



# *Outdoors*

Official Journal of the  
Otago Tramping Club (Inc.)  
Dunedin. N.Z.

Vol. 3 No. 2  
AUGUST, 1948

# OUTDOORS

---

Vol. 3

AUGUST, 1948

No. 2

---

## EDITORIAL

### RESPONSIBILITY

The increasing tempo of Club activity brings problems, the greatest of which is the steady increase in our responsibility to the community. As a Club and as individuals we must accept the responsibilities of seeing that in our own enjoyment of the peace of the hills we do not infringe the rights of others. Broadly speaking that responsibility is widely accepted, but its full implications are not always fully appreciated. In its narrower sense it includes our duty to see that we leave huts tidy and stocked with firewood, that we treat fences carefully and leave gates as we find them, that we do not disturb stock or let fires get out of control. This much is elementary tramping sense. Other aspects of our broader responsibility include our conduct while in the public eye, and our observance of the principles of safety. With regard to the first, much yet remains to be done to educate the public to appreciate the difference between the genuine tramp and the common larrikin, and in so doing we should avoid the cult of notoriety. Ragged clothes are no disgrace, but why go out of our way to attract the public eye—especially on a Sunday evening. High spirits on a trip are a good thing, provided they do not react to the annoyance of fellow-passengers on train or bus. In short, "Live and let live" is the tramp's motto. Similarly, we must beware of causing trouble or anxiety to others through our exploits. We are apt to think of it as entirely our own business if we take risks involving life or limb, or even simply get lost. It IS our own business, of course, but it may also be that of a great many others as well—the members of our party, whose trip may be spoiled; relatives at home, anxious at our failure to return on time; Club members, who may be called out to look for us; busy run-holders, police officers and the like, who may have to come and help drag us out—often at considerable inconvenience, involving perhaps financial loss and personal danger.

But our responsibility does not consist purely of a series of "Don'ts." There is the other side, our positive contribution. As guardians of the public property—water reserves, plantations, and the like—we can do a real public service which some day must surely be appreciated. In our own way, too, we can often render much-appreciated service to the run-holders whose property we cross—be it only mail or newspaper, or a cheery word, or the righting of cast sheep—so that they not only tolerate, but honestly welcome, the arrival of a tramping party.

The above issues, we feel sure, are broadly appreciated by Club members. Nevertheless nothing is lost if from time to time we take the opportunity to remind ourselves that membership of the tramping fraternity involves not only pleasure and happy recreation but a very real responsibility to our fellow-man. This responsibility attaches not only to the Club and to its officers, but to every individual member as well. Most of



all, we suggest, that by our enthusiasm for our Club and its activities, and our evident enjoyment of the good, clean recreation we derive, we can contribute to the community at large something intangible but exceedingly valuable.

\* \* \*

In this issue we publish articles by Club members, covering a surprising variety of expeditions. It is perhaps inevitable that such contributions should be hardly typical of Club life—since the normal Club outing, from which the more ambitious expeditions are born, is of necessity limited in its scope and variety. In the words of at least one Club member, echoed no doubt in the thoughts of others, "I've done nothing to write about." We disagree: we suggest that many a Club outing could well be written up to give a picture of Club life, and that many such expeditions, for all their strong similarity each to each, could be shown to have individuality and distinctiveness. We ask Club members—particularly those who have never thought of themselves as contributors to "Outdoors"—to consider each trip as a possible basis to a story. It will be surprising how often there is lots of interest, even of importance, which by recording you remember and which would otherwise be forgotten. Now is the time to start thinking of that contribution to "Outdoors," 1949!

For the present, however, we must accept the theory that what is typical of Club life is therefore predominantly humdrum, and leave it at that. To those who have contributed articles, grave or gay, or illustrations or suggestions, we express our thanks. We would be glad to receive many more stories of similar quality.

---

## *Out in front...*

For 77 years Mosgiel have consistently led the way in the Woollen field. Its nationally-known lines include knitwear—under and outer, rugs, blankets, suitings, and scarves. Look to Mosgiel—pioneers in the Woollen industry: pace-setters for the future.



# MOSGIEL

*the greatest name in woollens*

THE MOSGIEL WOOLLEN FACTORY CO., LTD., DUNEDIN.

---

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

To all Members:

Since the last issue of "Outdoors," another year has passed and members may congratulate themselves upon the amount of tramping activity undertaken by Club parties. At Christmas, official parties visited the Hopkins, the Ahuriri, and the Rockburn, while unofficial parties tramped to many places. At Easter 27 members went to the Eyre Mountains and the head-waters of the Mataura River. The working parties at Ben Rudd's and Green Peak were also well supported with an average attendance of 24 members. Such activity is a healthy sign and proof of our vitality. We, of the Otago Tramping Club, are trampers in fact as well as in name. We should continue jealously to guard our ranks against "social butterflies" who seek the title "tramper" without doing anything to merit that honour.

In a supplement to this issue we pay tribute to those who established the Club. On 23rd September, 1948, the Club will have been in existence for 25 years. There are few of the foundation members still active in tramping, but they have left us a heritage for which we should always be thankful. But for this initiative 25 years ago, our tramping to-day would be considerably restricted and more difficult. Remember their environment and the conditions which existed when those men and women first went tramping. Then praise their spirit of independence, their disregard of bigotted convention and their true love of the hills. It is evident that they, too, were imbued with the same spirit which binds together in a sound fellowship those who tramp the hills, and the valleys, and climb the mountain peaks.

Twenty-five years' activity is behind us, and I for one feel privileged to call myself a member of our Club with its history. However, what we do now will be history 25 years hence. Let us, therefore, follow on from the foundations of the past and use our energy and vitality to create a history which, in 25 years' time, will be respected by future members. This is not a duty, but a pleasure. The real enjoyment of our sport comes from doing things, yet tramping is the only non-competitive sport I know of. Let us keep it that way. Who care if you have gone from point x to point Y in 25 and a-half seconds less than anyone else? Who cares if you have climbed one more peak than the other bloke? What does it matter if you are a real tough guy, eat peas with a sheath knife, drink tea straight out of the billy, and never shave or wash! Who cares, I don't!

A real tramper is one who loves tramping for the pleasure it gives him, who knows, welcomes and appreciates the common fellowship of the camp fire; and above all, who feels at home and vitally alive when out in the open air over hill and valley and mountain peak. May I wish all members and prospective members the best of enjoyable tramping with the Otago Tramping Club in the future.

Yours, etc.,

HORACE TILLY,

President.

20th June, 1948.



## CLUB ACTIVITIES, 1947-48

Since last issue of "Outdoors," there has been plenty of full day and week-end activity on the hills around Dunedin. A full round of Club trips has been successfully carried through; the official trips covered a wide range of outings, including week-ends to Christmas Creek, Bendoran and the Waikouaiti; bus trips to Horse Range and the Taieri Gorge, and the usual round trips to Silver Peaks, Mt. Cargill, Chalkies, the Peninsula and so on. Unofficial trips covered perhaps an even wider range of territory, while Club members made many trips to the Otago Ski Club's hut at Rock and Pillar, and a number last year took part in the Alpine Club's climbing instruction course.

The Club has been in the property business pretty effectively. The Green Peak hut has had further work done to it and was in first-class order for the Christmas party; a lot of work had been put in at the Ben Rudd property, which is a very popular week-end rendezvous already, and will no doubt see a wide variety of types, styles and speeds as soon as the 1948 snow-fall arrives. Then the scheme of a hut in Christmas Creek is being pushed ahead keenly, and the coming months should see results here. Apart from this, the Club room has been a popular rendezvous right through for Club members in town, and the special meetings held have been well supported.

Christmas, 1947, saw the Club for the first time running three official trips. One party of five did the Rockburn-Olivine crossing and climbed Fiery Peak (article this issue). A few weeks earlier Ian McKellar led a party through the same country, and favoured by fine weather they made ascents of Climax, Tantalus and other peaks. Seventeen members went up the Ahuriri, and various parties covered a lot of ground. W. Marshall, N. and J. Kinraid climbed an unnamed peak above the Watson Junction; A. Barth and R. Gregory climbed a virgin peak near Mt. St. Mary, and with G. Sim, did a good round trip—Ahuriri-Watson-Maitland-Snowy Creek Gorge-Ahuriri. W. S. Gilkison and W. Brookes did the crossing Watson-Maitland-Hopkins under weather conditions which prevented their planned Ahuriri-Huxley high level traverse. Other parties visited the Grand Canyon, Dingle Saddle, and so on. (Various articles this issue). The main party was in the Hopkins Valley. The outstanding ascent was of Mt. Ward (8,681ft.), only twice previously climbed, by G. McLaren and M. Douglas (see article). These two with J. Scott had previously climbed Baker Peak. Baker was climbed by Misses M. Wilkinson, B. and J. Napier and G. Soper in company with G. C. N. Johnson (Editor N.Z. Alpine Journal). The latter party also did Dasler Pinnacles and with Mrs. Johnson climbed Mts. Welch and Kitson. An unnamed peak on the Neumann Range (possibly virgin), was climbed by W. Broughton, W. Brookes, W. S. Gilkison and Miss W. MacDonald, while the saddle to the north was reached also by Misses W. Brookes and J. Whittington. The first three made an unsuccessful attempt on Mt. Trent, access to which was blocked by a break in the head of the glacier. About twenty members reached Brodrick Pass and looked over into the Landsborough; other parties went into the South Huxley, and a saddle at the head was reached by W. S. Gilkison and Miss W. MacDonald. A party of nine visited the Richardson Glacier at the head of the Hopkins, and sundry shorter expeditions were made.

Other unofficial parties at Christmas covered a lot of ground, including Milford Sound, Manapouri-Doubtful Sound, etc. Since then there have been a number of good trips made, including a week-end ascent of Mt. French (see article), and ascents of Mts. Bevan, Joffre, French and Tyndall by W. Brookes and A. Hubbard in the course of a Matukituki-Dart-Rees crossing. Easter saw the main party in the head of the Mataura, where ascents of Eyre Peak and Symmetry Peaks were made; while eight members joined in the Alpine Club's hut-building expedition to the Matukituki. And now there is snow on the ranges again, and various parties are responding to the call of the snow-covered tops, while for others the trails nearer home will continue to give exercise and satisfaction.

## ROCKBURN-OLIVINE

### A NEW DEPARTURE

At various times during 1947, several people made the suggestion that the Rockburn Valley was worthy of some attention from the Club, especially because of its proximity to Lake Wakatipu and reasonably easy access. In October the suggestion was seriously considered, and I found myself becoming really enthusiastic about the idea.

Our party, consisting of Gavin Clark, Stuart Needs, Bob Mulgrew, Julian Bullock and myself was duly formed and on a rainy Christmas morning we left Queenstown on the very crowded "Ben Lomond" bound for the "tiger country"—or so we thought. The weather had been very bad during the week, and all the rivers in the district were in full flood. I was not surprised, therefore, when I learned that the route into the Rockburn via the Dart Confluence could not be forced. A short delay at Kinloch with Harry Bryant for some road mending, and we were on our way up the Routeburn. There are two ways into the lower Rockburn (which is a tributary of the Dart)—one up the Dart and into the gorges of the Rockburn from the mouth, and a second over the Sugarloaf Saddle between the Routeburn and the Rockburn.

By 5 o'clock on Saturday evening we were on the Sugar Loaf Saddle, swaying gently under the influence of a howling wind and 70lb. packs. The weather was very poor, and the Rockburn Valley, now in view far below us, reminded one more of the abysmal depths than a charming alpine valley. Down we went towards the bushline with sleet pattering unpleasantly on our waterproofs. Sure enough we entered the bush too soon (as we had been warned not to do), and before long a mighty bluff stopped further progress. The events which followed did not give us much cause for joy and Saturday evening was wound up by pitching a very doubtful bivouac at the bushline.

Sunday, amid snow and sleet saw us on the correct spur, and after four or five hours of negotiating bluffs and alpine thickets we reached the floor of the valley. Sunday evening was a wonderful climax to two tiring days—a comfortable camp pitched on a friendly little flat beside the Rockburn—a good meal, dry clothing and warmth.

A good dry out in the sun on Monday, and we moved on to Amphitheatre Flats. A further spell of bad weather forced a camp here. The surroundings, however, were delightful even in bad weather, and with the added attraction of Julian's vocal talents to entertain the party, waiting around wasn't so bad. Wednesday morning we were away at 6 a.m., Gavin's cine-camera whirring joyously, seeming in harmony with a



fine morning amid glorious scenery. Soon we were on Park Pass, and a vista of the Darran Peaks reared up into the sky to greet us, with Tutoko and Madeline dwarfing all else. A gambol on the Park Pass Glacier without the opportunity of a climb, and we slid off down through the horrid bush again to Hidden Falls. A long day and we reached the upper flats. On again next morning to Cow Saddle in bad weather and another forced camp—visibility being about nil when we reached the great jumble of huge boulders on the Olivine side of the Saddle.

However, the good days were now outnumbering the bad, and Friday morning was one of brilliant sunshine giving promise of high temperatures later in the day. We weren't quite sure where Fiery Peak was, but as it seemed well within the scope of the party we started off at 6 a.m. up the first rock ridge behind the camp. By 8 a.m. everyone was on top enjoying the glories of the morning and the breathtaking view of Tutoko which, although hundreds of peaks were visible to us, seemed to dwarf all others into insignificance. A retreat to camp, a sun bathe and we set off down the Olivine for the McKellar-McCahon camp at the upper flats. At 8 p.m. that evening we were surprised to hear raucous shouts and noises coming from the top of Alabaster Pass. A little later, fourteen trampers descended into the valley, transposing the peaceful scene into a buzz of activity.

Early on Saturday morning we, too, ascended the pass. We stayed on top for quite some time, appreciating the view of the Pyke Valley far below, slumbering in soft light and shadow of the early hour. Down in the bush, as yet invisible, wound the tortuous route laboriously blazed by Jim McCahon and party a year previously. Just how important that track is to those who would cross from the Pyke into the Olivine we were soon to learn. In fact the increasing popularity of the Olivine district owes a great deal to the pioneering work of Jim McCahon, Ian McKellar and other members of the Otago University Tramping Club. An easy four hours took us out of the upper hanging valley and down to the Pyke Flats. A five hour search in blazing sunshine for our two cases of provisions, and we were at last rewarded. The days that followed, if not exciting, were pleasant as we wended our way down the Pyke and back up the Hollyford to Deadman's Hut.

Just to show we weren't going to escape without another taste of wet bush work, we were forced to cross the Harris Saddle in a downpour. Parkas which, by this stage, afforded little protection against the rain, were soaked from the moment of leaving Deadman's. Perhaps this contributed to an unusual show of speed when, after a non-stop climb, we reached the saddle in three hours, and Routeburn Huts in two.

A very pleasant rest day at Routeburn Huts put the rest of the trip in kindly retrospect, and we all felt quite sorry to be leaving the valleys of our travels in which, during the past fortnight we had learnt a great deal about cross country tramping, the vagaries of the weather and the joys of camping out amid beautiful and ever-changing surroundings.

—R. E. M.

\* \* \*

The honour of making the first ascent in history goes to Noah, who attained the summit of Mt. Ararat; but it scarcely comes within the category of climbing as at present understood, and the means employed are unlikely to be repeated.—Stanley Snaith.



SUMMIT ROCKS OF MT. WARD

Neumann and Ben Ohau Ranges in background, Hopkins Valley below.

