



Outdoors

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EDITORIAL

FUNCTIONS OF A TRAMPING CLUB

With the development of a widening range of interest in mountain activities it is not inappropriate that we should give some consideration to the aims and objectives of the Otago Tramping Club. In the beginning we tramped the Silver Peaks, we explored the Kakanui, we even went as far as Lake Wakatipu and a few daring spirits reached the top of Cecil Peak. That was in the early days of the Club, and the standard set then remained fairly steady for a good many years. Even three years ago the Club's mountaineering activities remained fairly modest, consisting mainly of a partial ascent of Leary Peak, and a Dart-Rees round trip. Three seasons later, and what a contrast!—ascents of Cook, Haidinger, Aspiring, Earnslaw, Pluto, St. Mary, Pickelhaube first ascent, various ascents of Clarke, Aeolus, Headlong and so on; while many Club members were to be seen in action during the winter on skis at Rock and Pillar, Queenstown and the Kakanui.

The question is, to what extent are these activities consistent with the ideas and ideals of the Otago Tramping Club? True, they were visualised by the stalwarts of the Club in drafting the original constitution, and to many members climbing and ski-ing represent the logical development of youthful tramping. A further consequent tendency has been, and must inevitably be, the interest of O.T.C. members in the sister clubs, the N.Z.A.C. and the O.S.C. To what extent is this desirable, and to what extent should it be encouraged? At first sight it would seem most unfortunate that the Club should appear to lose in this way some of the most active and most enterprising of its members, but we can take a broader view. One aspect is the realisation that **active membership of these other clubs is not inconsistent with active membership of the O.T.C.**; in fact, the more active members of one who are in close contact with active members of the other, the more naturally will full mutual support and co-operation follow. Another aspect is the thought that the logical meeting-ground for those who climb the tops is the Alpine Club; for those who ski is the Ski Club; and for those who tramp is the Tramping Club. Already there are quite a good number of O.T.C. members who are members of the others as well; most started with the Tramping Club and developed their climbing or ski-ing tastes later, but in some cases the reverse has been the case. Others, perhaps, would join these other clubs were it not for the feeling that such might involve disloyalty to their "first love." We believe that Club members will take the broader view. Better far to attract and encourage young men and women of the right type, many of whom will at some stage feel the urge of the higher tops, than to discourage either the Club aspirations or the mountain ambitions of those who join the O.T.C. There is no need for any clash of loyalties, and a broad and tolerant attitude becomes us much better than any suggestion of "What I have I hold." In co-operation with other Clubs we can best play our part as loyal supporters of the N.Z. Federated Mountain Clubs.

One further thought. Members of the O.T.C. are well aware that although safe and pleasurable tramping may be enjoyed on the local hills by parties of from one to fifty, in the mountains there is no such elasticity.

A party of one always, a party of two frequently, and a party of ten or more usually, is asking for trouble. When invaded en masse the mountains give no quarter, and there is a world of difference between the free-and-easy parties we so enjoy on the local hills, and the efficient mountain party which reaches its objective comfortably and safely.

The O.T.C. must find some way of reducing the size of the parties it sends into the mountain country; and, having reduced the size of parties over all, it must also take some responsibility to see that individual tramping and climbing units in such country are of manageable size. The alternative sooner or later is a mountain disaster for which all of us are responsible. The difficulty as always is the shortage of competent leaders, and the natural desire of potential Club leaders to seek major objectives with their own hand-picked parties. Let us not suggest that such natural ambitions should be discouraged; to do so would be to negative most of what the Club stands for, or that the traditions of the mountains have to offer. But Club parties, whatever their ambitions, must first and foremost make sure that their objectives are within their several abilities. One way, the negative way, is to restrict objectives to the point where danger is not. The other, the positive way, is for each member who looks beyond the immediate horizon and seeks for something beyond, to undertake such personal training and preparation as will both extend those horizons and develop the desire and ability safely to look at the promised land of mountain and valley. Is such an ambition not worthy of a little present self-denial by each one of us? For herein lies our own ultimate delight and satisfaction, and herein lies the future prosperity of the Club.



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Almost another year has passed since the last issue of "Outdoors"—a year of extensive activities which have taken Club parties into widely separated localities both around the local hills and into the back country.

The Christmas and New Year period saw Club parties, official and unofficial, in a variety of areas. The main party, some forty strong, was in the Wilkin, and made very full use of the fine weather spell following Christmas Day to make numerous mountain and valley expeditions. Other parties were operating in the Rees, Dart, Matukituki, Rockburn, Hollyford, Ahuriri and other areas, and some of their exploits are recorded elsewhere in these pages. Easter saw three main attractions: the main trip up the Ahuriri, where snow conditions thwarted further attempts on Barth, but permitted an ascent of St. Mary (the second recorded ascent); another substantial party went to Christmas Creek and the Club was well represented—officially and unofficially—at the opening of the Alpine Club's new Aspiring Hut in the Matukituki. Full day and week-end trips have covered the old places, and a few new ones as well. During the summer, satisfactory progress has been made with the Jubilee Hut project in Christmas Creek. At the moment the "hut" consists of a row of concrete piles, a well-cut access track, and a heap of pre-fabricated materials sitting forlornly "somewhere" between Hindon Railway Station and Cave Creek! Next summer should see this hut ready for use as a base for extending our activities in this area.

