

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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STOP PRESS:

RE PURCHASE OF ERA LANDS

The sub Committee appointed in connection with
the above matter, advise the negotiations are
proceeding favourably. Full report next issue.

In the meantime will all Members who have promised
outright donations kindly hand same to Edna Garrad.

ALEX COLLEY

Convenor - Era Lands Sub Committee

TASMANIAN HUTS

by "Ubi"

Nature was so very often harsh that, instead of enumerating in our minds the best camp-sites in terms of permanent water, of soft grasses and leaves for bedding or of abundant wood, we had to give first place to a roof over our heads even if it were not a whole one. Therefore we became aware of all the deserted farm-houses or someone knew someone whose friend lived near the desired mountain and possessed a barn or a shed. There were also the Government huts in National Park, the Hobart Walking Club possessed two in exciting localities and, on one occasion at Adventure Bay, Brunni Island we even rented a week-ender for the night.

My introduction to a roof over my head (while walking) was on the Mt. Dromedary trip. It had been noised abroad that we were to sleep in a barn, and our quarters proved to be a solidly built, commodious stone hut in one end of which corn sacks were piled high, serving as a mattress and insulating us from the stone floor. Unfortunately we were placed in a much used cow paddock and the circle around the fire, which dared not sit, smacked very much of the steppes and needed only a cow-dung fire to complete the illusion.

Not always did we have the security of walls a foot thick. Over the back of Mt. Wellington is a hut called "Thark" - a name which always titillates my imagination but whose meaning or origin I have never enquired into. I connect it, probably quite wrongly, with something Greek and aesthetically perfect and still do despite the fact that even before I went there it had an evil reputation chiefly connected with the fireplace. We would never have arrived on this fateful occasion if one of the members of the party had not been a previous visitor, for the fog was so dense on the featureless landscape that it was not until I was pushing open the door with my nose that I realised the hut was there.

However, even the thin walls gaping with cracks, the earthen floor covered with brushwood and the general air of dampness and prolonged decay did not fail to warm the heart as we escaped from the clammy, penetrating, isolating fog. Scarcely were we inside before it commenced to rain in torrents but we hopefully began to kindle a fire in the fireplace and managed a fair blaze. But the Flagellants never suffered half so much in their efforts at self-laceration as we. Every exacerbation, every curse which has ever been hurled at that fireplace was amply justified; not the slightest puff of smoke ascended the chimney and had we been of Cain's cast of mind we could not well have believed otherwise than that the maximum wrath of God had descended upon us. The rain now commenced to run down the chimney in rivers causing greater clouds of smoke to billow out as, though not yet quite reduced to this State emotionally, our eyes streamed tears. To this moment I cannot fathom why we did not extinguish the fire ourselves for we fought a losing battle with not even a consolation prize of half-cooked vegetables. When we awoke in the morning we were floating on a raft of rushes but outside where water seemed to be defying the laws of gravity and standing inches in the air, left no doubt as to our advantage.

There is one hut in the "wilds" of Tasmania called "Damper Inn" which I did not visit but whose name always conjured up for me a picture of a happy party on a rare, sunny day making a damper with such success that the

ecstatic cook or his gastronomic party christened the hut after this tooth-some morsel or it may even have been a large damper. - I think I pictured it as such. Alas, one day some Philistine disillusioned me by telling me that the name meant "damper in than out".

I was recently reading some very pungent lines by Gandhi in which he criticised the modern craze for speed, mentioning particularly the use of the motor car. I quite agreed in some respects but I am sure than even he would have approved the motor car as a means of getting away for a while to the mountains after a period of strife and care on the plains. We were making such an escape towards Table Mountain in the centre of the island once through a furious, cold wind and only the prospect of a deserted house helped us to dare think of the future as sleet commenced to fall. Towards dark we arrived. It was ramshackle but several rooms were intact, one being half filled with straw which, with the bits of genuine wallpaper adhering to the walls, made us feel quite gay. There were tall pine trees over the house and they groaned and tossed as we struggled with the fire which needed such coaxing that I was taught a valuable lesson in cooking. My chop fried so slowly that it turned out to be the most unqualifiedly magnificent I have ever eaten and the memory of it has always been a comfort when faced with restaurant failures and now, in the darker days of meat rationing, my spirit will receive greater balm from the past.

