their mothers. A ticklish job this with only three riders and some fifty or so powerful horses, all just as wild or wild as can be. The horse-man at the farm is

amazing. He sits his great black horse as though both were one. When the mob is corralled he goes quietly in among the great nervous animals and gently puts the rope halter over their necks, then over their heads. It looks easy. He leads the mother out and the gate must be shut quickly on the baby who, when he is obstreperous, receives a smart slap on his snowy, chestnut, or sable nose.

Finally all are separated and we round up the mothers and take them down to their paddocks about two miles away. Poor dears. Illogically they think they will find the foals there, and they race about the wide knolls and pine groves crying to them in extreme agitation. It is saddening but anyway they will soon forget. Meanwhile we ride back to deal with the foals.

The gorgeous arab stallion is shut away from all this excitement, but on almost any day one may stop to gaze at him as he races round his high fenced strongly-made corral. He is dappled grey and fine and slender. His whole body is a-quiver with fire and spirit, and he races fleetly round, wheeling and turning with glorious agility, poetry of freedom in motion.

On another day mustering sheep was in progress. We cantered down the long slope from the hill and fetched the sheep from their paddock, bringing them through a gate and counting them. This part was difficult to do and quite entertaining. The lambs had to be ignored and some of the lambs were large. I was about ten over the mark in my count. The idea was to pick up four stones - there were about four hundred of the ewes - and drop one every time one reached a hundred, at the same time shouting "hundred" in a loud voice. O! it was fun.

Next they were driven along lanes and other paddocks to a small yard where they were crammed in tightly and shooed in batches through a small race. Here they were separated into three, Mother-ewes, small ewes and ramkins. I was in position on the race and now and then held up proceedings by seizing some hesitant small woolly fat thing and lifting it up bodily to hug it. The yard was a lovely sight. Great shady peppercorns grew there making a green roof almost entirely covering the whole yard. In a green twilight the pale creamy fleeces heaved and circled casting a reflected glow upward.

We were tired out when the sun turned fiery red-gold above the western hills bounding the wide valley. Turning homeward we rode slowly up toward the little sharp pointed green hill with its olive green pines, and rounded granite boulders, beneath which the farm buildings are grouped among giant gums and hoary peppercorns. The darkening fields were quiet in the clear cold air and the only sound in the stillness came from our horses hooves on an occasional cobble.

In a few months now, I shall see again the glorious line of almonds in bloom. They circle the eastern side of the hill and dive down past the orchard into another wide valley. They are old and symmetrical and very beautiful, with palest pure pink chalices centered with dark red, crowded on long stems in heavenly profusion.

In the huge cool orchard shed last spring we sank our teeth into icy soft pears, brown-flecked sunny gold, and fountains of extasy. There are tables laden with boxes of almonds all shapes and sizes and conditions. Hard shells, soft shells, ones with the skins on and quantities without. As we munched our fill that day we were shown the specimen room where bottled fruits, olives, pears, peaches etc. stand in tempting array. There is a great copper where the fruit is preserved, and an intricate and interesting grader.

The olives, clothed with pointed glossy green leaves and loaded with

purpling fruit, are contoue planted, lines running round the curve of the hillside following the same level. The new orchard is being planted in this way and will look so much more charming than the old, with its straight rows and unimaginative squareness.

My year in Wagga has been so crammed with new and educating experiences that I could run on in the foregoing vein for an indefinite wordy space. No doubt after this war long yarns will be spun around the campfires. Perhaps among the tales of derring-do and of overseas marvels there will come a moment when I will be able to communicate the quiet peace of the Murrumbidgee and the beauty of this wide and sunny plateau, in the form of a murmurous lullaby to soothe tired walkers to a well-earned sleep.

LETTERS FROM THE LADS AND LASSES

Letters were received during August from:-

Jean Ray	-	C.M.W.	Norm Scott	-	S.B.W.
Peter Allen	-	S.B.W.	Bob Savage	-	S.B.W.
Jack Adams	-	R.R.C.	Betty Isaacs	-	S.B.W.
Ruth McLaren	-	S.B.W.			
Brian Harvey	-	S.B.W.			

Jack Adams - Airgraph Letter from London, 21.7.43. A copy of Bushwalker Songs and Poems came to its final destination today (Posted to Evans Head - last known address) Believe it was posted in January. Old favourites like "Kanangra", "Old Father Cox", "Come to the Bush", etc. bring back memories of great and cheerful times at walks, friendly campfires and gorging barbecues. You and I can look forward to the future when we can lay aside the uniform of war and again don rucksack and old digs for many more "Down in the Blue Gum".