The Club room has been a regular rendezvous for Friday night gatherings, and as a starting-point of week-end expeditions. For some time the old room has been too small; and a new room has been found in Lower High Street which has proved a popular spot during recent months. Various illustrated talks, films, etc., have been arranged, and these, too, have been well supported.

This year again the Club is well represented in the N.Z.A.C. "Climbing Instruction Course," and our members have learned much, both from the instructors and by association with members of other clubs.

These activities are the sign of a virile Club, and we, as members, must continue to work to keep up the high standard that has been set.

Our Twenty-fifth Jubilee is now behind us, and with the commencement of a new period now is the time to look to the future and not bask in the achievements of the past. This Club is now at a crucial stage in its history. Over the past few years there has been a rejuvenation, membership has grown, policy has been changed and the Club's activities widened, but that group of members of the period 1935-1939, who should now be leading the Club's activities in the field and directing its administrative policy have, because of the intervention of the war, lost touch, and the burden has been thrown on the younger generation.

This present predominance of youth does not place us in a strong future position unless there is a group among them who are prepared to remain working usefully and actively—both in the field and in committee—for a number of years. This, reinforced by a steady annual influx of new members, will eventually replace the vital middle group we have lost through the war.

The founders of the Club built a solid foundation for the first 25 years, and it behoves present members to plan an equally solid structure for the future. It is in this way that the Club tradition is built up and maintained.

Wishing all members, present and prospective, pleasant tramping.

W. A. McFARLAND.

ASPIRING AND OTHER CLIMBS

The shadow of the western peaks lengthened across the valley; another day was almost gone, but high above the shadows a long glistening snow-ridge swept far up into the blue. Aspiring, we knew, would still feel the sun's warmth long after the valley was asleep. It was a pleasant task reclining in an easy chair by the wide window of Aspiring Hut to re-live the happy hours spent high on that ridge, and the days when, high on the snowfields we, too, had watched the shadows gather.

Only a week ago we had this same view as in the usual manner, with "light hearts and heavy packs," we set off for the snows, with Aspiring our hope. That first evening we went to Pearl Flat and slept, with the river roaring alongside. Both John and Julian were suitably impressed by the steepness of French Ridge after an hour's toil early next morning. In due course we left the bush, then the scrub, and then the snow grass behind us, to reach the old Bivvy site as the sun finally dispersed all the valley fog. After a long boil-up there we moved up and across the crevassed snow-field. We attempted to get round the ice-fall, but after wasting considerable time amongst the seracs we gave it best and retreated. So late in the day the snow was getting soft, making the climb up a steep snowfield to the right of the fall rather a killing slog. The steepness of the slope demanded careful work, and it was 7 p.m. before we came out on to the scree and rock slopes leading up to Mt. French. There was no time to select our snow-cave site and dig in; the best solution seemed to be to find a comfortable camp on the rocks. The site chosen was rather an exhilarating spot, for the ridge was so steep below us that we felt it wise to build a wall to prevent a long tumble down the mountainside. Lying comfortably in our bags we watched the sun set in a flood of colour, and shortly afterwards the moon sail into the starry heavens from behind the dark bulk of Aspiring.

A clear, frosty morning with fog lying in all the valleys cheered us as we packed up and dropped down to the Bonar Glacier. Being unable to find any sign of previous snow-caves we started digging in at 10 a.m. in brilliant sunshine, and several hours later moved in, feeling quite proud of our efforts. With the passing of the hours the valley mists had risen and enveloped us in a small, cold, grey world of our own, therefore we were quite pleased to spend the rest of the day in bed, and recover from our strenuous efforts. It was quite comfortable inside the cave lying on Pinex beds with the pale blue light filtering through the roof.

The alarm woke us at 1.30 to a clear, starry morning with a slight N.W. breeze. At 3.30 we were on to the glacier, moving across the frozen snow towards the N.W. ridge of Aspiring, with the intention of prospecting a route from the glacier on to the ridge. We were unsuccessful in our first attempt to find what seemed a passable way; this we soon discovered was not the easy way, the rock was very steep and difficult, and before very long forced us back to the glacier. We tried again on easier rock, but the lateness of the hour and the bitter wind told us to go home. The sky was clouding over rapidly; by the time we reached the cave all the peaks had gone and the outlook was bleak and chill. Once more into sleeping-bags for the afternoon of leisure and "Readers' Digests." Hopefully we set the alarm for 1.30 again.

A Southerly was blowing, and the sky cloudy first thing; after breakfast the ceiling had dropped to 8,000ft., so no Aspiring this day for us. At 6.30 we decided to stretch our legs by walking across the glacier to



MT. ASPIRING, FROM SHOVEL FLAT, MATUKITUKI VALLEY.

---M. G. McInnes.

the edge of the Kitchener cirque. This was a most impressive sight indeed, particularly on this lowering morning, for on looking over the edge, one could see the valley floor thousands of feet below, and north, around the overhanging rocks, avalanches were roaring incessantly from an extensive broken glacier. Snow started falling heavily at this stage, so back across the glacier we plodded. As we neared the cave the snow-clouds showed signs of breaking; French then seemed the logical thing, and by 9 a.m. we were on top. The Southerly, which had beaten the gathering Nor'wester, appeared to be clearing up altogether, for away over the Earnslaws the sky was a clear blue. We spent about an hour on the summit, then moved off down the rock face above our camp, after an interesting time route-finding reached the snow and a slow glissade to the cave.