On just such another day we set out for the East Coast of Tasmania intending to climb The Thums at Orford. The East Coast is reputedly the Cote d'azur of Tasmania but on this occasion it was bitterly cold and in addition the whole district had just received a deluge, rivers were running bankers and lifeless swamps covered the ground. Luckily this was where a seventh cousin came in with a hut in an outlying paddock and we groped about in the dark collecting a huge pile of wood, by means of which the fire was kept going all night and I managed to narrowly escape death by freezing. I cannot think of any situation in life more pleasant than to have some companion who believes in keeping the fire alight the night through and who (Oh blessedness) feels the cold just a little more than you so that he is always up feeding and stirring the embers just before you suffer the final agonies in pursuit of your pleasure.

When Lake Fenton was the rendez-vous circumstances were transformed. From the six or so huts a choice could be made, account being taken of such factors as the bunks, the behaviour of the fireplace, proximity to the wood-heap and the addition of a verandah. There was always too a segregation, even if unexpressed, of the exuberant and noisy element.

I shall never forget my first visit to the Mt. Rufus hut which was also one of my earliest and most trying trips in the snow. The hut was not finished and parties were expected to take with them various items of furnishing and additional accessories. Heavy snow had fallen the night before and the first hundred yards were easily the best as I trudged up the twelve hundred feet, I think it was, with a week-end pack, a pair of skis and a kerosene tin full of panes of glass for the windows and various pieces of wood which, when jig-sawed together with other pieces of wood, formed a table. My most vivid recollection of the hut was our heating of it to such a temperature that we had to walk outside in the middle of the night to cool off despite the fact that the outside temperature was well below freezing point.

The huts in the Lake St. Clair Reserve need an article on their own but of one in particular I want to tell you my experience.

We were reviewing our itinerary at Fergie's on Lake St. Clair when Charles, Fergie's "off-sider", piped in with the gratuitous news that a new hut had been built under Cradle Mountain. This suited us admirably but as Charles was a very imaginative lad I catechised him thoroughly to make sure he had seen the place. Yes, he had stayed there..... We had already survived a rather heavy, trying day when we rounded the rock walls of Cradle Mountain scrutinising the slopes as we went for signs of the hut. Here for the first time we found deep snow on the track and in places water had cut through drifts twenty feet deep so we became a little apprehensive at the thought of a night out.

Presently on the surface of the snow appeared an eminence which did not look quite natural so we went across to make a close examination. It proved to be the ridge of the roof just poking out above the snow and when we dragged away some of the snow we peered in and found a pleasant little tea-house for summer visitors. A turn of anxious speed brought us to "Waldheim", a hot bath, a bed and other luxuries.

SADLY MIST (CONTINUED) by MUMBEDAH.

We had just settled down to a quiet Saturday afternoon before a kindly fire, when sweet female voices smote our ears from the little saddle one crosses to reach the cave. "There's someone here, there's a fire burning anyway", we heard a voice say, and as we peered expectantly round the corner, what should loom into view but two "covered waggons" under which peered persons of Dorothy Lawry and Grace Edgecombe. Then we said hello all over again for the third time, as we hadn't seen them for a few days, and were just getting over the sad parting. They had changed their plans by coming up Crunglebungie Pass and across to Kanangra instead of crossing from Kanangra River to Mumbedah Creek. With the advent of visitors, and taking into account the large amount of food they reckoned they were going to eat, we all set off to gather more wood. Whilst busily squelching around, we were surprised to hear the roar of motor-cycles, and a mechanised force of four men approached wearing riding breeches. "Can we get through to Burragorang from here tonight?", they innocently asked. We stood open-mouthed for a while and wondered if they were a band of unknown "Tigers", but they made it clear from their information that they were going to ride down Gingra and over Scott's, which after all, would be quite an accomplishment on a good mountain-bred horse. We enlightened them by showing them our walking maps, and they decided to take out advice and camp in the cave for the night and proceed back to the Oberon Road on the morrow and reach the objective via Mt. Colong. They left next morning wiser men.