You no doubt wonder how I'm progressing in this great country. Final training almost completed prior to conversion to heavy bombers. With an English crew as rear gunner, our mid upper is a French Canadian quite regular fellows. The people over here are kind and hospitable to us "colonials", many recall with passing years, the glorious Anzacs of the last great blunder. Many have boys overseas, some prisoners of war at Singapore and by their friendliness to sons over from home they hope to make up for their loss.

The food question is not too bad. The whole country is under the hoe. Vegetables or hay everywhere. In fact this harvest of fodder has been an all time record. Anyway thanks for the booklet and "Till we meet again", Yours ever a Bushwalker. Jack Adams.

Bob Savage - 20th July Whilst in Harold Chardon's office about a week ago a package arrived bearing the familiar stamp of the Services Committee and so, of course, the conversation swung to the old hunting grounds - the Garrawarra and the Central Blue Mountains - then to the old days of the Club when we were both very junior officers in Signals and week-ends have to be apportioned between military requirements and the walking game - having lived again a while in the past which is the privilege of Colonels we settled down to military requirements of today. On my return up country I found waiting for me a similar package and once again thanks to the Services Committee. Recently stationed near me was Sister Helen Moriarty - a sister of our Oliver - it was not until she saw a copy of last years "Bushwalker" that she made her relationship known and so the magazine has its uses in introducing people.

Jean Ray - 3rd August. After travelling down to Melbourne, and back to Sydney a lovely snap of Splendour Rock has just reached me from the C.P.W. photographic competition - and you. Many thanks to the unknown photographer and to all concerned. This is one of the spots I have not yet reached under my own steam, and one I am hoping to visit soon. The photograph, now adorning the far from ornamental beams of our hat, gives me some idea of the "why" behind the name. It must be a glorious spot.

Just recently we received back from England Arnold's "propaganda" book - in which we had a number of photos received from the Services Committee and other bushwalkers in addition to his own. From all accounts, good photos of Australian snow country are a constant source of amazement to the people at home who think that Australia is either a flat desert or an earthly paradise. So keep up the good work of photos to the lads away.

Another point which the Committee may be able to help through its respective clubs. Dr. McLennan of the Botany School, Melbourne University, Carlton N-3 is most anxious to get quantities of Australian fungi. She is testing out all varieties for a drug, penicillin(?) which is supposed to be very beneficial in curing bomb happy and shell shock cases. We do not get the quantity or variety of fungi that Victoria does, but may have some that would prove of value and contribute to our store of this drug.

Just as a matter of interest, she is working on the moment on a fungus which actually grows on the optical glass of binoculars etc., in the New Guinea area - not on the glue, - not on glue, but actually on the glass, making them unserviceable after a few months until they can be thoroughly cleaned. It seems an extraordinary thing.

We have been nearly blown off the Bradfield Ridge this week and the dust is already drifting in onto this paper as I write. It is going to be another "lovely day" - but at least the sun is shining.

FEDERATION NOTES

The Publication Committee reports that it has not yet located a printer with the necessary supplies of paper.

The proposed alteration of the Constitution has been carried so that the quorum for a Council Meeting is 5 delegates provided they represent at least three clubs.

The year's Annual Conference is to be held on September 31st at 8 p.m. at the Boy Scouts' Association rooms, 4th floor Australia House, Carrington Street City. One of the main subjects of discussion will be the Greater Blue Mountains National Park. Mr. Hodgson, President of the Blue Mountains Shire Council has sent a map of the area proposed as a park and the setting aside of primitive areas within the park will come before the Federation. Members are urged to attend the Conference and express their views. The proposed reserve is bounded by a line drawn from Hartley down the Cox's River to Kill's, thence direct to the Warragamba Dam site; then down the Nepean and up the Grose to Tomah Creek; then North to beyond Mount Irvine and back to Hartley.

A reply was received from the National Park Trust to the Federation's request that the road to Little Marley Hostel be closed by a gate where it leaves the Bundeena Road. The Trust refused the request as it is against its policy to put a gate across any road and debar the public from any part of the park. A proposal that Arnold Rae's legacy be devoted to the purchase of lot 7 at Era was turned down. The C.M.W. pointed out that Arnold Rae did not care for the place and the Blue Mountains was his favourite walking country. It was suggested that Long Angle Gully and Fitzgerald Creek might be suitable.

AT OUR OWN MEETING

Three new members were welcomed by the president - Christa Calnan (who was admitted last month), Mrs. Sheila Montgomery, and Mrs. Betty Dickensen. It was announced that Freda Newman, Bob Banks and Dick Howard had also been admitted, but were unable to be present.