At 2 p.m. the sun was shining brilliantly. Off across the well-softened glacier we plugged, thinking to work off our excess energy on Mt. Avalanche. Tiring of the snow we climbed on to the rotten rock of the North Ridge, wandered up to the face, crossed the upper snows to the slabs on the West face. We climbed the first section of the slabs, then considering the glorious, windless afternoon and the length and steepness of the rock above us, decided that it would be much pleasanter to sit on the rough, warm slabs and enjoy the view. The sun was dipping behind the distant peaks when we left the rocks and plodded back to the cave, feeling pleasantly tired and very content.

Awake once more at 1.30, when I pulled the cover away from the entrance a shower of snow fell inside, but on looking out it seemed that the sky was clearing; we decided to wait a while, have breakfast and be prepared to move at daybreak if the weather were with us. Unfortunately we omitted to re-set the alarm, and all fell asleep again until 4.30—the time we had intended moving. This was to be our last day high, so, late as it was, we determined to try Aspiring again, the morning now being perfect. Away at 6 a.m., the glacier was soon behind us and we were on to a long, steep snow-slope that we now knew would lead to the N.W. ridge. Considering the comparative inexperience of the party, we preferred to move slowly and safely, so that it took a long time to gain the ridge and the sunshine. The day was amazingly clear, not a breath of wind or a cloud in the sky. Our view was already very extensive, but the summit seemed not too far away; at 11.45 we were on the way. Under the withering sun we made good time to reach the ice-cap by 1.15, then proceeded much more carefully until the summit, at 2.45, the last hundred feet or so being particularly exhilarating, a razor-edge of glistening white against a deep blue background, twisting up to a perfect summit, with a drop of thousands of feet on either side. With everything in Otago below we spent a wonderful twenty minutes on top, before the thought of the ever-softening snow beneath urged us homewards. Once off the ice-cap we took off crampons and glissaded down to the rocks, from there romping out to the end of the ridge. Thinking there must be an alternative rock route to the glacier—the snow-slope was now very soft—we hunted round and discovered a very good way down on the Therma Glacier side. At 7 p.m. we were stretched, content, in the sun at the foot of the mountain munching biscuits and chocolate, our first meal since breakfast. The setting sun cast long blue shadows over the glacier as we plodded quietly homewards; long after the last rays had faded the sky remained brilliant above the cold peaks and dark bush-clad West Coast ranges. Home at 9.30 very weary, but a day we shall always remember.

We broke camp at 9 a.m. on another perfect day and set off for the valley via Bevan and Hector's Cols. We had intended climbing Joffre, but on passing below decided that it was too hot a plug, so carried on to Bevan Col. Leaving the swags we wandered up Bevan, where the view was well worth the climb; Aspiring, particularly, showing to advantage from this angle. Once off the rock we glissaded back to the swags and started for Hector's Col. We spent about three hours on some rocks above Hector's Col before pressing on to the valley by sidling round to the Col, and then down the narrow gut filled with avalanche debris, over steep slab and scree slopes, until about 6 p.m. we emerged into the open flats. A very mild, pleasant evening, so we just unrolled our bags on the green grass and slept outside, with numerous keas investigating our gear.

With the mist clearing away to another fine day we wandered through the bush and over the grassy flats on the way back to the hut, arriving after a leisurely journey at 2 p.m.

Although we did not suspect it then, this was to be the end of our climbing, for by the following evening it was obvious that a storm was brewing. Early next morning rain started pattering on the roof, changing after mid-day to a torrential downpour which continued all night, with vivid blue flashes of lightning, and thunder booming round the hidden peaks.

In heavy rain and bitter wind we splashed our way down the valley, arriving soaking wet, cold and miserable at Aspinall's garage about 2 p.m. Three hours later we were comfortably settled in the Wanaka camping ground and another mountain holiday was over.

GORDON McLAREN.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARY.

AND IT CAME TO PASS on the fourteenth day of the fourth month, as the full moon marked the approach of the festival of the Easter Egg, that the children of the plains took their impedimenta and went unto that place which is called Ahuriri. And Gregory, the chief patriarch, led them to that place which was to be their establishment, and here they erected a temple, and also an inner temple, and as was their custom, they howled out at the moon. And the patriarch sent four young men to that place which was the abode of the light and was called St. Mary. But even so, four called by the spirit of darkness, ventured into the lower place, the abode of devils, and known as Canyon Creek. And Claudius, the son of Baldwin, unto many generations, produced a board with black and white squares, on which were placed either black or white sacrifices which were moved according to the law, until only black or white were left, even as the law ordained. And yet more of the children of the plains paid homage at the feet of St. Mary, while the unbelievers worshipped the Sun God Ra. Then did even Bill, the son of Brookes, indulge in the black art of spine-bashing. Yet as Moses lifted the serpent in the wilderness, even so was the son of Elliot lifted up that he should reach even unto the head of the noble St. Mary. And even so were the flock gathered again together, even the Hubbard from the pit, and it was so, that they moved again from that valley and into the ways of men.