It was on this particular morning that I witnessed the finest mountain mist I have ever beheld. Commencing about a thousand feet below, in the Deep, it stretched away in a flat unbroken sea right up to Nellies Glen, rolling over the Dogs in a giant wave like a mighty comber breaking. The right over the Lower Cox, up Kedumba and away over the Burragorang Tablelands to the coastal ridge, in one unbroken flat plateau of cotton-wool. The rising sun made the whole scene one of great brilliance which almost hurt the eyes. It is remark-

able to record that whilst we gazed about in the warming sun, a party of S.B.W.'s were camped at Glenallan Crossing in the pouring rain under the mist. With our cameras busy on the job, and in a zealous endeavour to take a delayed-action photo of Grace Sproggo and self on Kanangra Head, I set my camera up some distance back on the cliff edge. Releasing the trigger, I raced round to the point, to be in the scene, and when about ten yards therefrom, nose-dived on solid sandstone, scrambled up, and just made it, as was demonstrated on the d. & p. of the film. Clinical examination revealed a sprained left wrist and a split knee which soon commenced to swell, (and which confined me to camp for the following two days). However, in compensation for the spill, I had the pleasure of seeing the picture in the (now defunct) "Sydney Mail".

Dorothy and Grace pushed off that morning, bearing the Royal Mail for our families, and we said goodbye again for the third and last time, as they disappeared over the top to take the short cut for Hughes', White Dog and Katoomba. The mist soon broke, and rain again set in and continued on and off for two days, during which time no further excitement befell us. It must be placed on record that a pair of Sproggo's brand-new hand-knitted socks, scarcely off the needles, were inadvertently roasted over the fire. Much gnashing of teeth. My knee was sufficiently recovered on the third morning for us to leave the Walls, and we set off in the down-pour and pea-soup gloom, and eventually reached the Kowmung via Hughes' Ridge, the latter giving my knee the works. So we camped at about 2 p.m. that day, and reached the Cox the following night just on dusk, wet through, and just before the Kowmung commenced to rise. We were delighted to find a heap of kindling wood at the junction which had been left there by the girls, which was more than welcome, and we here and now reiterate our thanks for this typical bush-walking gesture. We had not spared the tucker as we had sufficient to last until lunch-time on Sunday and as yet it was only Wednesday night and did we have a tuck-in? Before dawn we were making Johnnie-cakes by torch-light, but cannot recommend them to be tossed in the dim light of tired batteries as there's many a slip 'tween pan and cake! Pine needles don't taste the best. Proceeding upstream, we went as far as Mouin Creek and ascended the White Dog by its most gentle slope, and as before, entered the band of mist. On top, charcoal from the recent bush-fire ran down our limbs in dirty streams as we brushed through the dead trees. Medlow Gap was tricky with the land-marks left out but we soon reached the base of Debert's Knob where our ways parted. Sproggo wanted to return home to work on the canoe he was building whilst I naturally desired to haunt Carlon's for the remainder of my unspent holiday. As I reached Glen Allan, I let out a coo-ee and heard Sproggo's answer high up on the non-visible Clear Hill, which reminded me of the weather-god having the last say.

Wet and cold, I was glad to see Carlon's, and after washing off the producer-gas fuel, settled down to a hearty lunch before the blazing logs which always bring cheer to the heart. Ironically, the next three days were perfect, so to show there was no ill-feeling, made the circuit of Carlon Creek, Upper Breakfast Creek and the Black Dog, on the Friday. Few have ever traversed the upper part of this creek and will be well-rewarded to do so as there are many waterfalls with deep swimming pools and variety of track and rough, and a few rock-climbs. Saturday saw me down Breakfast Creek to old Man Cox with a newcomer, and back up Galong to a hearty tea. As I gazed across at the main divide, now turning into purple haze, at the top of

Nellie's Glen on Sunday, it was goodbye to another holiday. Megalong was still bathed in brilliant sunshine, but the folds of the ridges leading down to the Cox were merging into the deep purple of the steeply-rising mountains beyond. A hard road walk soon brought me into Katoomba to see the tourists in their Sunday best, pretending to be enjoying themselves walking around the block. At the time one wonders if the long trip, with its hardships is worth while, but the anticipation of the coming long-weekend on the next annual vacation soon dispells all doubts, and here we are again making out foodlists and pouring over the map.