—G. F. McLaren.



## MT. WARD

We left Dunedin at 7 o'clock on Christmas morning, and 12 hours later, in pouring rain, arrived at the base camp in the Hopkins Valley. Several days were spent trotting up and down the valley with supplies, while the weather changed from wet to floods and back to just wet again. New Year's Eve, however, was a real scorcher, and at long last we were able to set off up the North Elcho. This we did in easy stages, reaching the rock bivvy at 2.30 p.m. After a quick snack we left for Elcho Col to try and get a look at the country ahead of us. Leaving at 3 o'clock, we cramponed all the way, ascending the corniced lip at the top by a rotten rock rib on the left. On the main ridge conditions were very cold and misty, but we managed a view of the Landsborough and the hanging glaciers of Dechen, but of Ward itself absolutely nothing. So after deciding on the quickest way up to the Col, we began the descent, taking care to cut large steps over the cornice to help us on future trips. Once off the crevassed area we unroped and enjoyed an exhilarating glissade of 2,000ft. back to the bivouac.

Next morning we were away to a good start by 4 a.m. Although there had been no frost, crampon conditions were again good, and we made good time up to the Col (7 a.m.) and on to the top of Mt. Baker at 8. From here we had our first really close look at Mt. Ward, and were duly impressed. Acting on previous advice we spent the next four or five hours traversing the west face of Ward round to the north face. We struck some sticky patches of ice at various parts before we managed to gain the rocks, which we found very difficult, being both steep and loose, and with the slabs sloping the wrong way. It soon became obvious that we were not going to get Ward by this route, so off we went back to the west face. By this time it was getting well on into the afternoon, and we were doubtful as to the wisdom of tackling such a steep face in the middle of a hot afternoon, but after a meal and a drink we decided at least to have a look and see just how bad it was. We moved off, therefore, and almost immediately had our first minor mishap; the surface of the ice was such that a good stamp would sink the crampon right up to the boot, thus making a perfect 10-point grip, and all of a sudden I felt that my left foot was not gripping properly. Peering down through my goggles (which we had to keep on because of the intense glare) I found that one crampon had broken in half at the hinge. However, I managed to effect temporary repairs with some spare straps that I always carry, and we were able to proceed once more. We were approaching the lower lip of the bergschrund which guards the face of the peak, and the surface had changed from ice to snow, the lower lip of the schrund being protected by a steep bank about 10 feet high. I was about halfway up this steep bank when the whole piece, including the last 4 or 5 steps I had cut, crumbled away from the main mass and down I went with it. At this stage I would willingly have abandoned the climb for that day, but Gordon was keen to have another try, so up we went again; Gordon ahead, securely belayed by John and myself. He had almost reached the last of my steps when we heard a loud cry of dismay, and looked up to see him holding his ice-axe—now unfortunately in two parts! How or why it should have broken at all, and particularly at that time and place, we have no idea. This was now definitely the answer to our day's climbing, and off we went back to the bivvy, which we reached at 8 o'clock after a very full and exciting



16-hour day. In the afternoon light from the top of Baker we could see an easier way across the schrund, and decided that we would go that way on our next attempt.

Next morning we were feeling too weary to tackle the climb again, and our scorched profiles had reached the cracked and blistered stage and could not have stood another day on the snow without a brief respite. So we went down to the Elcho Hut for the day, and on the way we met Christopher Johnson who had been having a lively time with a large party of energetic females on the slopes of Barron and other peaks. The next day back to the bivvy again, complete with a spare primus and a replacement ice-axe. Somehow the weather now could not go wrong, and next morning we were away to a good start at 2.30 a.m. In the cool, clear morning we climbed effortlessly up to the schrund, crossing it quite easily about 30 yards from the edge of the terrific southern precipices. Our three-man party and a short rope delayed us again, and it was quite some time before we managed to gain the foot of the 300ft. rock tower. It was here that John generously decided to stay behind; it was his own wish and was in the cause of safe climbing, but was a disappointment to all of us.

Gordon and I went on alone. The rock was very rotten and exposed, and the holds were not the type that you could set up residence in, so we kept moving slowly and rhythmically upwards. We both felt safe as houses and glorified in slow, steady movement on the steep face. It was the most satisfying rock climb we have done, and will remain amongst our happiest memories. An hour later we had gained the crest of the ridge; another 20 yards along and there was the summit.

What a tremendous and glorious feeling of exultation it was when at last we stepped on to the final summit, shook hands and performed the various other rites reserved for such occasions. The view with its miles of ranges, valleys and peaks was too colossal for my pen to try to describe. We could only spare half-an-hour on top, so after a quick snack and a few photos we said good-bye to the summit of Ward, and commenced the descent. We had decided to go down by the ice couloir, which can easily be seen in most of the photos of the peak from this side, for it would be difficult to descend the rocks without the risk of knocking some down on our companion below. It was quite a tricky bit of work getting to the Col and descending it, and we found out what a back-breaking occupation it is to cut steps straight down steep, hard ice. In due course, however, we were down at the foot and had rejoined John, who was very glad to be able to get moving again. We wasted no time in getting down and over the schrund, then all difficulties were over, and we were able to potter back to the bivvy in easy stages. We said Au Revoir to the Elcho bivvy that night, and once again returned to the civilisation of Elcho Hut.

—M. H. DOUGLAS.

## AN OLD SKI TRIP

We were supposed to leave the foot of the Pineapple at ten o'clock, but it was nearly noon before the three of us got away. Robin and I had skis, while Ken had strapped to his pack a patent which for purposes of simplicity we will call snowshoes. As soon as the generous clearing is suddenly reduced to the miserable space between adjacent trees, Robin and I realised that the Pineapple is not necessarily the quickest way to the top



of Flagstaff, at least when carrying skis. In the first place it was obviously inadvisable to strap them to our packs as is frequently done. As an alternative I carried them on my shoulders, but one ski tip was invariably deflected. Fortunately we were not exactly speeding so the offending ski, now lying athwart my throat did not do any physical harm, but after the twentieth time the psychological effect was terrible, so I tried them under my arm, but the skis slid against each other, their ease of movement facilitated by the highly waxed surface. Possessed of the devil, the more tightly did I grip them, the more closely they resembled a gigantic pair of scissors trying to champ their way through the bush.

Slightly ahead, a faint blueness in the air and a sound as of muttered curses indicated that Robin, too, was having trouble. I found him frenziedly digging in his pack for a piece of string. Even that didn't work, we could only pray for the end of the bush.

Ken. was strolling ahead with all the smug assurance of one whose snowshoes are only two feet long. Strapped as they were on the back of his pack, we got a good view of them. They seemed to be sneering at us.

Along the ridge between Flagstaff and Swampy, with only the top of an occasional fence post visible, our curiosity was rewarded, we were able to see Ken's patent in operation for the first time. He seemed to lean over on the forward foot until, when on the verge of falling over, the friction on the rear foot was overcome, and he could bring it forward and so be lunched along with a Frankenstein gait, recognisable a mile away. The marks he left in the snow aroused considerable speculation next day amongst the University Ski Club. Not that Ken. was worrying about that, they fulfilled their purpose by making the trip to the Hut possible.

After a light meal beside Morrison's Creek we pushed on up into the mist. The flat expanse of snow offered no solution as to our required direction. Fortunately Robin had a compass, and with reasonable accuracy we were able to find north. "Now which direction are we supposed to be going anyway?" was the query that suddenly occurred to all of us, for in our previous trips the relation between direction and compass bearing had never mattered. So we each of us tried to remember the position of the sun on previous trips when we could see where we were going, and the time of day it had been, and thus calculate our required bearing. After a few moments' vain calculation we all went mad and made a wild guess, and after averaging out the result set off in that direction. We very soon found ourselves looking down a steep drift of snow leading into Burns Creek.

The sogginess of the snow robbed our descent of its wild exhilaration, but for all that it was a relief to see our way ahead, downstream for half a mile, over the spur and across country to the main ridge.

We only had to climb about twenty feet to get out of Burns Creek, and there were only occasional flax bushes to mar our progress. A simple zig-zag sufficed to traverse the hurdle. Robin and Ken. went first, so I was able to concentrate on the task of persuading my skis around the corner indicated by an outsize in flax bushes. It was quite easy, I realised that, having read all about it in the Public Library. All I had to do was to raise my right foot, rest the heel of the ski on the ground and point the front of it along the track the others had taken. The Book in the Library never offered any advice about disentangling ski-points from flax bushes, and it never even mentioned the fact that the other ski might

---

Solves your  
savoury problems



**ST. GEORGE**  
**LOBMATO**  
**PASTE**  
(Fish and Tomato)

The basis of all varieties of Savouries, besides  
making super Sandwiches.

**IRVINE & STEVENSON'S**  
ST. GEORGE CO. LTD.  
DUNEDIN

---



start to slide downhill again in the wet, sloshy snow. I reached the bottom at the same time as Robin. He had negotiated the corner all right, but the flax leaves he used to aid his progress over the brink of the bank had pulled clean out of the ground.

It seemed as if Ken., too, was in trouble, but we discovered that the horrible noise was only laughter—in the worst possible taste we considered.

At about ten o'clock we peered over a snow cornice into the hut. I can't really remember how we got down, the drifts we'd traversed paled into insignificance, it seemed at times we were tunnelling through the snow. But there was plenty of firewood, and within half an hour the rigours of the journey were forgotten.

We awoke next morning to a world transformed, the rising sun had discovered a million jewels on the slopes around us and on the foliage of the trees below. The bush under Mount Cargill was a mosaic in black and white, only at Waitati did the earth retain its mantle of green.

But if we were impressed by the view from the Hut, as on our homeward journey our noses appeared over the ridge we were spellbound to see the brilliance of Silver Peak.

We regained our skis and skimmed in pleasant contrast to the sluggish motion of yesterday. The hint of magic in the air persisted all day, culminating on the summit of Swampy; the snow had so crystallised the air that Silver Peaks looked only a few hundred yards away. A magnificent pall of whiteness lay spread out before us from the Blue Mountains in the south, The Lammerlaws, Rock and Pillar, to the Kakanui in the north. But the immediate circle of whiteness on the flat top of which we now stood, seemed much vaster than the other much larger circle, since it was so even and unbroken by the slightest contour.

Then to turn our blades towards the long run down to Morrison's Creek, gathering speed rapidly. Of the waves in the snow we touched only the crests. The snow was in perfect condition, and for once even I seemed incapable of falling over, while the shoulder of Swampy slithered sibilantly by. Not that we were really conscious of anything but the intoxication of the rhythm of motion, like Mercury and his elder brother descending from the heights of Olympus.

We stopped as the slope eased off, and grinned, no mere words could convey the exhilaration of the descent. We felt really sorry for Ken. who was still laboriously descending.

In those days we always used to foregather at the Old Sanny in the hope of meeting others, so automatically we turned in its direction, involving as it did a suicidal descent, confounded by the profusion of rocks and flax. In spite of them Robin steered a cunning course, while it needed more than an odd rock or two to deter Ken. with his snowshoes. It only remained for me to give the object lesson on how not to do it. When the first rock crossed my path, I could have dodged it with a neat stem turn or christie. But I didn't, I just kept bearing down upon it with ever-increasing speed, staring the while with stricken gaze. It seemed to be the Will of God. The ensuing painful scene of me in intense contemplation of a broken ski tip, while the remaining ski slid gaily down to join the tea party was too sordid to be described in detail.

Things never seemed quite the same after that. As it was, I limped home, and with seven feet of wood on each foot I had plenty to limp with. At Five Tree Hill we shouldered our skis and started to walk—a peculiarly erratic exercise it seemed.

—NORMAN BONSELL.

## OUR PARTY

It is very hot. Our packs are very heavy and the hill is very steep. But we are going down, not up. "B" remarks that this is a good thing if not a fortunate one. Below we see the valley, a nice grassy flat and a delightful stream. We hurry on down, ignoring the painful joltings of the swags, and soon we have reached the flat and I venture that this would be an admirable camp site. "B" agrees, and we whip up the two tents in fine style.

Soon the billy is boiling, and we set about a good tissue restorer. This done, thoughts turn to the next stage of the journey. Above, the eye perceives a savage bush-clad ridge which reaches more or less into the clouds. I now proudly bring forth my tomahawk which, I inform "B", will transform a desperate bush struggle into a delightful stroll. "B" receives this statement with some reserve.

"No need to carry everything up to the hut," says "B", producing a small knapsack from his swag.

"Just take a jersey and a few cakes, eh," I reply.

"Rather," "B" smugly replies, thinking no doubt of the hapless bodies toiling up to the hut with their back breakers.

Shouldering the Christmas tree we set off up the ridge. The tree appears to be feeling the heat, too, and despite its careful handling is beginning to show signs of disrepair. We move upward. I hack with the axe and "B" drags the tree behind. We continue to move upward, I continue to hack . . . . . (dots denote passage of time).

The sun is dipping in the sky as we reach the top of the ridge.

"A good job that's over," I remark cheerfully, massaging blistered hands, torn limbs, etc.

"Rather," replies "B", doing likewise.

In a short time, "B", myself and the tree reach the hut. Here everything is in a state of feverish activity. Decorations, coloured candles and odds and ends are being deftly arranged to produce a festive atmosphere. Before long people start to congregate inside till eventually a huge crowd has been packed round the bunks. Merriment proceeds. The evening wears on and voices wear out. The spirit of the season is making itself felt, and by and by a few tired, but obviously happy bodies totter gently out into the cool evening air to find repose under some nearby tussock. We, too, begin to think of our snug camp, and make preparations to leave. We are joined by "C", "D", "E" and "F" who, with customary feminine procedure, cause some delay in our departure. We move off down the hill, and are soon approaching the ridge. Behold, however, a dense mist has formed and all is inky blackness.

"The next ridge on the right," I say to "B" who is leading.

Ah, we are on it at last. Some of the torches have grown very feeble. We are sure of the track, however, so it doesn't really matter. Soon we come into the short manuka.

"Are you sure this is right?" I ask "B" in a casual voice.

"Sure," "B" nonchalantly replies.

We continue on down. Now we are in the really big stuff and I am convinced.

"We had better go back and find the main track again," says "B", wishing to be on the safe side and thinking no doubt of his sleeping bag some distance down the valley. We retreat. But lo, the main track has disappeared also. It is now drizzling somewhat.



"Where's north?" someone asks.

A number of points round the compass are nominated. There are no bidders, however, and camp on the spot is the decision. This happens to be a sheep track for fairly narrow sheep, running round the precipitous side of the ridge.

Reluctantly, with thoughts of the camp ever uppermost in mind, I lie down on the track, donning a few of the garments kindly proffered by "C", "D", "E" and "F" who, of course, have sleeping bags. Sleep comes at last and a few minutes later the dawn. The fog begins to disperse, and we quickly identify landmarks. We have not far to look for our ridge. We have been sleeping on it.

Off we go and in twenty minutes we reach camp. A swim for the girls and breakfast for us.

Another Christmas Party has come and gone.

—R. E. M.

\* \* \*

Did you hear of the occasion when our worthy President played the part of the absent-minded professor? When leaving camp for a day up the South Huxley, a billy of newly-made jelly was dumped in the pack "for lunch"; a billy of eats was left under a tree "to soak"; and a billy of soaking dry vegetables was put in the nearest stream "to set!" Woe, woe, woe is me!

—Mrs. SWEET ADELAINE.