—R. E.

PICKELHAUBE

Talks, slides and discussions on the Wilkin Valley and its mountains had fired our imagination and whetted our appetites for adventure, long before we finally made a last-minute dash to board the Christmas Eve train to Cromwell.

Siberia and the North and South Branches of the Wilkin each had their own appeal, while Castor and Pollux were beckoning bribes to those who had fallen captive to the mystery and aloof grandeur of the mountains. Other peaks had come to mind as possibles, such as Aeolus, Alba, Turner, and Jumbo, but it was Martin who first waxed enthusiastic on Pickelhaube, a mountain lying at the head of the South Branch. Having been thwarted on a previous attempt, he was yearning to launch another attack on this virgin peak, and he lost no opportunity in extolling its virtues. Indeed, we required little convincing, and decided that this would be our first objective, weather permitting.

After establishing ourselves at Kerin Forks on Boxing Day, Win, Martin, Bill and I continued the journey to Jumbo Hut that afternoon, preceded by Ralph and Cliff. These two joined in with our group the next day, and we pushed on to the head of the South Branch—a somewhat tangled journey. We had hoped to bivvy on the Pearson Saddle that night, but scorching weather slowed us down, and we camped on the lower side of the waterfall.

Led by Martin, we were off to a dawn start on the 28th, with every sign of the glorious weather continuing. The top of the waterfall was reached without difficulty, and this brought us out into the snow-filled basin which nestles at the head of the Pearson, East Matuki and South Wilkin Rivers.

As we made towards the saddle we saw a tent pitched well down in the basin, and a vague uneasiness, which had assailed us for some days, returned. Was this the Tararua party, and if so, had they already climbed Pickelhaube, or if not, were they well up on its slopes at this very moment? Martin unleashed his call of the wild to its young a few times, but there was no sign of movement down below except for the bellying of the tent sides, possibly an idle eddy of the dawn breeze. Ralph murmured his famous "press on" phrase, and we did, regardless.

The route followed was that taken by Martin on his earlier attempt, and soon we had gained the north-east ridge. As we climbed, the alpine panorama unfolded. In the extreme distance Mounts Sefton and Cook were unmistakable, while nearer at hand, Castor, Pollux and Alba were magnificently tinted by the early morning sun. Not one cloud sailed the sky, and even the mist in the Waiaototo was rapidly disappearing. (Jack and Scott, please note!) Immediately below us the East Matukituki gathered strength for its journey. We enjoyed this grand sweep of country while having second breakfast, and then on up the ridge, where came our first difficulty. Snow had now replaced the broken slate of the ridge. Should we continue up this tricky ridge or get out on to the east snow face, which at this point was steep, but flattened out higher up?

We roped up; Martin, Bill and I on one rope, Ralph and Cliff on the other. The ridge route was chosen with the intention of getting on to the face as soon as practicable. This line of attack proved successful, and before long, we were on a natural shelf walking across the face on firm snow. On our right were several hundred feet of crumbly precipitous

rock ending in the summit, with a threatening overhang of ice in two places. On our left the snow-face became steep and broken, with a few seracs leaning at tired angles. Ahead was the rocky south ridge, and it was on this we pinned our hopes. Getting on to it could well have been most difficult, but our luck held. A tongue of snow licked into the rock at just the right point for an easy scramble to the top of the ridge.

It was here I had the finest surprise of the climb. Expecting to land up on a very nasty rock ridge with jagged teeth right to the summit, we found, instead, a magnificent snow plateau, gently leading to Glacier Dome to the South-west, and heading off westerly to the Waiatoto. Behind Glacier Dome, Aspiring towered, and all the peaks of the Waiatoto were on special parade. Some cotton-wool mist caressed the tops and dispersed. To me that superb sweep of mountain rapture was all the justification, if any were needed, that mountain-climbing will ever require.

After paying homage by much clicking of cameras, we took aboard more calories for the final assault on the summit, which looked steep but quite practicable. From our vantage point, it no longer resembled the German helmet which its name implies, but was quite peaky. We looked at it appraisingly, and decided that we might possibly, after climbing Pickelhaube, take an easy walk to the top of Glacier Dome, and from there feast our eyes on the head of the Waiatoto, Aspiring and the Volta and Therma glacier systems. We should have realised how distances are so very much foreshortened on clear days in the mountains. Also how long one can stay on a summit and heed not the passing of time. This, however, we did appreciate when eventually we crawled on to the top, to find it undefiled by human footprints. From here we had a ring-side seat to a really good avalanche off the northern face of our mountain, lasting some minutes from start to finish. After its initial tumultuous descent, the broken ice from it formed a river and flowed slowly down into the Pearson, like thick porridge, faster in the middle than at the sides. When eventually it came to an uncertain halt well down the valley, upper parts were still on the move.

Our return was uneventful. We spent a very pleasant hour sunning ourselves in a large natural basin waiting for the snow to harden on the east face. When we finally traversed it, we frequently broke through the thin crust and found ourselves thigh deep.

Altogether it had been a splendid day, with some exhilarating glissading on the way back. Night was falling when we descended the waterfall and rejoined the "womenfolk."

—G. W. BROUGHTON.

THERE WAS JOE.