Is it worth while - I ask YOU !!!

RESTORATION

(Author unknown)

For the mind weary with the world's work,
 With teaching and telling what it sees,
 God made the cool winds and the wide spaces
 And the long nights and the green trees.
 Wide spaces for the mind's adjusting,
 Cool winds for the tired brow,
 And the still nights that the soul might find itself
 Mid the wordless message of the rustling boughs.

Why must we have enough memory to recall to the tiniest
 detail what has happened to us, and not have enough to remember
 how many times we have told it to the same person? --

La Rochefoucauld.

INSIDE INFORMATION

Well, we have no engagements to announce this month, a sure sign that Spring is over, but we have two additions to the Junior Bushwalking section of the club.

Lieut. Alan and Audrey Whitfield have acquired a daughter whom they are calling Helen Margaret.

Mr. and Mrs. Ashdown (Jean Malcolm) also announce the birth of a daughter. Congratulations from the Bushwalkers to all these parents.

What a pity George Dibley is not interested in talking parrots instead of having a passion for pigeons. We might then hear something about another little bird in whom George is said to be showing a deep interest. We do hope it is of the homing variety.

The services committee had a very profitable evening Friday the 26th of this month. Mouldy Harrison saw to the financial side by circulating round the room optimistically thrusting an outsize in saucepans under everyones eyes with a very meaning look. Mouldy, not the saucepan had the meaning look. We believe the saucepan, together with auction and raffle yielded about £16.

Our President gave her own Christening robe to be raffled for which, Hilma with an eye to the future perhaps, enthusiastically peddled tickets. We noticed that under her eagle eye even hardened bachelors bought tickets. The robe was won by Jess Martin and we believe in omens.

Grace Edgecombe was behind the scenes nobly carrying out the jobs of Producer, Stage Manager, and Dresser, for the short sketches which were quite obviously enjoyed by the performers.

As Androcles in "Androcles and the Lion" Alex Colley was quite a find, if he'll forgive us the expression, being an exasperatingly pious Christian which Malcolm McGregor as the Lion with leanings towards Vegetarianism, steadfastly declined to eat.

Then just as we had finished blowing our nose and wiping our eyes over this story of the misjudged lion, Edgar Yardley came along and told us about another lion and a depressing child called Albert.

Male Stars predominated in the show this year and an amusing Bridge party was played by Reg. Alder, Stan Martin, John Noble, and the first mentioned lion. This was played sotto voce quite unintentionally we believe.

A set of quintuplets very commendably shot each other separately as each failed to reach the high note in their rendering of "I'll keep going my way" and shooting was too good for the chap who spoiled our last line in "Agatha and Farquar" by pulling the curtain across too soon.

There was quite a roll up of S.B.W's and Rucksack club members who came to support the Services Committee's effort.

"Frosty" was there with her husband John Forshaw who is in the A.I.F. He looks awfully nice "Frosty".

A DISCOURSE ON THE MAGIC OF EATING OUT OF DOORS

An Extract from Stephen Leacock.

I want in this chapter to talk about eating in the open air -- about the joy and exhilaration of it, about the health of it. I'm enthusiastic about it, I'm crazy over it and have been for years. I think that eating air is the greatest tonic, stimulant, restorative -- I can't think of enough words for it, but those will give a first idea.

Here let's sit down and eat. Tasted good? Doesn't it? Digest it? Why, my dear sir with that fresh air blowing into you, you could digest a chunk of sandstone rock.

You see, if I may interrupt myself to say it again, the point is, not that you are eating in the open air, but that you are actually eating air. As every chemist (every good one) knows, air is made up of equal parts of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, iron and alcohol, with just a little touch of the saner elements of argol and gargol, those these last were only found a few years ago. Now these are the very things that support life, and these are what is found in fresh air. Only the air must be fresh. The ordinary indoor air that you breathe is filled with dust, feathers, dried ink, powdered leather -- heaven knows what. You need only to let a full streak of sunlight break into a room to see what the air contains. Now when you're out in the open, in the straight, clear open, you're breathing the pure oxygen, taking in argol and alcohol with every breath. Have you ever seen one of those muddy looking Highland gillies who spend their days on the windswept moors and the open braes and breeks? You haven't? Well neither have I, but I've seen pictures of them, in the Scotch Whisky advertisements. What makes them ruddy? What makes them live till they die? The fresh air, the alcohol.