---

In All Your

## Electrical Problems

CONSULT

**A. H. BARTH**

**Electrical Contractor - N.E. Harbour**

Phone 25-804. P.O. Box 876, Dunedin.

Electrical Supplies, Repairs and  
Installations. Prompt, Efficient  
Service Anywhere.

---

## A STORM ON SIBERIA

The idea of ski-ing on the Kakanui Mountains was first born one summer when, with a small party, I tramped over the tops from Herbert to Kyeburn. In particular, the high plateau known as Siberia which stretched for many miles at 4,500 feet, appealed as a wonderful ground for ski-touring. There were steep slopes in plenty where one could really ski, and long gentle slopes to make travelling a pleasure, even with packs up.

With this idea in mind then I waited through the winter months for better weather and longer days when such a scheme might be practicable. Shortly after mid-day on Friday, 22nd August, plans were complete; with Murray, two pairs of skis, tent and week-end packs all aboard my motor-cycle, we left the city behind and headed for the snows. The day was cold and showery, but the weather office said "fair to fine inland and improving", so we felt quite happy. Through Palmerston and up Shag Valley we roared, encountering several hail showers—very painful on a bike—until, within a few miles of Pigroot Stream, we left the main road and followed a private road up to a homestead tucked cosily in a little valley beneath the steep tussock-covered ridges of Siberia. As we neared the road-end, we found to our disgust that for the second time the back tyre was punctured, darkness was not far away now, so determined that no more time would be lost, we finished the trip by pumping vigorously every few yards of the way.

Strapping the packs, skis and tent off the bike on to our reluctant backs at 6.15 p.m. we started for the snow line. At this stage the weather still looked doubtful, but we knew that should it clear, we would feel rather annoyed still to be waiting below, so preferred to carry on to the snow-line and there await developments. For perhaps an hour and a-half we climbed to reach the snow, much shorter than was expected, then pitched camp, and scrambled round precipitous snowgrass slopes in search of water. Now the sky had cleared and a full moon lit our way back to camp—a vast improvement on our tiny torch.

Throughout the night strong gusts of wind tried to rob us of sleep, at one stage forcing me to abandon my warm bag and venture out to tighten up the tent. Over half-an-inch of ice in the billy, and a clear frosty sky when we first stirred at 5.30 a.m. We had breakfast and packed up before looking out again when, to our dismay, we found a heavy, threatening bank of cloud advancing from the south-west. A few minutes later snow commenced falling in large soft flakes, so resignedly we crawled back to bed, where without noticeable results we attempted to sleep. An hour later there was silence and on peeping out we found the sun shining from a clear, blue sky behind the vanishing clouds. Hurriedly we packed and started out on to the snow. On the ridge we were greeted by a strong sou'-wester that tossed our boards about somewhat, but otherwise quite a promising outlook. With an ever-expanding view of glistening snow-covered hills before us we made good time to the summit of Siberia, although the last few hundred feet proved rather tricky as the frozen snow slope felt rather steep and exposed with our heavy packs.

On top the wind was of terrific force, powder snow was blowing in stinging gusts as we clipped on skis and prepared to run for shelter. I remembered a little valley north-east of the summit, so down to this we ran in easy traverses, there to find we would be reasonably sheltered.





SIBERIA CAMP

The bivouac near the top of Siberia, a few hours before the storm broke.

—G. F. McLaren



Accordingly we pitched the tent, to have a meal and a spell before deciding whether we could safely spend the night so high. Later we climbed back to the summit hoping to get some good views of the hills about us, but it was not to be, for the swirling snow and the wind made photography impossible. Also dark, threatening clouds now unceasingly swept across the heavens, causing us to doubt the wisdom of remaining on top. However, determined not to give in while hope remained we retreated to our little haven and enjoyed several hours' good ski-ing before retiring again to the tent for a boil up. When we ventured out to the tops again we found the wind had dropped considerably, so off we started on a short tour over long, sweeping slopes towards the eastern summit of Siberia. We ran for several miles, glorying in the effortless rhythm that carried us so swiftly over the lonely snows, before reluctantly turning our boards back towards the camp, to finish with a gloriously fast swoop down the valley to our tent. So much did we enjoy this run that despite our weary limbs we climbed once more to the summit for a last run. The climb rewarded us with a grand sunset scene, as the sun, poised above the distant Alps, broke through the rolling clouds in long slanting rays of gold.

Back at the tent the air became very chill, so into bed for tea. We cooked, ate and yarned till we became drowsy while listening to the wind roaring above our heads. Soon we were asleep. About 11 p.m. we were awakened by a thunderous roar among the rocks above us, a few seconds later the tent was straining and slapping, the guy-ropes drumming as a terrific gust swept down the valley upon us. Alarmed, we undid the flap and looked outside, at a murky, grey night, for the moon had disappeared behind the heavy cloud banking up from the west. A few minutes later came another startling rush of sound, I pulled on boots and gloves and groped my way out to tighten up the ropes. The poles were bending badly so to both I lashed skis, pushed ski-sticks through the guys, then tumbled back into bed to thaw out frozen fingers. From this time on sleep was out of the question for the tent strained and slapped over our heads in a most disconcerting manner. The hours dragged by. At 2 a.m. the gusts seemed stronger than ever, we knew the fabric could not possibly stand much more. We also knew that to break camp would be impossible so decided to have breakfast; pack up, then sit tight and hope for the best. When the roar of the primus stopped the fury of wind seemed to have increased still further. First we would hear a booming roar as a gust swept the rocks above our heads, and split-second silence, then it seemed the whole fury of the night was directed at our tiny camp, the guy-ropes shrieked, the canvas bellied in right to our faces and in deafening crescendo the snow hissed against the wall behind us. By 3 a.m., as the gale still grew, we knew that sooner or later the tent must give way, although we were still saying to each other: "If it doesn't get any worse we'll be right," something we'd been saying since 11 p.m.

At 3.15 it happened, a sudden, sharp ripping sound, into the tent swept a cloud of stinging snow. We slashed the rear guys and collapsed the end—to prevent a gust from opening the whole tent out—while Murray held the tear together I pulled boots and parka on, then held on while he did likewise. Climbing out the hole, we cut the other guys and bundled the tent up, only to find that the snow in and over the canvas made it much too heavy to carry. To shake it clear in the howling wind was out of the question, the only solution was to jettison the gear and get ourselves out. To attempt carrying skis would have been madness, so strapping everything together and pushing the skis deep into the snow, we turned



our backs on the sorry sight and pushed off into the blizzard. Visibility absolutely nil, snow and sky were both the same vague formless grey, we were pushing straight into the storm so had the bitter, stinging snow to contend with, goggles, of course, being useless.

Within a few yards of camp we had lost all sense of direction, and had to rely on rough compass bearings to guide us over the broad saddle into the valley that would lead us off the tops down to safety. We found the head all right, and cautiously started kicking steps down the steep frozen snow, cautiously because we knew this valley boasted several fine bluffs over which we had no desire to wander. In the gloom the steepness of this slope appeared greatly exaggerated; we felt that we were descending an almost vertical face. For what seemed endless hours we plodded downwards, many times having to turn our backs on the blizzard and hang on with all our strength, on one occasion indeed, getting tossed several yards back up the slope.

About 5.30 we left the swirling snow behind, so crouched behind some small rocks and looked back at the grey, menacing hill we had escaped from, then at ourselves, white and crackling from head to foot with the frozen snow, long icicles hanging from our balaclavas where our breath had momentarily melted the driving sleet. As Murray had broken a ski-stick it was with redoubled care that we kicked on down, until at dawn we left the main snow behind us. This dawn, evil and forbidding to our strained eyes, will long remain in memory, for the cold moon broke through the black cloud to paint the hills in weird, nightmarish patterns. Even now we were not finished, for a light coat of treacherous snow lay right down to the homestead. After another hour's stumbling progress we thankfully kicked the last of the balling snow from our boots, entered the empty hut previously offered to us, and crawled wearily into our sleeping bags.

Later, much later, we started homewards, battling all the way against the same bitter southerly that had ousted us. Our ordeal proved not entirely in vain, however, for our salvage expedition the following week-end (our rescue trip) was rewarded with two brilliant days, cloudless and windless. Then we enjoyed ski-ing at its best 'midst glorious scenery, on untracked snow, with a small, independent party.

—G. F. McLAREN.

## FASHION REVIEW

MIHIWAKA, AUGUST, 1948

My Dear Clarabelle,

I have the most exciting news for you. The most ravishing tramping designs have just this moment come to hand straight from the Continent! My dear, they are simply divine! I can hardly wait to tell you about the latest models in packs. Packs for the coming season will follow the new exaggerated look, and will be larger and heavier. Really, my dear, they are breath-taking. This new style emphasises that fashionable hump-back appearance, throws the balance forward, and projects the face still closer to the ground—very useful when "twilight tramping." Another distinct advantage, Clarry dear, is that the perspiration may form in large beads and eventually drop vertically to the ground, instead of trickling down into the corners of the mouth and being licked away.

A whisper from Switzerland has it that shorts have lost none of their fascinating appeal, and the blues, tartans and flecked-whites offer no serious threat to the ever popular "dusky" khaki. As we are all aware, *ma chérie*, the accent in 1947 was on brevity, but now, Oh! la! la! we have them in the new "Flagstaff" line, featuring the padded hip, the new length (2 inches above the knee) and the fullness concentrated mainly in the front. This is a compromise between the daring hip-line of the 40's and the Edwardian calf length. (It is rumoured that the brooding presence of the Over-thirty Club has had telling effect in this "down to earth" movement.

Those who wish to attain that "New Look" in shorts, without sacrificing last year's model, may do so, by (a) a lace insertion one inch above the hem-line; or (b), for those members who wish to lose none of their womanly appeal, a double frill of net round the bottom gives a pleasing effect. A suggestion for the men is to add a wide band of a contrasting colour, preferably one to tone with other accessories to the ensemble. This is at once smart and ruggedly masculine.

From our roving reporter we hear that kilts are making a serious bid for gentlemen trampers' esteem, and, in fact, two of our finest male models showed them off to skilful advantage on a recent expedition. A well authenticated report has reached us that a ragged strand of tartan (thought to be the Douglas) was found on one of the uppermost ice ridges of Aspiring. We are all agog with excitement over here, and are simply dying to hear more about it.

Have I yet mentioned the latest creations in Alpine Undies? Here, one can really express oneself, and we have seen the most heavenly designs. Only the other day, I glimpsed an exquisite woollen set in the palest of blush rose. It was displayed by one of the more advanced sections of the hiking fraternity with superlative effect. Some of the main features were its ankle to wrist completeness, and the quaint buttons fastening right up to the neck. Really, Clarabelle, they are quite the rage. However, I may say that other styles are still worn, and on a wet day, it is quite the thing to have half an inch of undie dragging nonchalantly below the hem-line.

The trampler of 1948 will, of course, give careful consideration to the urgent question of night attire. It is only when one emerges from a sleeping bag in mixed company that the importance of night-dress design is fully appreciated.

Our biggest Mihiwaka Department Stores are featuring a night-dress of Athenic simplicity. Outwardly, it is the traditional long white nightdress of yesteryear, but to-day's outstanding designers are aware that trampers have to meet exacting circumstances, and these are countered by an unparalleled excellence of dress technique. First of all, the night-dresses are made in the finest Japara for lightness and strength, and lined with asbestos—a real stroke of genius—for it keeps the heat in, in winter, and the heat out in summer. Small lavender bags are sewn into the hem. These serve the dual purpose of keeping the sleeping bag sweet, and of preventing the tails from flying up on windy nights should the wearer occasion to leave the precincts of the tent or hut. We would like to note in passing, that some have their Japara water-proofed, as it dispenses with the donning of a cold parka on rainy nights.

Boots are still *à la mode*. The wide range at present showing features graceful contours and cannot fail to capture the imagination of the most fastidious. They are plentiful in a variety of exciting sizes, in the delightful shades of tans and black. Those with an eye for detail have them



---

# Photographs

- while you are climbing are hard to obtain, and cannot be had again.
- Therefore your films are valuable, and require the best servicing you can give them.



**Entrust Them to**

**CAMERON'S**

**CHEMISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHIC DEALERS**

**3 STAFFORD STREET and 102 PRINCES STREET  
DUNEDIN**

**Phones 10-403 and 13-288**

delicately clinkered, with an odd pound or so of triple hobs in each boot to preserve balance. Talking of boots, reminds me of the important question of socks. The trend for the moment is to have them carelessly draped round the ankle, and to wear them down to the last hole. Colour still remains a matter for individual taste, but it is correct to have them in muddy shades that merge imperceptibly with the boot.

And now, Clarry, just a word or two on hats. No tramper's ensemble is complete without one, and just lately, I have seen some that really take the eye. A most sensational model was introduced the other day—quite the last straw! A fluted, crease-proof brim in the finest of off-white canvass is one of the delightful features of this sartorial masterpiece, and one is left completely captivated by the deceptively high crown. The whole genius behind its design is at once apparent, combining as it does, utility with classic beauty. It threatens to become a "must-have" for every tramper. Although primarily designed to shade a delicate skin from the fierce rays of Apollo's flaming chariot, it can be equally well used as a water-bucket.

A more sober note is struck by another unique model, which already has considerable legal standing. Broadly speaking, the frame is that of the conventional ski-cap, but it triumphs over the unrelieved severity of this still popular type by a duck-billed peak bound with red braid—as distinct from red tape. Thus the silhouette is softened without sacrificing the ski-cap's intrinsic robustness. This tramway model has undoubtedly much to commend it, but it is only one competitor in a strong field of balaclavas, hoods, pixies, stocking-caps (very popular with the younger set) berets, panamas, sombreros, helmets and a host of more obscure designs.

Shirts, as always, form an indispensable part of the immaculate tramper's wardrobe. Here again, we have the "New Look" featured in the longer shirt-tail, and the fashion-conscious tramper will wear the shirt falling loosely over the shorts, thus following the simple Grecian outline. Those seeking ultra smartness, will take care that no other garment can be seen. Colours must be chosen with discrimination, and while the more conservative may prefer the quieter shades, we understand that tartans and loud stripes are making a successful bid for favour.

As most tramping clubs have keen collectors of gullet stones in their midst, the gullet-stone bag has become a real necessity. It may be worn attached to a belt around the waist, or at any place to suit individual convenience. It is a good plan to wear it in club colours, with the letters "G.S." embroidered on the outside. (Presidential bags should be twice as big). Over here, we are fortunate in having a leading authority on the Gullet Stone, who is shortly to deliver a series of lectures entitled "Out-standing features of Primitive Bird Life, and the Origin of the Gullet Stone."

Forgive me, my dear Clarabelle, if I dash off now, as I simply must not miss the opening day of the Mihiwaka Grand Winter Fashion Parade.

Yours enthusiastically,

"ANASTASIA."

\* \* \*

The Chinese speak of going up into the mountain mists for the pleasure of seeing nothing.