Joe didn't think to look or stop;
They hauled his car to a fix-it shop.
In just about a week or two
They had it looking good as new.
But though they hunted high and low,
They couldn't find new parts for Joe.

Golf is a game in which a ball $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter is placed on a ball 8,000 miles in diameter. The object is to hit the smaller one.

WAIATOTO TO WILKIN

On the 10th December, 1948, S. Gilkison, C. Kershaw, G. Goodyear and myself left Dunedin by train and journeyed in sweltering heat to Cromwell, where we were met by Mr. McLeod, who took us to Wanaka. In the evening we were taken to the slip beyond "The Neck," where we spent the night. Next day we covered a weary 27 miles of road walking, camping about a mile from the top of the Haast Pass. We had no sooner passed the dividing line between Westland and Otago than it started to rain; we lunched at Burke Hut and in steady rain pushed on to Clarke Hut. That night it rained very heavily and we awoke to find the river in high flood. We tramped on in heavy rain as far as McPherson's Creek, where we had a taste of West Coast rivers in flood. It was only knee high when Scott went over to test it, but in a few moments it became a raging torrent, which we crossed with extreme difficulty. The next creek was too high to cross, so we camped for three hours, then crossed with no trouble to make Sixteen Mile Hut that night, where the mosquitoes are of the most vicious type. The next day we arrived out to the end of the road on the Coast side, about five miles from Cron's. We had walked about a mile when Dick Eggeling met us with his truck and rattled us off to his home at Okuru.

We spent most of the next day drying out our gear and sorting out the food sent on in advance. Some of us went to the aerodrome to meet the mail plane with Mr. Eggeling, and while there had the good fortune to meet Mr. Nolan, one of Dr. Teichelmann's companions in 1908. Unfortunately, we had to leave Chris Kershaw at Okuru on account of a strained leg muscle, and that evening we continued a few miles south to the Waiatoto Bridge in a truck, then an easy half-hour's walk took us to the first hut on the bank of the Waiatoto. The river was still too high for us to cross, even with horses, so we settled down to make the best of things and wait. We filled in the next few days with a visit to Jackson's Bay and several trips to the Buchanan's home alongside the Waia-toto Bridge, where we listened to the weather forecast with much interest and hope.

Eventually, on the 18th December, the river seemed to be nearly low enough, but on reaching the ford we found to our dismay, that it was still too high, but going down; we pitched camp and assisted Dick on some track cutting. By 6 p.m. a trial showed we could get across safely, so we were ferried over with our gear, then made a hurried march through bush and swamp to arrive shortly after dark at the Casey's Creek hut. The night was fine, and we went to bed looking forward to an early start on the morrow, but, alas, it was not to be, for a little later we heard the rain pouring down once more. Towards daybreak it eased off and we made a hasty breakfast, then on it came again and we realised that we would have to spend another day or so in the hut, this time unable to go either up or down stream; however, there were plenty of books to read, and we were very comfortable, so we proceeded to wait once more. The first day we watched the river rise eight feet in a few hours, the second and third we managed to go out for short walks, and to keep an eye on the river that receded ever so slowly. The fourth day we really got away, with the weather much better.

The going was good, over open river flats for a few miles, till we reached the first big tributary, the Axius. This we crossed on foot, and soon after made another crossing of the main river on horseback. The

next few hours were mainly through heavy bush, but through breaks in the foliage we caught glimpses of the peaks beyond. Then we once more came to the river and had to cross again. We were now on open flats past the Drake River, which drains part of Castor and Pollux. The flats continued for about the next three miles, where we found the next hut and had lunch. We then continued through the bush to another ford which we negotiated on foot, then over more open flats, at the top of which we forded the river for the last time.

Here we reluctantly said farewell to Dick Eggeling, as the horses could go no further, and began to struggle up valley under heavy swags with Dick's parting remarks, "You'll never reach the Pearson to-night," ringing in our ears. From what we had been told, we judged we had about five miles to go, and should strike flats not far below the Pearson. We followed quite good deer trails through the bush till we came to a stream, which we took to be Stormwater Creek; to cross this we had to go a short distance upstream. From here the bush became thicker and towards dark we came to another stream which we decided must be the Bonar. We worked up the bank looking for a crossing place, but they became steeper and heavily gorged, so we reversed and struggled down to the main river, where we slept on the beach.

We woke to find the day fine and clear, and could see Moonraker not far upstream. We crossed the Bonar at its mouth, and began several hours' hard work through thick bush and over big boulders till we came to an open creek bed, which we scrambled up to work out the route ahead. From here we began a gradual drop towards river level, to emerge presently in a clearing, from which we could see right to the head of the valley, and to our surprise we found we were quite close to the terminal ice of the glaciers. Out came the map and photos, and with them the fact that we were well past the Pearson, which was in fact our "Stormwater Creek." So after lunch we began a retreat towards the Pearson, only to lose the deer track and spend an extra hour or so fighting our way through ribbon-wood scrub. We eventually camped in the bush not far from the Pearson thoroughly tired after a heavy and seemingly profitless day.