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Cooking out of doors -- over a fire made in the bush! How I would like to give a whole lecture on it! I'd like to get the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Librarian of the British Museum -- I mean people who live indoors, and take them into the Canadian bush and cook them a steak! My! Wouldn't they be surprised when I showed them that the point is you don't make a big fire but a little fire! I'd like the Pope to watch while I laid down two small logs side by side. O'd like the Archbishop to say, "But surely the logs are made too green to burn and I say "No, no, you are, I want the logs green so they won't burn! Now, watch me cook the steak--see it jump--see those ashes falling into the pan? That's what puts the taste in.....Excuse me I must upset it once. Now Pope you're the senior, here's yours. Eat it on a shingle.... Now watch me boil the tea, boiled from the cold water up... But stop! the Archbishop wants more steak.

So there's the topic, it is--real as real and one of the greatest things in the world. Eat more air. Never mind vitamins, the air is full of them. Eat the air. Take it in with every bite, breathe it in with every morsel.....

Tell the doctors about it? You don't need to. They know it. Don't you know that every doctor, the moment he gets a few days off, beats it for the bush? Any time you go into the rough country, in the bush and round the lakes you find it full of doctors, eating steak beside a log..... but you's hardly expect them to bring their patients.

THE PELION HUT

We are publishing a letter received during the month by the Editor of the "Sydney Bushwalker" from John Harvey, now living at Sandy Bay, Hobart, Tasmania. 'Dear Clare -- With reference to Dorothy Lawry's article on "Rumours and Facts", I do not think she nor Dot English need have any worries about the alleged reaction of the Hobart Walking Club about the loss of the Pelion Hut in Lake St. Clair Reserve, - I understand it is just over the border from the Cradle Mountains Reserve, and thus under control of the National Park Board.

I am now a fairly active member of the Hobart Walking Club and a member of the Committee, and since the occurrence I have heard only one reference to the fire; it was a casual remark by Mr. Jack Thwaites, a member of the National Park Board, that the hut was burnt down, and he expressed regret. No other remark was passed, the S.B.W.'s were not mentioned, and there was certainly not the slightest suggestion of annoyance and hostility. The hut did not in any case belong to the club. The Hobart Walking Club is not a highly organised concern like the S.B.W.'s.--quite a small, informal, and friendly body, and it is impossible to imagine the members getting up in arms about something that was a pure accident, especially as fires here are very common in the bush, and do not seem to be looked upon as the major disasters they are in N.S.W.

I hope this will set at rest the minds of all concerned.'

LETTERS FROM THE LADS

BILLY BURKE (continued)

This orderly carried me for half a mile - a might man is all I can say. We were packed like flies on the jeeps, I sat on the bonnet along with two other chaps. They're invaluable up this way.

Reached the M.D.S. to find things not too bright; Tojo was conducting a regular bus run in the egg laying line. His best effort was five raids before breakfast one morning. I became converted to a walking patient here as did practically everyone else in the tent. A slit trench is much more comforting than a stretcher raised off the ground. He has such a lovely daisy cutter bomb - the best I've seen. By the time I left all the tents had been dug in which made us all much happier. Spent my birthday here, but the lads were kind and didn't wish me many happy returns of the day.

The field ambulance unit here were doing a magnificent job, it was more like an A.G.H. than a M.D.S. and their cook was cooking for everyone on three primus stoves as fires were out of the question. I take my hat off to the whole crowd. The night I arrived their surgeons never stopped, I was the last to be done about 9 a.m. the following day.

After a week of fun and games here I finally got away as a walking patient - and once the first stage was over the going became smooth. Became a stretcher case again and did the rest of my travelling by plane. I'm definitely air minded already; it's far better than foot slogging on those dirty greasy barges. Think I'll have to join the parachutists. Life at present could hardly be improved on, a hospital bed and all its attendant

Luxuries. However, have only been here a couple of days so may change my mind before long.