## THE AHURIRI

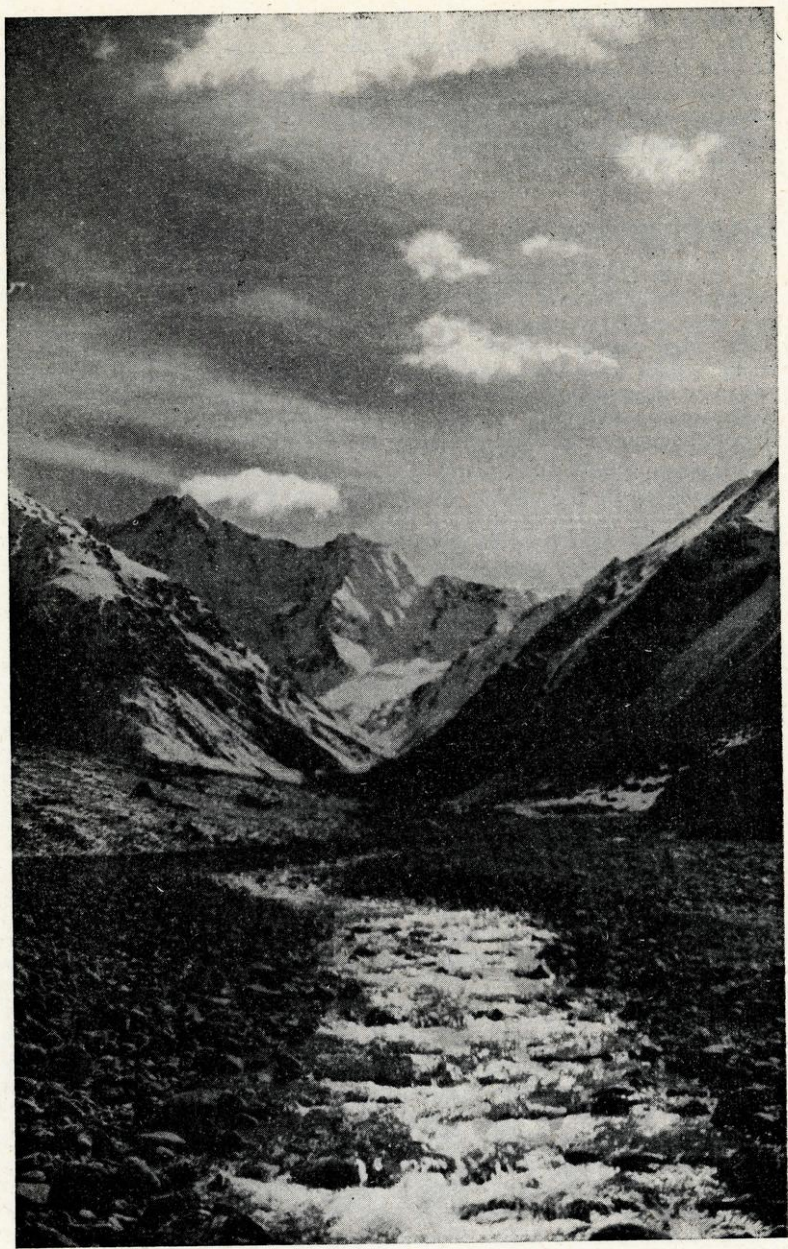
### GENERAL NOTES

Early on Christmas morning, Ian Adamson's truck dropped fifteen weary trampers at the end of the so-called road up the Ahuriri Valley, at a spot locally known as Firewood Bush. The luxury class travellers, two in number, had already arrived via a Vauxhall car, and were just rousing themselves from a deep slumber. As a base camp, Firewood Bush possesses many advantages—it is reasonably sheltered, plenty of good wood, very few sandflies, but has a decided lack of water in dry weather. The opportunities for tramping parties in this valley are many and varied, and most of the obvious ones were undertaken by some members of our party. Hodgkinson Creek, the first large tributary up the valley on the right, looked hopeful to several of us desiring to climb on the Barrier Range, separating us from Lake Ohau. That same evening we duly set out and made a camp some distance up the creek, but a wet night and morning forced us to retreat to the deer cullers' hut in the main valley. Casualty—one ice-axe lost near the mouth of the Hodgkinson, which was in flood and very dirty. The deer cullers regaled us royally, and we pitied the rest of our party back at base camp as the wind whirled round and beat down on the hut. The Watson is the next creek draining from the Barrier Range, and next day we crossed from there to the Maitland, and finally over to the Snowy for our first fine day. A short climb in the morning gave us a grand view of the country surrounding Lake Ohau, and a lovely peep of the lake itself. From there back to base camp down the Snowy, across the swing bridge and up the main valley is just a long rather weary tramp.

The upper Canyon Creek next claimed our attention on the last day of 1947. It was a 4.30 a.m. start, but some time was lost in an effort to locate the missing ice-axe. The water, though clear, was desperately cold and still a little high. The blazed trail through the bush above the branch of Canyon Creek proved very good after we managed to find it. The upper valley is cut off again by an enormous bluff, which can, we were told, be climbed by a shelf leading from its foot, but we chose a scree slope lower down the valley. After a short fight with rather offensive sub-alpine scrub, and a long sidle round rather steep snow and rock faces, we reached a high saddle just below Mt. Heim, which afforded us a glorious view of the Hunter Valley and lower Southern Alp peaks as far south as Aspiring. An attempted short cut down from the saddle gave us an interesting three-quarter hour of roped rock work, and landed us exactly where we started in the morning, so we retraced our steps down the valley, reaching camp about 8 p.m.

The remainder of the party, with the exception of three who turned up next day, one day out in their dates, had by this time returned to camp and organised a large bonfire, so the New Year was duly and well ushered in, at least two members deciding that bed was out for that night. During the rainy days, our base camp had been well organised by those remaining there, and two large tarpaulins had been rigged to form an excellent cook-house which was much appreciated then and later. A stream had also flowed quite handy to the camp and still flowed well further up the creek bed. An ambitious irrigation scheme seemed to offer possibilities, and water did flow in the correct direction for a few days, but dry weather put an end to that idea, so our water expeditions continued. Trips to the





UPPER AHURIRI VALLEY AND MT. HUXLEY

(By Courtesy of Editor N.Z. Alpine Journal)

—W. S. GILKISON



Dingle, the head of the valley with a climb of an unnamed peak in the valley itself, and several most enjoyable rest days completed for most of us a really good trip.

P.S.—One ice-axe was discovered two days before we left the valley lying high and dry on the shingle about 400 yards down the Hodgkinson—a little rusty, but otherwise none the worse for its watery holiday.

—A. H. BARTH.

## IN QUEST OF ST. MARY

Mt. St. Mary, of nearly 8,000ft., a rock peak on the Barrier Range close to our base camp in the Ahuriri, had a great fascination for at least two of us during our trip in this valley. We had studied it from various angles, and had decided that a small creek just up the valley from our camp, would do. This creek has a most pronounced bluff just over half way up, and from then on at least until the final rocks are reached, looked easy. With only two days of our holiday left, we therefore rather defied the weather and set off early for a final flutter.

Crossing the main river just above our camp site, we climbed steeply but diagonally up the hillside, to reach the small creek not far below the bluffs. There we left the tussock for scree slopes, or should I say boulder slopes, in parts very steep which ran into the foot of the bluff. This can be climbed reasonably easily, as small shelves lead upwards in all directions, and apart from the bottom few feet, we had no trouble at all. The upper valley was most impressive, as it contains a quite sizeable lake, roughly a quarter of a mile long and over half as wide. This is entirely surrounded by boulder slopes, with small patches of snow, and even on that dull and threatening day was a most glorious purple colour. There is no sign of any outlet from the lake itself, but a deep gorge runs down one side of the bluff, and into that fall innumerable tiny water falls issuing from right under the scree slopes. We later descended the bluff by means of this gorge, which is a most interesting one and on a decent day should be really fascinating.

At the lake side, we skirted round to the left and were almost immediately faced with a serious problem. Which of the two peaks on our right was St. Mary? We had expected to find it almost at the head of the upper valley. We could now see a saddle there, with a fair-sized peak just to its right and a much higher one well to the right again. Deciding that must be it we duly skirted round the head of the lake to climb the lower scree slopes to the foot of the rocks. A steep chimney led up to the ridge. Steep, rolling scree in the bottom and rather rotten rock on the sides made going slow, but never really difficult, and we finally reached the ridge to see well over into the Snowy. We now had to climb up the ridge to our left—it was narrow, steep in parts, and the rock very rotten, but again not difficult, although requiring care. An easy run to the summit up the last few yards gave us a glorious view of the surrounding country and especially of Mt. St. Mary just where it should be, a quarter of a mile further up the valley, and obviously screened from our view from the lake by a smaller peak or really a leading ridge. The peak we climbed gave us a marvellous view of the lower Ahuriri Valley, of Snowy Creek and the upper Maitland and surrounding hills, but distant heavy cloud and the true peak cut our view of any of the higher peaks of the Alps.

It was still only 10 a.m., but the weather was most threatening, as was the ridge along Mt. St. Mary, so we decided to leave her for a future date and descended rapidly down to the lake by a rather easier route, and hence to camp by 1 p.m., just beating a rain storm to it. This trip impressed me for several reasons, and when I return to this valley I'll make it a first trip on my programme. Up to the lake is an easy scramble well within the bounds of any of us, and on a fine day should be most interesting. Any of the lower hills above the lake would afford a glorious view of the main valley, from the homestead up the Huxley, with a number of the Southern Alp peaks in the background. The climb of St. Mary itself looked reasonably easy, hardly as steep, I imagine, as the one we climbed, and we are assured of a super view from there. Apart from that even the climb up the hill, a scramble up the bluff and even a bathe in one of the smaller tarns above the bluff (they were really quite warm!) would make an excellent start to any Christmas trip.

—A. H. BARTH.

### HAPPY DAYS IN THE DINGLE

Eight city slickers—henceforth to be known as the "Ahuriri Eight," spent a very happy time exploring river-bed, wild bird life, and, of course, the mountains in the vicinity.

Zero hour, 9 a.m., and the entire party commenced to steam up the valley to the Dingle Saddle, which was reached after an hour and a-half. The weather was, to put it mildly, mighty hot, and at the top one pack was lightened to the extent of four and a-half pounds. Once over the top the going was good, and it was here that we saw our only deer of the trip—fourteen all told. On reaching the floor of the valley we had a boil-up, and made our way down the left bank of the Dingle to the Dingle Hut—all members having by now worked up enormous appetites. On the other hand two of the party were noticed carrying two large stones in each hand, and it has been suggested that they were to stop those concerned from breaking into a gallop. We were soon settled in at the hut, and before long were all gently snoring.

The second day we split up into small groups; some carried on several miles down the Dingle, while another party climbed a peak at the back of Birchwood Station. From the top most of the peaks in both Dingle and Ahuriri were shot, plotted, re-shot and aligned, but our old friend St. Mary seemed to have a bad habit of turning up in different places. On this day also one of the party decided that he wanted at least one more hot bath before 1947 passed into history, the feat being duly accomplished with the aid of a camp oven and personal back-scrubber.

New Year's Eve saw us retracing our steps up the valley where a more leisurely pace was set, and photos were taken of a beautiful waterfall on the left hand side near the head. Once over the top things were on the "up and up", and we trotted down the hill and back to the place we called home.

—"TALL TIMBER."

### UP THE SNOWY IN A HEAT-WAVE

The "Ahuriri Eight," already minus one of its members, was reduced to five, as we left John and Marion at Birchwood Station, they having decided to see how far it was out to the road. At this time in the evening, Mt. Huxley made a grand picture rising up behind the tall poplars



of the homestead. With less than an hour's daylight ahead, we made across the river flat towards the Snowy Valley, and it wasn't long before we were looking for a good camping spot. A wide, starry sky and the rush of Snowy's cold waters, muffled by the darkness, will always be clearly imprinted on the memory of one who had never slept out before. Then at 4 a.m., "Alarm Clock"—Jim had us up and about, chattering and shivering. We had decided to tramp in the cool of the day, and rest or sleep in the heat; but as we pinned wet socks on our packs, after a very early crossing of the cold waters, I found myself wishing, rather rashly, that the sun's rays would not take long to reach us.

A good track took us onwards and upwards, but later we had a bit of rock scrambling, with the day promising ever hotter. Sooner than expected the valley opened out, and there on a great pile of rocks was the cairn of which Arthur had told us, and behind the rocks, well out of sight, was the Snowy Hut. No shade there for our after-dinner nap! After some discussion we chose the high right-hand bank of quite a large tributary to lead us on to the Snowy Saddle; a hard, hot grind, but well repaid when we reached the top. Looking back, there lay the valley we had just traversed, while ahead lay the Maitland with its background of snow-capped peaks, but not a sign of shade of any description. Mad dogs and Englishmen had nothing on us as we plodded on with our eyes glued on the distant bush-line. Ferg. and Jim, mustering some second wind from somewhere, forged ahead and by the time we arrived they had the billy well on the way. The musterers must use this huge rock fireplace set in a small cleared space which later proved to be the "Home was never like this" type of bed. Sleep came very easily to all of us.

The "Alarm Clock" was on the job again next morning. He and Ferg., noble souls, gave us tea in bed. After breakfast we retraced our steps halfway up the valley to where a tributary of the Maitland rushed down through a deep valley on the left.

It was good to leave our packs behind and follow up this creek. In two hours we were seated in what little shade tussock affords overlooking Dumbell Lake, a still dark green gem with its far shore a steep scree slope, rising high on to the side of Mt. Sutton. Another hour saw us on the top of this rocky ridge leading on to the Mount. There must be a little of the mountaineer in all of us if I, a mere trumper, could wish at this stage that we had rope and ice-axes (apart from Harry's indispensable one) in order that we could have ventured further in safety. But even here the view was extensive and most interesting. St. Mary and other peaks rose behind us, below us lay Lake Ohau, limpid in the blazing sun, while white and shining, high above everything else, was Mt. Cook.

Camp that night was made beside the Snowy Hut. Despite the fact that early rising was not intended to be the order of that last day, the sun simply forced us up. It was an easy trip home (queer how base camp became home). In due course we sighted the solitary willow which some angel must have planted at the swing bridge; and as shade such as this had not been seen for two days the pace was on, and Harry's short legs worked overtime.

"SHOO FLY."



## WAIKOUAITI TO MIDDLEMARCH

This is the tale of a very enjoyable three-day trip starting from Waikouaiti and with Middlemarch as ultimate objective. Our packs had certainly been lighter, and as we lumbered up the road towards Blackbridge we asked a passing farmer if he wanted some work for his spare horse. His reply was simply, that we looked as though we needed one, to which, as we could find no suitable answer, we hitched our loads still further up our backs and made the best of a long, steep road up to our first eating place, Garden Bush. The shearing shed and hut were a very welcome sight, particularly as it was now drizzling slightly, so we piled in and prepared our mid-day snack, at the same time looking over the old cuttings on the walls to the strains of corny records on a rickety old gramophone.

After that welcome break we started off up the clay road again to find it gradually becoming less of a road and more and more like a grass track. The country now was new to us, but not particularly interesting—just tussock-covered hills, one upon another without a tree for miles. Putting out from the tops of the ridges were queer sentinel-like rock formations, which looked particularly impressive as they stood out in silhouette against the evening sky. After two or three hours' steady work, we stopped to consult the map; the next hut appeared to be another hour or so ahead, but at the end of a good hour's march we were beginning to wonder if the hut really existed. However, we pressed on and at last, just as darkness was taking a hold on day, there it was, snugly nestled in a grassy hollow, surrounded by pine trees with a large woolshed not far away. This hut was all we could have hoped for—the "mod. cons." included a coal range (with plenty of coal in stock) and a water tap inside, so we had little trouble preparing a substantial meal and were early in the sack. The weather looked rather threatening next morning as we pushed off on the second stage of the trip—up from the hollow where we had found the hut, then out across the main mass of the hill until we overlooked Nenthorne Valley. This made a fine sight—a large homestead surrounded by poplars, and a broad expanse of green fertile fields in marked contrast to the bareness of the surrounding hills. The weather, however, had become worse—we had several heavy showers of rain and hail, and later in the day just a steady downpour which made us glad of our waterproof equipment. We stopped a few minutes to inspect an old roofless stone hut, and nearby some old miners' shafts which were full of water and appeared very deep—no place this for a midnight meander!