The Federation decided against the purchase of lot 7 at Era. It was proposed by Alex Colley that a motion be discussed at the half-yearly meeting next month, for the purchase of Block 7 by the club, £100 of the purchase price to come from accumulated Club funds and the balance to be raised by loans and/or gifts from members. A number of members expressed opinions, most of which struck a cautious note. Marie Byles said that a client of hers, who was favourably disposed to the walking movement was willing to buy the land if the Federation or the Club did not do so. The vendor wanted grazing rights for 10 years with an option for a further period. Ray Kirkby pointed out that it was unlikely that the land would become ours for all time. It might be resumed or the surrounding lands might be sold to other people and developed, in which case our block would be of little use for camping. Wal Roots pointed out that a large sum was involved and we might jeopardise our financial position. On the other hand it might be impossible to develop the surrounding lands without the possession of block 7. Jean Moppett drew attention to the difficulty of policing the area, Irving Calnan said that there was a general encroachment on lands near to Sydney and that Era would be affected in time. He thought that the same amount of money applied to publicity might achieve something more worth while - e.g. the Greater Blue Mountains National Park. Ron Eddes questioned whether many Club members went to Era. On the suggestion of Alex Colley it was decided that anybody willing to help by means of loan or gift should give their name and the amount they were willing to put up to the assistant Treasurer, Jean Moppett, so that the half-yearly meeting would have some idea of whether members were willing to support the proposal. It was decided to put the proposal before the half yearly meeting.

It was announced that, owing to the difficulty of obtaining leaders for walks, the Walks Secretary is trying out a new scheme for the next walks programme. Portion of the tentative programme is to be made out showing suitable routes, so that members may place their names against any they wish to lead. It is hoped that this would overcome the difficulty of many who would lead walks if they knew just where to go, though of course the choice of route and date can still be decided by the leader. The Walks Secretary (Allan Wyborn) requests that members do not wait to be asked to lead walks, but see him if they can lead a walk, and so keep the Club's activities going during these troublesome times.

YOUR SOCIAL CALENDAR
FOR SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

- 17th Sept. In all probability Dr. Ian Hogbin will not be in Sydney on this date, in which case Miss Dorothy Taylor will lecture us on Wendell Wilkie's popular book "One World".
- 24th Sept. Services Committee Night in the Club rooms.
- 6th October Join with us in matching the jits jittering at the Trocadero.
- 8th October Fifth Watercolour Exhibition of Australian Wildflowers.
- 22nd October Play Night (would any aspiring producer or actor see Mr. Kirkby).
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W A T E R P R O O F !!

Last month we discussed the different meanings of the word. Let us now turn from etymology to clothology.

with cloth as with so many other things in life, we must constantly accept compromises. As a rule, an advantage has a corresponding disadvantage. For instance, a giraffe finds his long neck handy for getting at treetops but not so good for getting through doorways. Similarly a cloth which is completely and absolutely waterproof has one or all of the following disadvantages,

1. It is heavy
2. It is airtight
3. It is cold to the touch and therefore causes dew to form on it.
4. When treated with oil or paint it loses tensile strength.
5. It attracts the sun's heat and gets unbearably hot when exposed to summer sun.

Such a cloth is obviously unsuitable for tents but is good for ground-sheets and loose capes which allow good ventilation. Loose fitting jackets and coats are not too bad but tend to 'sweat'. That is why it is impossible to get a satisfactory lightweight tent which is "absolutely waterproof".

For tents whether "proofed" or not we must depend on a good "run off". A camper must therefore see that his tent is so designed that all water runs freely and easily off the roof. Of course water will run off any sloping surface but we must bear in mind that cloth is a flexible and elastic substance which therefore has a natural "sag", no matter how well the tent is pitched. This sag is very much increased when a strong wind hits the tent. A good rule is that the roof of a lightweight tent should have a minimum angle with the ground of 45°, 50° or 60° is better. Even a well designed tent will leak if by bad pitching there are puckers in the roof.

Given a good "run off" any smooth tightly woven cloth will keep water out without having been treated in any way. Japaras being specially woven for such purposes are of course the bushwalkers choice. An untreated cloth however, while running off the water, nevertheless gets wet and if the wet underside of the cloth is touched, the 'skin' of the water is broken and a drip starts. Most campers know the trick of running the hand down from the drip to the bottom of the roof which stops the drip.

A tent made of water repellent cloth whils it resists the water for some time, eventually gets wet, but because of the resistance a drip is not so readily started.

If a tent is packed up in a wet state and pitched in that condition, there will be wet patches inside the tent. If rain falls the tent will leak. The moisture on the wet patch attracts more water through the cloth which runs down the inside of the tent until it comes to the edge of the wet patch. Here a holdup occurs and a drip starts. The wise camper wipes down the inside of a wet tent with a towel or a handkerchief not so much to dry the tent as to spread the moisture evenly over the surface.

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