By the way I've been talking you'll be beginnin' to believe that this New Guinea is as bad as its cracked up to be, far from it; put some beer and some gurls up here and it would be a pretty popular spot with the lads. The rain is heavy when it starts but there are far more fine than wet days; the weather is hot but I've experienced worse at our training area in Aussie and the same applies even more so to the denseness of the jungle. The nights are beautiful, just warm enough to keep one warm without a blanket. As far as the mossies are concerned they must be here but I haven't been troubled in the slightest up to date and I haven't seen a mosquito net for the past month. Have killed one and that was in the hospital ward. Tojo was the biggest surprise of all, he's treacherous and has a lot of dirty tricks such as using the dead and wounded as bait, but we're awake to them by now and he doesn't have much luck in that direction. We lose good men finding out where he is, but once we know it's just too bad for him. Our main trouble is trying to keep up with him, if he stops long enough to let us have a go it's the same old story, already mentioned. He's too cunning for his own good, waits until we are right on top of him before he fires, which is all right if its only a patrol, but if it's an attack we're on top of him before he can inflict many casualties. Once his defences are breached he loses his head and then it's just "fruit for the boys". How he loves our grenades too; it's a joy to listen to him screaming "no more grenades Charlie". The P.O.W. situation is first class - there isn't any apart from one or two for information purposes. We handed one of them a grenade (det. removed of course) to commit hari kari, but he wasn't interested, just simply refused to play. I'm beginning to think that fear drives them to fight to the end and no sane person would kick, scratch and bite to prevent himself being taken.

I've made Paddy's list of gear required for a light weight walker look sick; the clothes I'm wearing, groundsheet, half a dixie and toilet gear isn't not bad and all I possessed right through the scrap. Even discarded the towel in favour of a handkerchief. Not that I travel light however as my old pal Lady Godiva-II (that's the bren - so called because she is always stripped for action) plus accessories keeps the weight up round the 50 lbs. mark. Food was our main problem throughout, a tin of bully and a packet of biscuits per day perhaps. Improved on this with a little bit of jungle fare; native taro, green paw-paws and green bananas either fried or boiled make a tasty dish. Taro done up as chipped potatoes is excellent. I'm afraid the natives are sky quite a few pigs and fowls, wasn't lucky enough to bump into any myself, but I certainly tried. At one spot we could hear a rooster crowing in the Jap lines, we made elaborate plans for his welcome but whether anyone finally got him I don't know.

When we first got here four of us decided to operate a jungle juice distillery. On the boat coming over we had discussed numerous recipes and made great plans. We could even see headlines in "Guinea Gold" "Sparso's Distillery for Mango Wine, Tropical Cocktail and the Finest Brews of Jungle Juice". "Spraso" reckoned he got his recipes from a book that had been handed down in his family for generations. I nearly killed myself climbing cocoanut palms after the green nuts; we all sold our souls to the devil to get sugar raisins etc. and then after a week of blissful dreams had to throw the lot out.

'WITH SWAG AND BILL' - By H. J. Tomkins

A Book issued by the Government Tourist Bureau in 1910 - Described
by Alex. Colley.

Most of the old members can remember the day when a walker was somebody to be gaped at. If you go far away from Sydney, they still gape. Imagine what it must have been like in 1910, or before!

This old book gives you a glimpse of our forerunners. They used often to walk quite long distances - up to 39 miles a day, though they seldom left a road or a broad track. How they did it, covered from neck to toe in hot clothes, is rather astounding to modern walkers. All the photographs show the men clothed in long pants and usually with jerseys and coats. The ladies, too, exposed nothing but their faces. Even their hats were about a foot and a half wide and arranged in tiers, after the fashion of the day. Their skirts reached to within about 2 inches of the ground. On their backs they carried small swags. It must have been pretty torrid going - but - were they gone? Think of the flutter in the drawing rooms!