We carried on along the same old road, and before long were in Nenthorne Valley itself. We lunched hastily by the bank of a small stream then carried on in the face of weather which was even more threatening. We headed for the nearest of several small huts dotted over the valley: this one being full of baled hay, we decided to carry on to the next and hope to find a bit more room. The next hut proved a bit elusive, but after a few disappointments we were all the more pleased when eventually it showed up through the drizzle. We crossed a creek without difficulty, and were quickly making ourselves at home. The hut was in good order, but clearly had not been used for a long time as was shown by a cluster of birds' nests in the chimney, a four-year-old newspaper in a corner, and the general appearance of things inside. The only dry wood within miles was an old dead willow tree, but we soon had a merry fire crackling in the fireplace: it was in fact too good for a while,





# BOOTS

***Hand-made to your measures and  
to your own requirements***

The most important part of your Ski or Tramping Outfit is your Boots. Yes, everything—even your life—may depend on reliable footwear.

You cannot buy better Footwear than our heavy grain water-proof genuine hand-made Boots, with hand-sewn Veldtschoen soles. The making is under the supervision of a specialist, late of Robert Lawrie & Co. Ltd., London.

SKI BOOTS with platform, repairable platform, or ski heels, all grooved and with instep and round ankle rigid support strap. Tramping or Alpine Boots nailed to your requirements.

Write for Illustrations and Prices.

**L. A. DOOLAN LTD.**

124 GEORGE STREET, DUNEDIN, C.I

the combination of heat and smoke kept us from getting too close. In due course we cooked and enjoyed yet another tasty meal, then settled in our bags on the floor, yarning and enjoying Arthur's experiences in the Desert and Italy.

Next morning the weather was still miserable, with a continuous heavy drizzle. To reach Middlemarch we could either cross a narrow chain of hills separating Nenthorne Valley from the Strath Taieri Plain or follow a roundabout route along an old road. The former appealed to us much more, so we crossed the valley and tackled a straight-forward-looking ridge. Visibility was not good, the mist was thick and the grass very wet, and we were almost soaked to the skin before we reached the top. We then turned south, and felt our way cautiously so as to make sure of not getting off the ridge too soon. We nearly walked into a small lake which suddenly appeared at our feet. We worked round the side of this, then on to the crest of the ridge, and out into lovely sunshine. Not far away were some interesting-looking slabs of rock, so having plenty of time now we dumped packs and spent the next hour or so trying our hand at anything that looked at all tricky. Then we continued our enjoyable journey, swinging along the ridge with desolate hills on our left, the Rock and Pillar range showing up prominently on the right, and in the foreground the cultivated plains of Strath Taieri, with the river winding serenely through.

Middlemarch was not far away now, and almost all downhill, so we realised that we had heard for the last time Murray's exhortation "back to Garden Bush!" We were soon alongside the river, then on to the town where we obtained some additional items of refreshment, and retired to the outskirts to consume same. As we lay there in the sun, cheerfully drinking to each other's health, I couldn't help thinking, what a glorious way to end an eventful and enjoyable three-day week-end.

—J. M. E. B.

## FRENCH LEAVE

Many moons ago Gordon confided in me that instead of having a party for his 21st birthday he wanted to climb a mountain. I immediately agreed that it was an excellent suggestion, and was delighted to accompany him; and before long we had decided to make an attempt on the lofty and noble summit of Mt. Aspiring, king of the Otago Alps. Then came the happy and exciting hours of meticulously planning every detail, which is in many cases half the fun of the trip and certainly contributes largely towards the success of it. We discovered in our search for information that week-end parties had attempted and won many noble summits, such as Mts. Huxley, Glenmary and even the mighty Tasman, and felt that our proposed trip was not so far out of place after all. Eventually the day of departure dawned, fine and cold, while the learned men of the weather office predicted fine southerly weather all over the island—just what we wanted. Then at 5 o'clock I brushed my work aside, flung on my pack, and galloped down the stairs. We had a hasty meal at Gordon's place, then at 6.30 p.m. clad in parkas, jerseys and every available stitch of clothing we were on the way.

All through the night we pressed on. The road appeared endless, and time began to drag a little; twelve-thirty, one, one-thirty, and we knew we must be fairly close to Wanaka. Then at 2 a.m. we found ourselves roaring down the last hill towards the lake. It did not take us



very long to tumble into the old bag that night, after first setting the alarm for 6 o'clock. Five minutes later (it seemed) we awoke to its shrill voice, found it was a beautiful morn, and promptly turned out at the double. We went past Glendhu and on to "Boil the Billy" Creek for breakfast, and so up to Jerry Aspinall's garage by 9.30. At last we had to proceed on foot, for once quite a relief. Soon after mid-day we were having dinner at Cascade Hut, 18 hours after leaving Dunedin. After taking some photos of the new Alpine Hut, and spending some time observing Aspiring through a pair of high-powered glasses, we gambolled on through the terrific heat to Shovel Flat, and thence to the foot of the French Ridge.

So far everything had gone according to plan, and we were beginning to wonder just what was going to go wrong. Well, after an hour's going on the ridge we noticed that the temperature, instead of dropping—for it was after 5—had increased to a muggy, cloying, uncomfortable heat, so we sat down and had a much-needed spell. Half an hour later all the peaks in the head of the valley were under fog, while the haze down south had thickened considerably. We had actually decided that to go on was futile under the conditions and had stood up to retrace our steps, when suddenly we spotted a patch of blue sky in the middle of all the murk. Knowing how foolish we would feel on the morrow if we were on the valley floor and it was a fine day on the tops we promptly sat down again to re-discuss the matter. After almost making up our minds both ways several times we pressed on—promptly stepping off on the wrong branch of the track, which landed us in for an hour or so of hard scrambling among alpine scrub of the more concentrated type—and about 9 arrived at the tarns, where we threw ourselves down on the luxurious tussock. The sky was now clearing, and only a slight easterly wind blowing, so we were able to cook the evening meal and lie down in perfect comfort under the wide and starry sky.

Sunday morning at 2 a.m. was fine and starry, with only a slight easterly breeze blowing, and it looked as if we were going to be lucky after all. As we sat in our bags listening to the muffled roar of the primus, we went over yet again all our knowledge of times, routes, conditions, etc.; then breakfast was over and after a short spell to digest it we pulled on boots and packs and were away up the ridge. But as we stumbled our way up the bare scree slopes, we once again began to have strange misgivings about the weather. The wind had gradually swung round from east to north-east, one or two threatening clouds had appeared over the Rees, and the high haze down south had formed again. We plodded on, still hoping for the best, but as we came close to the snow-fields leading up to Mt. French, the growing daylight revealed heavy black clouds and a thick mist covering everything above 7,000ft.

With a sinking feeling, we began to realise that we were not likely to climb Aspiring that day. Still we might as well carry on in the meantime, for if the weather was capable of changing from good to bad so quickly, it might be capable of reversing the process. But we had to admit, as we sat dejectedly nibbling the tit-bits of our second breakfast, that the hope did seem a little slender. Half an hour later the weather had grown steadily worse, and we then and there gave up all hope of climbing Aspiring on that day—this from the points of view both of safe climbing, and of straight-out enjoyment. And now came the problem of what to do with ourselves for the remainder of the day. We thought of Avalanche, Joffre, French and Bevan, and finally decided to spend

the rest of the day on the slopes of French, practising our climbing technique under life-like conditions and possibly climbing to the top as well. The first part involved an hour's step-cutting in very hard ice, a very satisfying piece of work. As we were now in no desperate hurry we were able to devote plenty of time and care towards the development and perfecting of our methods. Then came a rock wall, rising steeply from the lateral moraine of the glacier, and here also we paid full attention to accurate climbing, both because the face was really pretty exposed and because it was exceedingly good for us. After three hours of delightful going we emerged on to some smooth slabs which quickly led us to the crest of the ridge.

We could now see the summit of French not very far off, so we pushed off along the ridge towards it. The crossing of a crevasse on the way called for a little ingenuity, then at 9.30 a.m. we stood on the summit of Mt. French, which is about 8,000ft. high, and is on the Main Divide of the Southern Alps. And what a superb view—thick heavy mist to the north, south, east and west, both above and below. So we retired to the east side of the peak to enjoy another snack in the shelter; and it was here, alone in our tiny little world on top of Mt. French that we celebrated Gordon's 21st.

We had now to think of finding a way down again, for we preferred not to return exactly as we had come. We decided, in the end, to try a descent by traversing along the west face. Once again we were in no hurry, so we just idled along for a while, having finally turned our backs on Aspiring without even having a view of the summit from nearer than Shovel Flat. But now we realised that if we did not watch our step we would become entangled in a nasty series of bluffs, slabs and seracs. As it was, the few bluffs that we did tackle were interesting enough to warrant much care. Then followed a series of steep couloirs and wet slabs on which we found crampons most effective. Eventually we arrived back at the bivouac site after a long but entirely satisfying climb. We had also spent some time on the way collecting flowers for Gordon's alpine garden, and some rock specimens to add to my collection. After a spell and a snack, we had to realise that we were not on a Christmas trip, and that we should be on our way home without further delay. It was with mixed feelings that we packed up, for I can assure you that the temptation to take another day's "French Leave" and have another climb on the morrow was very strong; but, mindful of anxious friends at home, we kept to our plan, and arrived at Cascade Hut shortly after dark. Next morning we awoke to a perfect day—the very day we should have been up on the tops, but that could not be helped.

The return journey went mostly according to plan, except for the severe bodily discomfort I suffered due to the loss of the air pillow under my pillion seat. But all these things are forgotten when, back home at last, we were able to look back on what we had done: 200 miles on Friday night, another 30 next morning, followed by a walk up one of New Zealand's most beautiful alpine valleys, a high bivouac, followed by an ascent and traverse of a Main Divide peak, then all the way home again. The trip was undertaken, not on the spur of the moment or as a display of bravado, but as a well-considered, fully-planned mountain expedition, in which the factor of safety was at all times the major consideration. So after a quiet week-end in the hills, one of the best and fullest trips



we have ever had, we returned to the city refreshed in mind and body; returned to the stuffy old worries and drudgeries of civilisation, optimistically hoping that petrol rationing would not completely stop us from making an occasional quick dash to the mountains.

—M. H. DOUGLAS.

(Editor's Note.—The members of this party have shown on this and other trips that they have the ability to undertake major expeditions and the judgment not to walk into difficulty and danger. It is appropriate, however, for the guidance of Club members generally, to reproduce the following comments from the N.Z. Alpine Club's instructive course, on the subject of Two-man Parties.

On some climbs, particularly in the Central Southern Alps, a competent two-man party will be more efficient, and will preserve a greater margin of safety, than any other combination of similar individual ability. The pre-requisite basic precautions in this case are:—

1. That both members have proved competence, experience and ability to co-operate, and that they will work as a team.
2. That they are climbing from a hut or recognised camping site, and leave full directions as to plans, dates and times.
3. That adequate precautions have been taken against the dangers of one man falling into a crevasse—safeguards such as double rope and extra loops, prusik slings, etc.

In the less frequented localities the two-man party can, however, seldom be justified, being too weak in cases of emergency.)

---

---

## **Tramping Equipment**

**We can offer FRAME PACKS  
in two sizes, sturdily made of  
best materials and well  
balanced for heavy loads.**

**Also fine quality Norwegian and Swedish Ski.**

**T. L. BEGG & SONS**  
**Limited**

**Princes Street - DUNEDIN**

---

---

## FOG

It seems, for reasons into which it is better to probe not, desirable to discuss fog. Not Mental Fog, be it understood—this is too prevalent and complex to be dealt with in a short article, but real dinkum thick, rainy mist: a fog which drifts on to the hill tops and takes such a fancy to them that it cannot bear to leave them.

Is it possible to get lost in a fog? It is. Anyone, even I, can get lost in a fog. By lost I mean really lost; not just a little vague about your precise whereabouts, but lost in the sense that you have no idea where you are going, much less where you are or where you have come from.

Fog is not nice. Even in country that you think you know well it is not nice. The reason is not far to seek. Every trumper, partly unconsciously, sets his directions by distant objects, often miles away. Seldom, unless he is in bush or scrub, does he pay much attention to near objects. For one thing it is too much trouble, and in open country obviously unnecessary. This tendency is so unconscious that he will tell you he knows a certain route—say across Swampy—perfectly. But does he? Let the distant objects be blanketed out and he finds nothing that he really knows or is certain about. Then an insignificant gully about ten feet deep, that he never noticed before, becomes a chasm that calls for a suspension bridge. Then a tiny knoll that he strode over a fortnight ago with his eyes fixed on the distance and his mind on the next boil-up, looks like a pocket edition of the Silver Peaks; and an obscure clump of manuka that he has not even seen before looms up like a forest of kauri pine. But all these things may not matter much if only he can rely on walking in a straight line—but this again is impossible, stone cold sober though he may be. Why this should be does not matter much. Possibly one leg, usually the right one, has been pulled more than the other; hence one step longer than the other; hence walking in circles unless you have some distant object to aim for and unconsciously correct the tendency. There are no rules to stop this tendency, but here are a few which may stop you before you start:—

1. Keep out of it in the first place.
2. If you are on the tops and see it forming, get out to the nearest track or fence line. Remember it may form very quickly; it does not necessarily just drift over; it can form spontaneously in the very air around you.
3. If you are on a track, watch it. Most Otago tracks are good only in parts; when and where you really need them they have a knack of just fading out. Also in pig country the most obvious track is very often the wrong one, and will leave you at some wallow or drinking-place. A gap of only 20 yards in a track will give you a lot of trouble in a fog. Fence lines are better if available—they are at least usually continuous. Tracks also have a habit of sending out branch tracks that you never noticed before—a friend of mine once followed a track from Swampy Saddle to Burns Creek that has never been seen before or since; he was making for Hightop.
4. Don't strike off into the blue. If you know where you are and can get back, get out.



---

# CLOTHES . . .

*maketh the man!*

An old, old saying . . . but there's a lot of truth in it. Indeed, we've *proved* that clothes do "maketh the man" . . . if the clothes are from J. & J. ARTHUR'S store in George Street.

For there's something in the cut of a J. & J. ARTHUR garment which gives a man that little extra smartness . . . that *distinguished* appearance.

But, why not prove it for yourself? Call and see our selection of Men's Apparel. You'll like our range — and our prices.

**J. & J. ARTHUR**  
LIMITED

The Bespoke Tailors

21-31 GEORGE STREET, DUNEDIN

---

5. Don't moon about or panic. Think! There is usually a solution even if it is only to wait for the search party. For example, while rivers run it is always worth considering to follow the water down. You may have a sticky time, but you will eventually get out. Remember, when you do make up your mind, don't change it unless your plan becomes obviously dangerous or impracticable. Even a bad idea if stuck to, will probably get you out; two contradictory good ideas will leave you well and truly in.