Next morning we made the Pearson junction for breakfast, and here left behind our reserve food, then headed up stream. The going was good till a heavily-gorged tributary had to be negotiated, then the scrub got steadily thicker as we approached bush level. We eventually took turns at cutting a track, hauling our packs up when someone else took a turn at the cutting. Towards evening we dumped our packs under an overhanging rock, and began to collect the drips of water from the roof for a brew of tea. Once again the morning dawned clear, and we made an early start, forcing our way ahead till we came against a bluff which we worked round and came upon a deer trail that led us to a small stream, and on to better going. Before long we were on a easy grassy slope, with the upper waterfall of the Pearson several hundred feet below, a scramble under a waterfall off Pickelhaube and we were out on the top flats of the Pearson; the ascent of the saddle was a weary, hot grind, and early in the afternoon we were in the South Branch of the Wilkin. Not far down we met a Tararua party, who were doing the same trip in reverse. We left with them our notes, also a note of where to find our food dump, then we headed for the top flats of the Wilkin. Early next afternoon we reached Kerin Forks to find the Club party busily engaged in erecting their base camp.

Unfortunately this trip was marred by the weather, but I think the whole party enjoyed it even though no climbing was done. I, personally, would enjoy revisiting the Waitoto under more favourable conditions, and perhaps doing some climbing on the Haast Range.

—J. HOSKINS.

FRATERNISATION IN THE WILKIN

I'm not hard to get along with, and whilst out tramping I always endeavour to fraternise with the locals, and, in this instance, it was in the person of two Government Deer Cullers.

The story opens on New Year's Day, 1949, when I was along at the deercullers' camp.

Bill and Red didn't feel much like going shooting as the day was a bit misty and, in any case, they had spent the last two days in the Newland Valley.

"You know," said Red, "you seem to have a few girls with you, but they appear to be very shy."

"Well," I said, "it's like this. I'm sure they are not really shy, but you know with those beards on you don't altogether look like Frank Sinatra."

On the understanding that I would bring round half a dozen of the most beautiful trampers I could find, I toddled back to camp to see what the cook was organising for tea.

When the deercullers' desires were made known six of the above mentioned were soon available, and the time set for 3 p.m. next day.

Next afternoon about 2.30, much to my surprise who should I spot going down valley but "Red."

"Hi, Red, where are you going?" I said.

"Down valley to shoot out a patch on the left bank," was the reply.

"Oh, but I've arranged to have half a dozen of the girls around at 3 p.m.," I said, "but still it can't be helped."

"To H—— with the shooting, I'll nip back and catch Bill before he crosses the river," said Red.

About two minutes later three shots rang out (a pre-arranged distress signal), to be answered by a single shot.

In the circumstances I thought discretion was the better part of valour, so delayed our visit twenty minutes or so. Then with mixed feelings we set off to find Bill changing into dry togs.

It then transpired that "Bill" had thought that "Red" had met with an accident, and disregarding the accepted ford, had charged through the river up to his neck in his haste to return.

However, the billy was soon on, incidentally for the ninth brew of the day. Our peace offering was in the shape of fruit cake, and this was matched in turn by fresh bread which had been made in the camp oven that morning.

A pleasant hour was spent, and Bill showed us some of his skins, and later presented us with a leg of venison.

Bill told me afterwards that he was very pleased the girls had come, but what he said to Red when he first stepped out of the river would have made vivid reading. I doubt very much if the censor would allow it in print, even if it were known.

But thanks, Bill and Red, for a very pleasant afternoon.

—"TALL TIMBER."

CASTOR AND POLLUX: REFLECTIONS

O namesakes of the Roman warrior Gods,
O symbols now of all I hold most dear,
O aid, inspire my faint endeavour to search,
To seek, and seeking, find, my driving force,
And power to live the highest life this year.
Ay, highest life, the life along the ridges,
Inspired by noble motives, led by search for Truth,
Raised from the valley floor and treacherous marshes of worldly lust for gain.

A pauper then, as in the worldling's eyes,
But rich in spiritual blessings, the wealth that lasts
Long after Midas' pile has tarnished or changed hands
In the struggle for the human sway or destiny.
The riches of the spirit let me seek,
The riches of the spirit of the Lord.

O Lord we find Thee in the glory of the sunset,
Yet in the changeful beauty of the hills
Dost Thou choose to show Thyself most clearly.
In the sleet, or driving rain, or mist
Thou dost clothe Thyself oft-times.
At others, in the splendour of the noonday sun,
The rugged grandeur and the savageness of rock,
The snow and ice, or steady moving glacier,
There Thou art.

And these, twin products of Thy fruitful hand,
Castor and Pollux, thus become our joy and inspiration.
From such as these we draw our strength to live
The highest: yet not for one year only
But all our pilgrimage on earth, ay, further,
Such is the utter timelessness, serenity, endurance,
Of Thy work. We fade, we pass away in to the far beyond,
But these, Thy mountains, stay unchanging on,
Bringing fresh hope and light to later generations,
Fresh courage, stamina and strength.

Now in the drabness of a city we work at our appointed tasks.
Soon comes the time we long for:
Forth we go with buoyant eager step,
To rise above the petty squabbles of this place
That men call earth,
Shake loose the bonds of time and death,
Rise far above the weariness of body and of mind.
E'en so, we live, we truly live, for one brief season.

O grant that we returning may bring with us
Some of Thy force, Thy power, and Thy love,
That we may strive, and striving, strive more valiantly
To bring about the peace, the harmony of nations,
That all men yearn for now.