There were mixed parties in those days too. Says the writer - "What a merry company such a mixed party is! The merest peep at one of these expeditions must suffice. It is a beautiful, clear, fresh forenoon in October. The party, having negotiated the long steep hill in front of Jenolan Caves in the early hours and breakfasted by the roadside, is making good progress towards Oberon. As it makes its way through the scented woodland, the girls form the advance guard, tripping along expectant, chatting merrily and feeling that it is a joy to be alive; the men smoke and bring up the rear - and most of the luggage. To observe the zest with which the girls enter into the more or less commonplace incidents by the way - epoch-making events to them - is to be re-juvenated. They remark on the rude manner in which we prepare the chops for breakfast"

It is interesting to see how much of our present walking country was known to them. In fact, some of the walks are still done, such as Katoomba-Jenolan Caves via Nellies Glen and the Black Range. Another favourite was Wentworth Falls to Picton, which, by the way, is described as a three day trip. The country between Moss Vale and Kiama was very popular and this country has recently come back into favour. The Bell Kurradjong route was a popular one. In the days before cars these must all have been good walking.

Some of the trips, on the other hand, look queer now. Watson's Bay to Bondi Junction; Edgecliff Road to Bellevue Hill and Parramatta to Burwood are recommended as half-day walks. This was in the days before the city spread over these areas.

One of the most interesting parts of the book is the spirit of the walkers in those days. The walks are described in typically Victorian language. They were constantly being "refreshed" or "rejuvenated", they "descried" rather than "saw" things and so on. Take, for instance, the following passage - "What days were those, Parmenides! No morning paper, no post, no tram, train or boat to catch. Sky overhead, mother earth under foot, pumping God's pure air into his lungs and halting to camp at his own sweet will. Weary of limb at times and blistered feet, perhaps. But the ecstasy of it!" We wouldn't say it that way now, but we know just what

he means.

In the days before light-weight camping, before framed rucksacks, down sleeping bags and japara tents, it was a great adventure to sleep in the open for the night. The writer describes a night spent out at Little River (Megalong district), when they found the old hut too dirty to sleep in. He says, as a matter of course, - not that it mattered much, for nobody slept.

These walkers of 30 years ago look funny to us. They dressed differently and they spoke differently. But they were real walkers. The bush meant the same to them as it does to us now.

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AT OUR OWN MEETING

One new member, Max Nathan, was welcomed by the President.

The President announced that permission to have more badges made had been refused. If any old badges are returned by resigning members they will be issued to new members.

The B.S.C. is in a "high state of activity" at present. Christmas parcels for the ten boys overseas are already on the sea, and a further sixty are on order for some of the boys nearer home. The Committee wants people to join the Rucksack Club's pea-picking parties and give the B.S.C. 2/- in the £ of their earnings.

The Katoomba Council wants to know of tracks which need repair. Paddy Pallin would be glad of any information on this.

Myles Dunphy presented the Club with maps of the new Snow Leases National Park and a vote of thanks was passed to him.

Mr. Bennett, Chairman of the Blue Gum Forest Trust, would like anybody visiting the forest to take some wattle seeds to plant there so as to stop the erosion of the river banks. Some discussion followed this announcement. Myles Dunphy pointed out that there would be a great danger of fire if wattle was planted there. Wattles not only burned readily but came up more thickly after a fire. He suggested Pussy Willow, Myrtle, Kanuka or Ti-tree. Ray Kirkby was against the introduction of any exotic shrubs and thought a suitable grass might be found. Marie Byles suggested asking the advice of Thistle Harris and of the Forestry Dept.

Frank Ricketts and Vic Bailey were elected room stewards for the next two months.

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S O C I A L N E W S

ABOUT THE XMAS PARTY

That much looked for Annual Event - the Xmas Party - will be held in the Club Rooms on the 17th December. Dancing and games will be the order of the night and we promise a good supper - also something special in the way of novelties.

Come along and join in the fun - by the way, SHORTS & SPORTSWEAR are recommended as the dress for the night.

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Y O U R O P T O M E T R I S T

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HAPPY XMAS (NO COUPONS)

Butter

Sugar

Tea

Clothes

Linen

Meat (soon)

All on the official ration list.

Smokes,

Films

Liquor (walkers don't mind this of course).

Books

Travel (This hurts)

All on the "difficult" list and worst of all camping gear in short supply.

Still we're not so badly off after all. Few of us (who are not in the forces) go short of food. None of us misses a night's sleep cringing in some shelter with the big bombers overhead.

The bush has never looked so glorious and there are still a few places left to camp on within easy reach of Sydney's electric railways.

Heigho, Come to the bush!

Bestwishes to all Bushwalkers from

PADDY

You know where to find him