6. If you are properly bushed and decide to wait, don't move. Remember the search party. Light a fire in the best shelter you can find.

7. Don't fool yourself. If you have a compass believe in it. It is 100 to 1 it knows more than you do. "I thought the compass must be wrong" is the cry of a fool. Any compass that swings freely on its needle can hardly be more than 5 degrees out, and twice that error would not matter for your purposes; it is indications of direction that are constant, that you want. If your compass tells you that you are going south, and you are quite sure you are going north, then you are still going south.

8. If you have a map and compass you have no excuse. Place the map on the ground with the north reading of the compass about 20 degrees to the east of the north pointer on your map; this will allow for magnetic variation. Even if you have your map position only to within about three miles it would be very strange country if you could not find yourself a way out.

9. Don't scatter. You may think your leader to be a congenital moron. You may consider you have more bright ideas in 10 minutes than he gets in a week. But, as long as he acts as a leader he is better than nothing. Tear the inside out of him! tick him off; even never speak to him again—**after** you get out. While you are in, work together, and do as you are told. He probably knows more about it than you do anyway; he got you there!

—R. B. HAMEL

(Editor's Note.—The above commentary on Fog is of particular importance to Club Members, and has particular reference to the special problem of Swampy Hill, on which many a party has got out only after a good deal of aimless wandering, and various parties have been benighted. This problem deserves closer attention from our Members.)

## HOW WE HIT THE HOPKINS

After disposing of a large 'Xmas dinner, we set off on Boxing Day by train to Waitati, and set off along the road at a brisk pace. This did not last long, however, as the day was very hot and shorts were donned before we had gone very far. Many cars passed us, the occupants still feeling the 'Xmas spirit, for many waved or tooted horns, but no lifts were offered. We had tramped about two miles, and were feeling pretty good when a Studebaker of ancient vintage pulled up beside us with a cheery cry: "hop in, but don't sit on the eggs." We hopped in and made Oamaru in record time. Our driver was going on to Timaru, so we were given a further lift to the crossroads. As we advanced a very old model "A" Ford came backwards down the Georgetown road, spurring steam as it came. Our driver said, "There's your next lift," and before we knew what was happening, he was out of the car and offering assistance to the four lads in the Ford. Our billy was used to fill the radiator, we removed the



six eggs from this billy beforehand, and it was found afterwards that only five were put back, the other found its slimy way into various articles of clothing. A lift in this Ford was offered us as far as Georgetown, this being the nearest place they could partake of the right kind of refreshment after a particularly dehydrating 'Xmas.

At Georgetown we thanked them and trudged off towards Duntroun. After walking another two miles a small Ford picked us up and took us to Duntroun. From there to Kurow, we varied between walking, accepting two lifts, and finally boarding a bus, which took us to Kurow. We did not linger longer than was necessary, and five minutes after we set off once more along the road. The time was now about 4 p.m., and we were beginning to realize that perhaps we were not going to make Omarama that night as planned. About half a-mile along the road a bus picked us up and set us down at Waitaki.

It was now 4.45 p.m., and the day had turned very cold; the sky was grey and an icy wind had sprung up. We walked and walked, and many cars passed us, but our luck seemed to be out. It was at this point that we found a penny on the road. To us it was going to bring good luck, but after walking about five miles and no lifts offered, we decided that our guardian angel had left us for the moment. Darkness was falling fast, so we decided to find shelter for the night and cook some tea. Leaving the road and crossing some paddocks to reach the water's edge we came upon a large truck and three men fishing in the lake. They were from Dunedin, so we chatted for a while, then they insisted on our having tea with them and sleeping in the truck for the night.

We gladly accepted the invitation, and we packed into the truck and were driven to their camp.

We had a delightful night in the company of these friends and their good wives, and were off early next morning. The day was pleasant, and we again walked many miles. We still had the penny, so after walking nearly 10 miles and having about 10 cars pass us we decided the penny was a bad one. A short ceremony was performed, and the penny was placed in the middle of the road. Five minutes passed and we were picked up by a couple from Christchurch. These people took us to Omarama where we learnt of the poor conditions existing in the Ahuriri and the Hopkins. We, ourselves, had had reasonable weather and found it surprising to watch large branches coming down the river. The grocer told us that a truck was going to Ohau and would pick us up along the road. Well, we walked eight of those 10 miles and finally the offer of a lift in a local farm truck to the turnoff.

By this time it had become very cold, and having walked 18 miles that day, we decided to have some food and a short rest. After a half-hour's rest, and as there was little shelter in sight, we decided to tramp until we found some. Alas, the further we walked the more barren became our surroundings, and as we had only two cups of tea that day a boil up was decided on.

By the time we had had a hasty meal it was raining in earnest, so we packed out of that terrible place and started off again. We were both very wet, and as it was now dark and the chances of shelter nil we both agreed to walk until we came to Ohau. A fairly brisk pace was set for we knew that there would be no cars on that road that night. Our guardian angel must have returned, for we were brought back to earth by the blaze of car lights and the screech of brakes! A car had rounded the corner and had nearly knocked us down. We jumped on the back and

rode into Ohau. Once again we were treated well by strangers. We were given a hot and hilarious supper, a sleepwell mattress on the floor, and in the morning we woke to a hot breakfast and dry clothes. These people also made us up a lunch and took us over Parson's Creek in their car.

We were beginning to feel that our journey was coming to a close, for looking up the Lake we could see the Hopkins and Dobson Valleys coming in from the head, and the sight of them gave an extra spring to our steps. We had lunch at Lake Ohau Station, and just past there we met Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson on the way back from the Temple. Further up we met Ian Adamson, and learned from them that we had just missed a party of Club Members down for the day. We were hot on the trail now though, and after another mile we turned at last into the Hopkins Valley. At the first glance it looked dark and sullen; the flats close to us were bare and uninteresting. New snow had fallen on the tops, and the upper valley was choked with cloud. But as we walked and the valley opened out we began to realise the sort of scenery we had come into. Then in the distance we saw smoke, but although we quickened our pace it took a long time to get any closer. We stopped for a wash and clean-up, then turned a corner and saw fires and heard the homely sound of wood-chopping, a few yards nearer, and there was Horace. This man gave one long withering look, threw his hat on the ground and informed us that our tent had been leaking.

JOY AND BETTY WHITTINGTON.

## IMPRESSIONS OF THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our first warning that something unusual was afoot would be about half-way up the ridge from Hightop. Even from there you could see tiny figures scurrying round the hut, while splashes of white among the green marked the positions of newly-pitched tents. Then we, too, arrived, to find the hut and its environs a real centre of activity. Harry was inside boiling up countless brews of tea on his primus, Gordon was outside starting the major job of frying a square foot of steak, and others were buzzing to and fro making preparations of one kind and another. Were we the Official Party? they asked. No, we hadn't seen them . . . Meanwhile interest was centred on a group of figures scurrying up the long ridge above the Powder Spur. Up towards the Peak they moved, and in surprisingly quick time the pace-makers were in amongst us—steaming gently under the influence of a summer sun and a solid pack, but otherwise showing no signs of distress. But still no sign of the Official Party . . . Down the Hightop ridge more figures appeared, looking as they approached more like the arrival of Macduff from the Forest of Dunsinane, and turned out to be the Christmas Tree arriving. But no Official Party? However, the hut was full, most of the nearby countryside likewise, and we were well prepared to enjoy ourselves even if we were to be entirely unofficial! So things went on, all arrivals were fed, and it was time for the main function to start when, with a yell of triumph, the Official Party were observed to approach—all four of them! We gathered that a delightfully leisurely journey has been enjoyed, with frequent intervals for refreshments. And now, let the revels begin! We started with a Treasure Hunt, following which the whole assemblage numbering some fifty odd (very odd!) members and friends squeezed into the hut for an evening of rejoicing. So a programme of toasts, choruses and cheerful chatter was successfully put



through, followed by a tremendous supper. At this stage conditions had become so pleasant outside (or so thick within!) that everyone adjourned to the open air, where a large bonfire proved the central theme for an informal hour or so of chorus and song, and a surprise presentation by Wilf. and Win. of an original poem based on happenings and personalities up the Rees at Christmas, 1946. And so to bed—some in the hut, some in tents, some up near the Peaks, and some in strange places down the valley. Next morning again dawned fine, and saw the multitude quickly dispersing, some for home direct, some to Whare Flat, some to the Gap, a few to Waitati—and so home after a splendid week-end.

"ONE WHO WAS THERE."

## THE EYRE MOUNTAINS

Scarcely had we stretched our travel-weary limbs by the willow-shaded banks of the Mataura River than some terribly bright and cheery soul was heard exhorting us all to rise and shine, the truck would be leaving in half-an-hour. Shivering in the frosty air we rose, loaded up and started the last few miles of the journey. As we bumped and swayed over the valley floor, on what passed as a road, we were suddenly bathed in the first flush of a brilliant sun. Fine weather was ours, the glimpses of the hills to the west were grand enough to awaken enthusiasm in even the most trucksore body.

Soon we were at the wool-shed that marked the end of transport. Here, while breakfast was cooked and eaten parties were sorted out, before long all but we had fled. Before us lay Eyre Peaks, steep tussock ridges, higher, the broken rock and scree slopes led up to the lofty crags round which light billowing clouds drifted and on which glistening snow still defied the scorching March sun. This was our objective. From the first, when the Eyres were decided on as the Easter tramping grounds, we had known what our trip would consist of. A leisurely assault of the peak with, we hoped, many hours on top, to appreciate the wonderful panorama that must surely await us, then the remaining days spent sunbathing and wandering round the valleys.

By mid-day we were away. Our route took us an hour and a-half up the main valley, through a rocky little tributary, then straight up the most obvious ridge to a height of perhaps 3,000 feet. Here, considering the strenuous climb we had had and the perfect bivouac site we had stumbled across, we decided to call it a day and make ourselves comfortable. After tea we went scrambling in gym. shoes on the ridge behind camp, climbing high enough to watch the sunlight fading from the Garvies, far across the plains to the east, and to feel the dusk gathering in the valley at our feet, till only the silver threads of the river were visible. Back to camp we galloped and soon were warm and comfortable in our bags. Sleep was almost impossible that night, for when the Easter moon rose, the hills were lit with such a beautiful soft light that we were sorely tempted to rise forthwith and start for our peak.

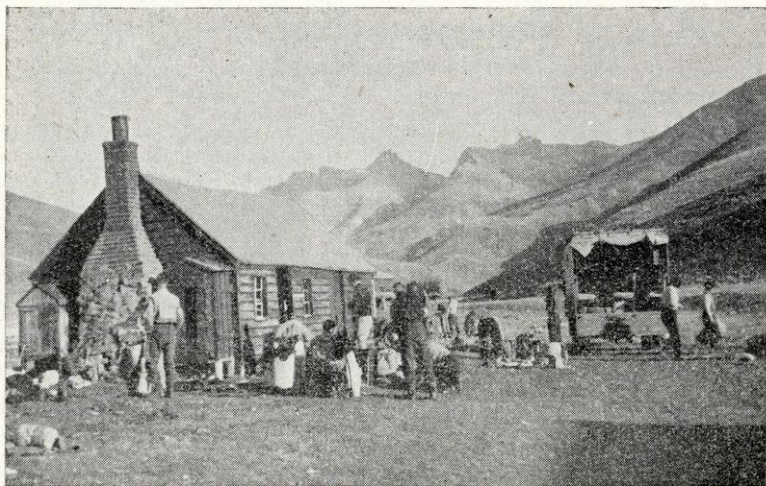
However, we did get away about 5.30, wandering up through the snowgrass on to the loose, broken rock beneath the peak. The glow over the eastern ranges gradually brightened, soon a great golden ball of fire swept up into a cloudless sky, turning a hundred tussock-covered hilltops to gold and sending shafts of light into a hundred dark valleys. Higher and higher we climbed into the sunlight, threading a tortuous path amid

towering cliffs on a line that would take us into a deep cleft on the ridge about 1,000 feet below the summit. Possibly we could have found an easier route by dropping to the shadowed valley below, but we had all day before us to ascend about 2,000 feet, surely the rock would have to be very difficult to deny us the peak.

Nine-thirty saw us in the cleft partaking of one of our numerous breakfasts. Already our view-point was magnificent, above rose the great face of Eyre Peak, with a large snowfield flanking its southern ridges, through the high pass between Eyre and the Symmetry Peaks appeared the glistening snows of the Earnslaws, surprisingly close, and on the opposite side of our valley, still dark and featureless, a long rock wall which looked absolutely sheer and at least 500 feet high.

With expectations of an interesting scramble we again started upwards, turning the first buttress easily, then up and across a large steep screefield to the foot of the last tower, over 500 feet of very steep, but fortunately well broken rock. Half an hour of the most enjoyable rock-climbing ever took us out onto the summit where the view was all we could wish for. Aspiring, Earnslaw, Tutoko, all the big fellows were there, as well as all the lesser ranges, lesser perhaps in height but surely not in grandeur. Our ascent was the third recorded on top, but within an hour two more had been recorded, at one stage in fact there were twelve climbers on the summit.

Some two hours later we started homewards feeling very lazy and happy, the sky had become gradually overcast till now the sun had gone and the afternoon was strangely still and hushed. So quiet, indeed, that when Murray and I stopped behind the party for a moment's rest, we both dropped off to sleep, to wake with a start over an hour later.



#### EASTER BASE CAMP

Some of the Party preparing to leave for Eyre Peak (seen in background)

—G. F. McLaren



In camp we ate and yarned and sang by the smoky veronica fire, and when the embers died, dropped off to a dreamless slumber, life was very good.

Daylight found us deep in our covers, vainly trying to stem the searching trickles of water that several hours' heavy drizzle had started. We got wetter and the drizzle got heavier, until about 8.30 we bundled our wet gear into enormous packs and deserted the bivvy in favour of valley residence. Once in the main valley we decided to press on upstream where, somewhere, was the Mataura Hut. Our backs soon complained about the heavy dragging loads, it was with great relief that we spotted the hut after an hour and a-half plodding up the broad valley floor.

This hut was a typical shepherd's hut, musty and dusty, and with an extra large quota of mice. We spent a very amusing afternoon lying on the bunk overlooking the table, operating our mouse trap with quite satisfying results. The mice were quite fearless, coming out in numbers while we watched, soon we were not content with one at a time, but were devising even more ingenious methods. Outside the weather was really packing up, a strong gusty wind sweeping cold vicious squalls down the valley. In the midst of one of these the door burst open, in pushed a cold wet party after a long day from the Roberts. The hut was comfortably full now, with a roasting beech fire in the huge old fire-place—we were very snug.

Snow fell on the tops during the night, and the river was up twice as high when we left for the wool-shed in the morning. Although a bitter wind blew off the snow and showers were frequent we really enjoyed the trip down, even if we did ford the swollen Mataura twenty-two times.

All too soon we were in the truck and the wheels turning away from the hills once again. A last spiteful shower passed, we saw the peaks, cold and grand beneath the black storm clouds, the road twisted away, and the Eyre Mountains, a happy memory.

—G. F. McLAREN.

## DONALD McQUILKAN

(From the "Times," 8/11/47)

### AN APPRECIATION:

With the death of Mr. Donald McQuilkan recently, many people of Dunedin felt that they had lost a real friend. His little home at Whare Flat was assuredly one of the best-known landmarks for miles around, and at it many of his friends and acquaintances were wont to foregather. But one did not need to be even an acquaintance to be sure of a warm welcome at that hospitable fireside, where a love of the out-of-doors was sufficient common bond. Even the complete stranger, arriving wet, muddy and bedraggled from the Silver Peaks track or beyond, would be cordially greeted and made at home.