—D. C. BILLING.

SOUTH BRANCH SIDELINES

"Oh well," announced our leader joyously, "another short scramble, and then for a long laze in the sun, and an early night to bed." The prospect of further effort—even the easy scramble promised by our leader—did not arouse our interest at that moment. We had not long arrived at the Top Forks after a gruelling tramp in the sun. Too hot even to eat, we flung ourselves under the trees, lazily to contemplate the superb view offered by Castor and Pollux, as they stood sharply etched against the intense blue of the sky. Carefully disregarding the marked lack of enthusiasm displayed by the party, especially that of the—er—fair sex, he went on to outline the route we were to take—apparently a new one, which was calculated to be much easier than the one used in the past. By craftily mentioning that another party ahead might also have designs on their heart's desire, the virgin Pickelhaube, our leader eventually spurred the party to some activity. I had been crushingly told that I couldn't climb Pickelhaube, but had been graciously promised an "easy little climb" on our return from the South Branch. Therefore, my presence in the party was tolerated only as the wife of one member, and the sister of another. However, I privately thought that they really needed the superior judgment of a woman with them—especially when too ambitious schemes were mooted. We women have our own methods of dealing with the sterner sex.

Eventually we were under way, after having had a rigorous comb through the packs in order to toss out what was "not wanted on the journey." As I said before, we were adopting the new "easy" route promised us by our leader. We set off at a steady pace, with exclamations of delight at the beauties of our native bush. My exclamations of delight became fainter and feebler and the grade became steeper and steeper, and soon there was nothing to be heard but heavy breathing punctuated now and then by an occasional regrettable word as my foot would go right through what was seemingly solid earth, but would turn out to be leaf mould forming a bridge over a large hole! It was also just a shade annoying while swinging lightly up through the trees, to grasp for support what would appear to be a sturdy tree, and find it come away in your hand. If you were lucky, you hung on by your fingernails (if long enough), or iceaxe, but if not, you crashed back to the spot you were half an hour before. As you climb up again, it is quite stimulating to ponder over suitable material for an essay on "Why I Enjoy Tramping."

As I didn't want to get too far ahead, I courteously took up my place in the rear, and maintained that position so well, that at times the only indication I would have that I wasn't alone in the Great Outdoors was an occasional flash of red or yellow from the delicate embroidery on the seat of our leader's trousers as he performed wonderful feats of agility far above.

At last we came out on to the scree slope which was to provide us with the short, quick access into the South Branch. We stopped here for a breather, and to admire the view below us and around us. Steadily keeping in mind that long lie in the sun, we pressed onwards and upwards, with conversation limited to such terse remarks as "a bit steep, isn't it?" "watch out for rock," or simply, "whew, s'hot!" Now and then one or other of my fine, manly companions would recollect that they had a member of the frailer sex with them, and would give expert advice as I was negotiating what seemed to me to be a tricky piece of rock climbing. "Place

your foot here in this niche" I would be told kindly, as to a small, slightly moronic child. Displaying perfect trust, I would do so, only to find myself spread-eagled across the rock, unable to move backwards or forwards, in a position not to be recommended by the best books on Deportment for Young Ladies. However, I feel bound to report that true chivalry was not lacking, and at one time my pack was carried some considerable distance—easily 200 yards, I'm sure.

We had a brief interlude while we stopped to admire and photograph a clump of exquisite mountain lilies. It is always a source of amazement to me that these fragile waxen things can grow almost out of the rock itself. How fortunate we are to be given the opportunities for seeing some of Nature's loveliest flowers in their natural habitat.

It was a very long scree slope, and it was a very hot day. Our pauses—purely for aesthetic reasons, of course—became more frequent, and slowly, but steadily, our hopes of that long laze in the sun began to quietly diminish. Even our leader, whose optimism was, and is, truly proverbial, yes, even his voice which had been as one crying in the wilderness, had become stilled, and when he spoke at all, it was in hushed terms of an early supper.

We toiled on, and as evening shadows were falling, we were at last able to gaze down upon our Mecca—the South Branch, to say nothing of the coveted Pickelhaube.

Here the party divided, leaving a cavalier husband to assist a wife who was finding great difficulty in negotiating some rather steep downward slopes, and who, I regret to report, negotiated most of them on a certain portion of her anatomy.

Arriving at our "home" for the next day or so—a large rock—we found a cheery fire going, with supper steadily under way. When innocently asked about the lie in the sun, our leader was observed to blush violently, and hurriedly change the subject.

It wasn't long before we had climbed into the old sleeping bags, just a trifle tired after a day that had lasted from six that morning until after nine in the evening.

The alarm rang all too soon the next morning, and the five intrepid mountaineers piled out, to make swift preparations for the day's work. They were soon away, leaving me in solitary possession of the valley, and to fervently hope for a successful and safe return.

How a young lady—well, comparatively young—spends a day alone in a valley, could well provide a subject for an introspective essay, but away with introspection, I shall merely touch on a few odds and ends as they come to mind.