Once inside there was no mistaking the character of the home or its proud owner. A big open fireplace, roaring log fire, an iron kettle singing on the hearth; the walls a mass of relics, photos and mementos, mostly with a tang of old Scotland about them, and testifying to the goodwill of many an absent friend. The host himself was a mine of information on a wide variety of subjects. Was it history, or war, or politics, or religion or sport, he had read them all, and was more up to date than most of his town visitors, and on all he could discourse intelligently. One of his treasured possessions was his Visitors' Book, and typical of many entries was that of one well-known citizen, "Enjoyed a cup of tea with one of Nature's gentleman," a tribute as sincere as it was appropriate.

Every Friday he would don his bowler hat and tramp six miles to Kaikōrai for a few hours in town, where his figure, trim and erect, was well-known and might have been the envy of many a man 30 years his junior. Every third Sunday, as long as church services were held at Whare Flate, he took his place. He loved hard work—only last year, at the age of 85, he cleared an area of heavy broom and planted what proved an excellent crop of potatoes—and his healthy respect for an honest worker was equalled only by his scorn for loafers and idlers. His hospitality was a household word, but so was his respect for property, and as an honorary ranger he was always on the lookout for destruction and vandalism.

Many years ago Mr. McQuilkan was elected a life member of the Otago Tramping Club, for whose members his home was always a happy rendezvous. His happiness and his thoughts were mostly bound up with his home and its picturesque setting—"Who would live in a smoky city when there is all this lovely fresh air going to waste?" was his cry, and in that was symbolised his philosophy of clean living, good health, and goodwill to his fellow-men.

—W. S. G.



DONALD McQUILKAN and "LADDIE"

—I. B. Mackie, Photo



---

# **SKI-ING THIS WINTER?**

Then select your equipment from  
our comprehensive range of

" Andreff " Canadian Laminated Ski, " Jacober-  
Fischer " Swiss Hickory (edged), Canadian Dural  
Sticks, Canadian and Swiss Cable Bindings,  
Canadian Clamps, Boot Protectors, Edges and  
Sundries, including

ALPINA WAX, PARKAS, MITTS, etc.

AT

**Alex. Thompson & Son Ltd.**  
453 Princes Street, DUNEDIN

---

# JUBILEE SECTION

## 25 YEARS BACK AND FORWARD

The Otago Tramping Club has, in the hundredth year of the Province, completed its first twenty-five years of service and usefulness. Twenty-five years is a long time in the history of a club—long enough usually to see a complete change in the active personnel—and its completion makes a convenient point to look back and indulge in a little stock-taking. It makes also a very suitable time to look forward and, in the light of lessons of the past, to plan for the future.

A glimpse backwards shows that the Club's activities have been steadily maintained throughout its life, with varying degrees of success and support by members. The Club has had its ups and downs: at present the emphasis seems clearly to be on the former, and if the present progress is maintained the future is rosy indeed. The membership has at times been numerically stronger, but on counts of activity, enthusiasm and all-round performance it has never been so high. Certainly the Club has never had the keen support of so many young members, in whom must be our great hope for the future. It is in fact largely to the young members, and to those who have been in the Club a comparatively short time, that we look to-day for trip leaders, for Club-room workers and for Committee members, and this aspect of Club affairs could well be considered. If it is purely because of the unbounded enthusiasm of these members, this is a good thing, although the tempering influence of experience might still be very much worth while. But if the younger men have simply stepped in because of the lack of anyone else willing and able to do the job, our appreciation of their work must be tinged with concern as to why they should be forced into this position. Where, we would ask, are the young men of the 'twenties and 'thirties? Many fine young men and women have tramped with the Club in the years of its existence, but how many of these are active to-day in Club affairs? Conversely, how many of those who to-day control the Club's destinies, or are regular attenders on official trips or at the Club room, have been members more than ten years? How many more than five years? It is regrettably true that only a handful of the Club's young people of 1930 and 1935 are actively interested in its work to-day. In some ways, of course, we have been unfortunate. Of the first six Presidents, five are deceased and one is no longer in this country. Several other members who have contributed greatly both to the active work and to the administrative side of Club affairs are now away from Dunedin. And, in the natural course of events, some will always drift away, acquiring outside responsibilities. Some will simply lose interest. Some, again, may feel out of place in the Club to-day: if this impression has been unwittingly created, let it be quickly put right, for nothing is more valuable in the Club than the interest and support of those who, for want of a better name, may be called "old stagers." Whatever their present position, their help would still be keenly appreciated by the younger generation—that younger generation whose members in 25 years more will themselves be "old stagers." Is it too much to hope that in 1973 the Club will be flourishing under the control of a keen body of young men and women with the guidance and support of those who in 1948 are still under 30?



In asking this question we do not seek to be critical, rather do we look forward with confidence to the future. We salute the memory and work of the Club's founders, and feel that they would approve of the virility and vitality of the Club to-day. We feel that the spirit now manifest is such that, even allowing for the ravages of age, matrimony and outside responsibility, most of those who to-day are supplying the motive force in Club affairs, will to-morrow remain faithful and keenly interested and glad to lend their maturer counsels to leaven the youthful enthusiasm of a new generation of trampers. In this way is a Club tradition built up and maintained. We know that the present officers of the Club are duly appreciative of their position as beneficiaries of the past, custodians of the present and trustees for the future; we know that they have the welfare of the Club very much at heart, that they are earnest and enthusiastic, and equally happy to receive a word of advice from their elders and to pass their enthusiasm on to the new recruits; we know that they have the backing of a splendid body of active Club members. With their continued interest and support, the second chapter in the Club history, now beginning with such favourable omens, will see continued progress and development; we have confidence in wishing the Club well, and in wishing to all "Good Tramping."

—THE EDITOR.



ON SUMMIT OF MT. CHARLES, 1925

Back Row—R. B. Hamel, R. Gilkison, E. McBride, E. W. Hunter, —, A. J. Thompson, H. S. Tilly.

Front Row—R. Watt, S. Gilkison, Miss Reynell, —, —, Miss D. Mackie, —, J. J. Kennedy, —, —, G. C. Arras, —, I. B. Mackie.

## IN THE BEGINNING

From "Otago Daily Times," 23rd August, 1923.

DUNEDIN

---

### The Pedestrian's Paradise

---

Ladies and gentlemen interestd in the formation of a "Tramping Club" are invited to attend a meeting to be held in Mr. Divers' Board Room, Grand Picture Palace Building, TO-NIGHT (THURSDAY), August 23, at 8 o'clock.

From "Otago Daily Times," 24th August, 1923:

A successful and enthusiastic meeting was held in Mr. E. S. Wilson's Board Room last night for the purpose of forming the Otago Tramping Club. There was an attendance of fully 60, including a large number of ladies. Mr. O. Balk, who was voted to the chair, referred to the great advantages which Dunedin offered to a club of that nature. He pointed out the benefit to be derived from such healthy exercise as tramping over the hills, and the elevating effect it would have upon the mind. In the Tararua Tramping Club, of Wellington, which had now completed its fourth season, they had an excellent model to work upon as regards rules and procedure.

A decision to form the Club, proposed by Mr. R. Gilkison, and seconded by Mr. F. W. Clayton, was carried.

The following Committee were elected:—Messrs. O. Balk (President); R. Gilkison and F. W. Clayton (Vice-Presidents); C. J. Hayward (Secretary); E. Miller (Treasurer); A. E. Gascoigne, P. L. Ritchie, R. B. Hamel and Misses E. Webling and M. LeBrun. Messrs. J. Knox, I. B. Mackie and Miss E. Harrison were later co-opted on the committee.

\* \* \*

This original meeting was convened by a small committee headed by Mr. Balk and Mr. Gilkison. It is interesting to note that these gentlemen had independently conceived the idea of the formation of a club, and both had written to the Tararua Club asking for advice and information. From their enthusiasm and that of their colleagues arose the early success and progress of the Club. It is of interest also to note that both these gentlemen are represented on the active strength of the Club to-day by their descendants—in one case a son, in the other a daughter and two grand-daughters.



## EARLY TRAMPING CLUB DAYS

(Re-printed from "Outdoors," No. 1, September, 1934)

For eleven years this club has been in operation and giving much pleasure and enjoyment to all its members. What a series of beautiful pictures flits before our eyes when we look back on the past—sunrise from Ben Dhoran, moonlight on the harbour, clear views from mountain tops, here and there a misty day with rocks and trees looming immense and weird through the fog, splashing through the sea on the beaches, or wading knee-deep in the moss and ferns under the glorious New Zealand foliage; and always a merry throng, full of happiness and good nature, pressing on through these wonderful natural beauties.

In August, 1923, the club was formed, and forthwith, as a sturdy infant, set out to walk. In the early days so many attended that the parties had to be divided. Sometimes three trips were arranged for one day. However, by the time the club had found itself, when the weak followers had dropped out, and the others got together, we settled down to work with a programme very much like the present.

In the early years, the Red Hut was very much visited. Its place is now taken by our own hut on Green Hill, from which the whole of the Silver Peak range can be reached. The club in its longer holidays has visited Cecil Peak, Naseby, Dansey Pass, Catlins, Papatowai, Milford, Hampden, Rock and Pillar, Fox Glacier, Lake Gunn, Eglinton Valley, and Matukituki Valley, and has tramped many long miles through those districts.

We still go weekly to some of the many charming beauty spots around Dunedin, and our numbers are about the same as we had in the first year, after the first attraction of novelty had gone.

It is noteworthy how faithful our old members have been to the club, and what a large number we still have of the "Old Brigade."

The first tramp of the Club was held on Saturday, September 1, 1923, when about fifty members set out from Ross Creek Reservoir to climb Flagstaff. The weather was clear but a strong and bitterly cold south-west wind was encountered (don't we all know it well!) As the trampers set in to Ross' Track in Indian file, the line of members was so long that the leaders were at the top when some were only entering the bush.

On September 23, one party of nineteen went to Mount Cargill when they were enveloped in mist, but got safely out: while a still larger party went over Flagstaff to Craiglowan. Ben Rudd took strong exception to so many people invading his solitude, and forcibly stopped some of the younger members of the club. However, when Mr. Balk came along, Ben was more reasonable and offered to cut a track through the manuka scrub for the club for £5. This offer was subsequently accepted by the committee, and the track was duly cut, and has proved of very great benefit to our members.

The first Labour Day was the occasion of three parties going out to the Silver Peak range. Mr. Balk and a party of fourteen went to Whare Flat, spent the night there; next day walked to Mount Allan homestead, where they slept in the shearers' quarters and found the night uncommonly cold, and on the Monday went to Silver Peak and Waitati.

Another party of about forty, including Mr. Thompson our president, Mr. Knox, and Mr. Hamel, went by train on Monday morning to Mount Allan, and walked to the Peak and thence to Waitati.

A third party, including Mr. Clayton and Mr. Gilkison, went to the Red Hut on Saturday, and on Labour Day descended to the Waikouaiti River and thence by the Long Spur climbed to the peak. Altogether, about seventy gathered on the peak that day and, after a time, water became scarce, and we had to go long distances to fill the billies.

At Christmas, 1923, members were busy. While a large number did the usual walks round Dunedin, including Waipori, Maungatua, and the Peak, a party of seven proceeded to Wakatipu under the leadership of Mr. Knox, and spent a splendid holiday at Cecil Peak Station, where they were allowed to occupy the shearers' quarters.

Since those days the club has gone on and prospered. All the beauty spots near Dunedin have been visited many times, and, in the long holidays, far off mountains have been scaled and distant places have been visited. We are no longer lonely trampers, for the cult is now fashionable, and, for one walker we used to meet on the hilltops, there are now probably five. Health and pleasure and good-fellowship have been our reward. Our memories are stored with hundreds of happy incidents. To all old and new members we wish many future happy expeditions with the Otago Tramping Club.

—R. GILKISON.

---

## *The Success of Your Trip*

depends a great deal on satisfactory stores. We carry a comprehensive stock of best quality provisions and are always glad to assist you with your food problems.

**W. SMITH & CO.**

(Next N.Z. Travel Service)

**368 PRINCES STREET - - DUNEDIN**

---



## HUTS, TRACKS, ETC.

### NOTES FROM THE PAST

In October, 1923, the Club accepted Ben Rudd's offer to cut a track on the northern side of Flagstaff at a cost of £5. As well as doing this work, Ben Rudd also did some work on re-opening the Pineapple Track, for which a small additional payment was made.

In 1925 a series of working parties re-opened the track down the Powder Ridge.

In 1926 the Club erected six stiles on the Black Head route, and spent some time clearing a track to Fairy Grotto, and on improvements to the Bridle Track.

In 1931 a track was cleared from Opoho Road to the Trig on Signal Hill. Other work on the routes Logan Point-Signal Hill, upper Ross Creek, etc., was left over "until a definite decision as to the control of the various scenic reserves has been reached."

In 1932 the Club voted £5 to the N.Z. Alpine Club as a contribution to the cost of the new Cascade Hut, Matukituki Valley. The same year enquiries started into questions of materials, possible sites, and methods of transport for a hut in the Silver Peaks district. On 7th December, 1932, the Committee decided to build a hut on a site selected on Sec. 3, Block X, Silver Peak district, permission having been obtained from the Dunedin City Council. This scheme was approved by a special general meeting of



BEN RUDD'S OLD HUT ON FLAGSTAFF

From Left—I. B. Mackie, Miss B. Martin, Miss Garrett, Ben Rudd,  
Mr. Buchey.

—I. B. Mackie, Photo, 1927



the Club on 16th March, 1933, and arrangements were at once set in train. A packing contract for £30 was let, and working parties from the Club, assisted by various parties of helpers from the Alpine Club, proceeded to get the materials transported and the hut erected. It was officially opened on 3rd June, 1933. The financial accounts for 1933 record the cost of the hut (less donations) as £48 16s 10d; no figure is shown for the total cost, but as the Committee had been authorised to expend £50 only it is clear that some hard thinking and keen planning must have been done.

## EARLY OUTINGS

My introduction to the Club was on its second tramp—on 8th September, 1923, a large crowd met at the Gardens and moved with stately stride up the hill past Opoho, on to the top of Signal Hill, and down the other side to Burkes. I went down with my father, who introduced me to Mr. Balk and Mr. Clayton, two gentlemen who showed me many kindnesses and gave much assistance. At once I became the "youngest member" of the Club, which position I held with a good deal of self-satisfaction for the next four or five years. On Sunday, 16th September, I went with a bigger party to Whare Flat. Two groups went out that day—my father and I went with Mr. P. L. Ritchie's party from Kaikorai terminus, and beside the creek below Mr. McQuilkan's house we met up with Mr. Clayton's party which had come from Ross Creek. That was the first time that Mr. McQuilkan was officially "at home" to the Club, and I have no doubt he revelled in the opportunity. My own impressions of the day are rather clouded by the fact that, when scrambling after lunch in the upper branches of a Kowhai tree, I had a nasty fall with a broken branch, and for a little while went right "out." The following week-end sticks more in my memory, however. The programme for the Sunday was for one party to climb Cargill, which they did, while two other parties went from Ross Creek to Whare Flat. I was with the first party, but going up the bush track I got left behind. (I was slow even in those days!). Up along the fence line I met a young lady who had also dropped behind, and together we plodded round the route as we knew it, but not for long. We had not gone far when we were pulled up short by a stumpy figure in much-patched clothes and—what was more to the point—fingering the business end of a gun with evident enthusiasm and anticipation. What he said I don't know, but we easily recognised him as old Ben Rudd of whom we had heard so much, and having no taste to proceed further on this world or the next, we started back with our tails well down. Before long, though, we met the second party, and under Mr. Balk's sheltering wing we resumed the advance—albeit a trifle shakily. Our leader, however, was friendly with old Ben, and after they had chatted cordially for a few moments the whole party was made welcome to proceed. So far as I was concerned, the worst feature of the day was that I never caught up on my father, who had the billy and most of our food! The practical result of this encounter, however, was the Club's arrangement with Ben for the cutting of a track which would keep the average passer-by well away from the old hermit's residence.

Then there was Labour Day, 1923. I went with Mr. Clayton's party on Saturday afternoon from Waitati to Red Hut. On the Sunday we went for a walk along the ridge to the north and down into Evansdale Glen, and on Monday we dropped into the Waikouaiti and climbed direct to the Peaks. Parties from Bendoran and Mt. Allan had started to arrive at the top by the time we got there, and all day they kept on arriving. The day was hot, and before long the little spring by the track had given out completely, so that some parties had a long climb for water. That day saw



probably the biggest crowd in the Club's history gathered at Silver Peak, and for a while there seemed to be "standing room only." Then back to town—mostly by Waitati, but others no doubt by way of Whare Flat or Leith Valley. Throughout that week-end I was very well looked after by Mr. Clayton, who was one of the most capable and considerate party leaders I ever met. How many members to-day know that the tarn near Swampy Saddle used to be called "Lake Clayton?"

—W.S.G.

## NOTES OF EARLY CLUB ACTIVITIES

One of the Club's earliest public activities was in April, 1924, when a grand Military Pageant was staged at Carisbrook in aid of the War Memorial Fund; the ladies of the Club ran a refreshment stall, while some of the men joined in the pageant as "The Yeomen of the Guard." Later in the same year at the Oriental Bazaar in aid of the St. John Ambulance Association, over £75 was taken at a Kitchen Stall run by Club members.

At the N.Z. and South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin, 1925-26, the Club arranged a framed list of outings, surrounded by views of some of the beauty spots round the City, and this was displayed at the entrance to the Canadian Court.

In 1926 the Club began supplying the press with regular reports of day trips, and this was continued for about two years. In 1928, for a change, a series of radio talks were given over 4YA dealing with the beauties of Dunedin's scenery.

In 1927 arrangements were made for a Club room to be open fortnightly on Wednesdays, the room first used being in the International Harvester buildings in Castle Street. Over the following years the Club room idea was maintained, with varying support, in several different locations. In 1940 the Club secured the use of the Otago Chess Club's room every Friday evening; this most satisfactory arrangement has been rewarded with its steadily increasing popularity with members, and the Club room to-day is obviously a major function of the Club's activities.

In 1933, following the completion of the Green Peak Hut, the Club was incorporated and acquired its proper legal standing. The following year the suggestion of a Club magazine was raised; this was approved on 3rd July, and in September No.1 appeared, under the title of "Outdoors." In scope, shape and size it has been developed, diminished and generally changed round to suit the varying circumstances of the Club, and the present set-up—one issue of "Outdoors" each year, and ten or twelve bulletins—may prove as inadequate in 1950 as it is satisfactory in 1948.

Early in its career the Club would organise tramps for both Saturdays and Sundays. Before long the former lost popularity, and for a while were dropped from the programme. A few years later the Saturday trips had gained in popularity, while the committee was concerned about the "dwindling attendances on Sundays," and proceeded to take appropriate action. Since then the wheel has turned full circle again; Saturday walks have come and gone, come again and, for the present, gone again, the present emphasis being on Sunday tramps and week-end outings.

\* \* \* \*

During my leave I propose to look for virgin peaks. I hope to make some money by selling the information to mountaineers.

\* \* \*

The method of discovering a virgin peak is to climb it to see if there are any footmarks on the top. The descent is then made backwards, carefully erasing footmarks en route.

## GLEANINGS FROM THE MINUTE BOOK

### THERE'S NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

(Editor's Note.—For this and other sections the Minute Books, kept with care and attention by a succession of able Secretaries give invaluable assistance. Members are deeply indebted to past officials, and in particular Mr. G. A. Pearson, for the meticulous care with which all matter relating to the Club's history has been preserved).

"Members may at any time form groups or parties, having regard to vicinity of residence, similarity of tastes and preferences as to objectives, distances and pace." (Circular to members, 6/9/1923).

"Proceedings commenced with a tramping song by members of the social committee." (Report of social evening, 19/4/1925).

"After the last heavy snowfall a few of our members had the experience of ski-ing on the slopes of Flagstaff and Swampy Hill." (Annual Report, 1925).

"Dancing was indulged in till 11 p.m., and all went home pleased with their evening's enjoyment." (Minutes of Special General Meeting, 30/6/1924).

"The Club supports the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce, the Otago Institute and other bodies in the course they are taking to keep Mt. Cargill, Flagstaff and Signal Hill as scenic reserves." (Committee Meeting, 20/4/1931).

"During the year the Dunedin City Council has taken over the control of the scenic reserves on Flagstaff and Mt. Cargill, and has been given power to plant trees on both areas up to height of 1,500 feet above sea level. (Annual Report, 31/8/1932).

"We learn with interest of the recent formation of the Otago Ski Club, and extend to it our good wishes for a successful future."

"In order to assist in preventing damage in the Water Reserves by pig hunters and others carrying firearms, it was decided that the Club Hut be kept locked." (20/4/1936).

"As a result of the increasing popularity of tramping, it has become still more necessary for our members to exercise the greatest care when taking part in the various outings. During the past year it has been made plain to us that the privilege of tramping over private property will be available only so long as members realise their responsibilities in this connection." (Annual Report, 31/8/1937).

\* \* \*

Ski-ing, indeed! Isn't there enough sadness in life without going out of your way to fasten long planks to your feet and jump off mountains?



## GLEANINGS FROM OFFICIAL CLUB RECORDS

### EGLINTON VALLEY TRIP, CHRISTMAS, 1932:

Lake Gunn via the Eglinton Valley was the setting for the official trip for Christmas, 1932. 31 members took advantage of this trip, and left Dunedin on Saturday, 24th December, at 9.30 p.m. Our outfit comprised a motor lorry, a luggage van and a car with trailer. At 1.30 a.m. a halt was made by the wayside near Waiwera, and the billy was boiled. At 7 a.m., just past Lumsden, we stopped for breakfast at a pretty spot by the Oreti River. Then on again, stopping at Te Anau on the way. All were keen to see the new road for its beauties had been widely spread, and we were not disappointed, for the tall beech trees and the glimpses of snow-clad mountains through them were indeed beautiful. On arrival at Cascade Creek, near the end of the road, everyone was busy setting up tents, dining-room, store-room and sleeping quarters which took till about six when a welcome meal was spread before us. The next day we farewelled nine of the party who were doing the Howden-Homer-Gertrude, etc., trip. The rest of the party had a busy morning fixing up stores, etc., and in the afternoon visited Lake Gunn and had a dip in its waters.

Thursday was a glorious day, and all the party set off for the Livingstone Range. Our way took us along the shores of Lake Gunn on the newly-formed road for about three miles, then through the bush along a very rough track for a further three miles, passing Lakes Fergus and Lochie. After Lochie we came to a well-defined track which led to the Howden Hut. A stiff pull led to the Range and a whole panorama of mountains, snowfields and passes. Out came the map and for a while our attention was fully occupied in naming the different peaks. We continued our way along the ridge (for miles, it seemed), then a stiff climb brought us to the trig, the highest point. After a short spell here we carried on, then down towards Lake Gunn direct by way of a steep scree slope, over logs and boulders in a creek bed, into the bush on to the road, and so home to camp. Then followed several days spent in visiting the Lake, Cascade Falls and the Eglinton River in which we enjoyed many a refreshing bathe. Another day we went to Lake Howden and on the Earland Falls. New Year's Eve was happily spent entertaining some of the Public Works men. A huge bon-fire was lit, and sing-song and jokes, and supper were enjoyed. We were serenaded by the Invercargill Tramping Club, and New Year greetings were exchanged. We broke up about two in the morning singing "Auld Lang Syne" round the dying embers.

Tuesday came all too soon. We were called at 4 a.m., and the next two hours were busy in taking down tents, packing, etc. We were back in town by 7 p.m. after a most enjoyable holiday.

The party consisted of Messrs. R. Gilkison (Leader), O. Balk, G. C. Arras, G. D. Wright, F. Dunn, G. E. Pearce, W. Gordon, R. Watt, R. Fullerton, J. Mann, J. Armstrong, M. Howorth, Misses C. S. White, M. E. Hyde, R. Brown, E. Shaw, L. Summerfield, N. Dunn, D. Phair, M. R. Taylor, M. Slemin, M. Cotter, D. Reynell, D. Purvis, M. McDonald, E. Park, D. Mackie, E. Garrett, E. Pearce, A. F. Edmond, M. Anderson, C. M. Lucas.

### ROUTE BURN VALLEY TRIP, CHRISTMAS, 1936:

We started from Dunedin on Christmas Eve at 12 p.m. (one hour late!) and everyone settled down to listen to the wireless and tales about packs weighing 100lbs. At daybreak we stopped at Shingle Creek for breakfast,

and our driver successfully piloted us into Queenstown at 9.30 a.m., 'Xmas morning. Our launch had been waiting since 7.30, but we managed to pacify the skipper and set sail up the lake to the accompaniment of loud cheers from the wharf from three children, one dog and our driver. It was a perfect morning, and Kinloch was reached all too soon. Everything was successfully transferred to service cars and truck, and the procession moved off for the Lodge. The cook was waiting on the doorstep, and a huge meal was ready on the table. Afterwards we recovered enough to make the trip to Sylvan Lake, "Ten minutes' walk" said George; after an hour and twenty minutes scrambling and fighting through thick bush we nearly fell into the lake, but it was worth going to see. Next morning was perfect and the whole party set off up the Routeburn Valley, calling at the huts on the way. Two budding mountaineers branched off to climb Ocean Peak, and the rest of the party reached the top of the Pass, also Conical Hill. It was a very tired and hungry party that arrived back at the Lodge that night. From then on the days continued beautifully fine, and splitting up into small parties we climbed, swam, sun-bathed and bush-whacked to our hearts' content. One party made trips to Emily Pass, Lake McKenzie, Harris Saddle, North Branch, Mt. Alfred, Paradise and Mt. Bonpland—and Ian and Co. climbed what is believed to be a virgin peak behind the camp. On New Year's Eve we had a trip to Glenorchy, followed by a huge bon-fire. The next night a party went down to Glenorchy to a dance, and enjoyed themselves thoroughly! The return journey by car, launch and bus went smoothly except for a minor breakdown at Roxburgh, and we were home in the early morning hours, satisfied that we had had the best sort of holiday to be had.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LIFE MEMBERS

30/9/1924—Donald McQuilkan	29/9/1937—J. Knox
30/9/1924—Gilmore Bros. (Kilmog)	29/9/1937—I. B. Mackie
25/9/1929—F. W. Clayton	29/9/1937—P. L. Ritchie
23/9/1931—A. A. Jopp	29/9/1937—A. J. Thomson
23/9/1931—D. Malloch	29/9/1937—G. D. Wright
6/2/1935—R. Gilkison	29/9/1937—L. Lumb
18/9/1935—O. Balk	18/9/1947—D. Mackie
29/9/1937—A. E. Gascoigne	



Year	President	Secretary	Roll at End	Christmas Trip	Easter
1923	O. Balk	C. J. Hayward/J. Knox	157	Cecil Peak	Silver Peaks
1924	R. Gilkison	I. B. Mackie	105	Cecil Peak	Hyde-Hampden
1925	J. Knox	I. B. Mackie	73	Waipori Falls	Red Hut
1926	F. W. Clayton	I. B. Mackie/E. W. Hunter	96	Cecil Peak	Kaitangata/Taieri Mouth
1927	L. Lumb	G. A. Pearson	105	—	Catlins
1928	J. J. Kennedy	G. A. Pearson	125	Milford Sound	Bull Creek
1929	A. E. Gascoigne	G. A. Pearson	144	Fox Glacier	Naseby
1930	P. L. Ritchie	G. A. Pearson	138	—	Blue Mountains
1931	G. D. Wright	G. A. Pearson	148	Ohau	Kyeburn
1932	R. Gilkison	G. A. Pearson	155	Lake Gunn	Blue Mountains
1933	A. J. Thompson	G. A. Pearson	149	East Matukituki	Papatowai
1934	Miss A. F. Edmond	G. A. Pearson	120	—	Styx
1935	P. L. Moore	G. A. Pearson	114	Ohau	Kyeburn
1936	R. B. Hamel	G. A. Pearson	110	Routeburn	Peel Forest
1937	R. B. Hamel	G. A. Pearson	116	Makarora	Piano Flat
1938	J. C. Lucas	G. A. Pearson	110	Ahuriri	Blue Mountains
1939	J. Niven	G. A. Pearson	112	Routeburn	Waihi Gorge
1940	R. B. Hamel	Miss L. Williamson	100	Moke Lake	Hokonuis
1941	Miss A. F. Edmond	Miss L. Williamson	101	—	Kyeburn
1942	F. Dunn	Miss L. Williamson	122	Dip Stream	Rock and Pillar
1943	F. Dunn	L. R. Butterfield	153	Paradise	—
1944	J. Niven	E. A. Hughes	125	Moke Lake	Kakanuis
1945	R. B. Hamel	R. Markby	121	Rees/Dart	Kakanuis
1946	H. Tilly	R. Markby	124	Rees	Piano Flat
1947	H. Tilly	R. Markby	131*	Hopkins	Eyre Mountains
				Ahuriri	
				Rockburn	



#### FOUR EARLY PRESIDENTS

R. Gilkison (1924), O. Balk (1923), A. E. Gascoigne (1929),  
J. J. Kennedy (1928).

Taken at Fox Glacier, 1929.

---

### OTAGO TRAMPING CLUB

#### **Hon. Editor:**

W. S. GILKISON, 33 Barr Street, Dunedin.

#### **Hon. Secretary and Treasurer**

R. E. MARKBY, 29 Jackson Street, Kaikorai. Phone 21-768.



*Rich in* **VITAMIN C**



Gregg's Rose Hip Powder contains approximately 3,000 m.g. Ascorbic Acid (Vitamin C) per 100 grammes. Vitamin P is also present. A teaspoonful daily will supply the Vitamin C you need.

*Gregg's*  
**ROSE HIP  
POWDER**

Made by GREGG & CO. LTD.,  
Pure Food Specialists, Forth St., DUNEDIN.

*Try this*

**Delicious Health Custard**

Get the Iodine you need in your daily food. Gregg's Seameal and Seameal Custard are the **ONLY** two foods made from seaweed which give it.



*Gregg's*

**SEAMEAL**  
**Dessert CUSTARD**

Made by  
W. GREGG & CO. LTD.,  
Pure Food Specialists,  
Forth St., DUNEDIN.

---

**CROWN PRINT LTD.**

**Printers and Publishers**

**294 Moray Place**

**DUNEDIN**

**1948**

•