After actually sleeping for an hour after the boys' departure, I awoke to brilliant sunshine. For the first time I could really see the valley. It was rather narrow, the dominant features being the two magnificent waterfalls. One, at the head of the valley, came down in one shining sweep of water. It was around this waterfall that the boys had to climb to get on to the Pearson Saddle, and thence on to Pickelhaube. The other fall was much higher and more beautiful. It was on the right hand side of the valley looking into the head, and cascaded down in three graceful sweeps. As I watched, the wind, which must have been fairly strong at that height, caught the volume of water, and wafted it several hundred feet across the rocky face. The sun caught the myriad of tiny drops, and an iridescent rainbow shimmered through the sparkling spray, creating a scene of fairy-like beauty. I longed to share it with someone, but there was only the mournful cry of the keas, as they circled high above.

To fill in time, I wandered up and down the valley, washed my hair in the river, made a large stew for the wanderers' return, and gathered a pile of firewood. Firewood was rather scarce, as there were no trees at all in the valley, only clumps of dracophyllum.

I then settled myself to sun-bathe a la Lady Godiva, and made a close study of a gem of literature entitled "Beauty for Everywoman." From it I learned how to reduce my hips, treat blackheads, and many other hints to maintain that womanly charm. Excellent though "Beauty for Everywoman" was, it was difficult to give it the concentration it deserved, and I found myself gazing with ever recurring frequency to the top of the waterfall, and straining my ears for sounds of returning conquerors. To keep my mind occupied, I took to shouting poetry, and the local keas must have been vastly intrigued with my impassioned rendering of "Omar Khayam" and passages from "The Merchant of Venice" recollected from lines at school.

'Twas with great joy, therefore, that at about 8 p.m. I heard sounds of a distant coo-ee, and could discern small figures scrambling down round the waterfall. Rushing madly around, I lit the fire, upset a billy of water, combed my hair (*toujours la femme!*) and generally felt like whooping with relief.

On their arrival at camp, I could see by their faces that they had been successful, and I will here draw a veil over the touching scene of reunion between husband and wife.

Food in large quantities was then consumed, during which I received a detailed and, I suspect, highly embroidered account of the climb. Bed once more, this time with the blissful knowledge that no early alarm would arouse us from sweet slumbers.

Before departing, I was taken up via the waterfall on to the Pearson Saddle. Absence of packs and an improved mental outlook made both the climb around the waterfall and the slight snow climb on to the Saddle very enjoyable. From the Saddle, we had a wonderful panoramic view of the surrounding countryside, and I felt well rewarded for the effort that had gone into getting there. After a luxurious bask in the sun beside a clear little stream, we turned back, this time to glissade down the slopes we had climbed up. Glissading is wonderful fun, especially when you can't do it, like me. There is always that delightful feeling of uncertainty as you launch yourself off, whizzing madly down in an upright position for a few moments, and then—crash! you continue whizzing madly down, but this time on that portion of anatomy mentioned previously. It is hard to preserve one's natural dignity at times like this. Once back at camp, we lost no time in packing up for the outward trip, this time by a different route, which included following a "well defined deer trail."

We were soon singing happily along the well defined deer trail, but to our great surprise, and that of our leader, it soon petered out, and it was not long before even the odd hoof mark could not be discerned. From then on, it was each man for himself, and if a branch of ribbon-wood caught you a stinging whack in the face as you charged after someone ahead—well, that was your own fault. Much fun was had in some very tangled bush, and trying to circumvent bluffs but, eventually, we got into more open bush, and from then on, it was comparatively easy going.

We arrived back at the Top Forks just in time to pitch camp for the night, and although rather scratched and weary, very satisfied with our little sojourn in the South Branch, and still full of enthusiasm for further tramping.

—W. M. BROUGHTON.

GEOLOGICAL WANDERINGS IN N.W. OTAGO

They asked us what we were looking for when we left the Routeburn Huts. "You won't find any gold up there," they said. We certainly did not find gold, but we found many other interesting things. In country mainly made up of a great variety of steeply tilted slates and schists, we tracked down a southern extension of the Red Hills peridotites in a bare red saddle-shaped depression in the north-west part of the Lake Harris mountains. There also we found breccias similar to those seen far to the south in the Takatimu ranges, with interbedded bands of grey fluted limestone and great masses of diorite wedged in between breccias and peridotite.

Last year in a hurried solo trip down the shores of Lake Alabaster in the rain, Larry's practiced eye had seen the fragmentary remains of a fossil shell called *Maitia trechmanni* in boulders in creeks flowing off the western slopes of the Southern Brynias. This year Larry and I had hoped to locate the impure limestone bands where this strange thin-shelled creature was interred. Though we found many more broken fragments of these beds, some of them in creeks as far south as Deadman's, and though we must have been hot on the trail in one tributary creek cluttered up with fossil-bearing rock, the exact location still remains a mystery buried in the Hollyford bush.

The far north-west corner of Otago is a land where the amateur geologist can find much to interest him. East of a line running north and south through the Route Burn bridge, a geologist finds that he has to describe most specimens brought to him by his fellow travellers as "schist" with monotonous regularity, till the sacred word becomes a standing joke with the party. West of this line, however, the tramp staggering up a river bed bowed down under a fortnight's supplies can see much to take his mind off his immediate troubles amongst the boulders and pebbles under his feet. Travelling west from the great schist mountains of the Wilkin, Matukituki and Arawata, we strike first the hundred-mile long streak of ultrabasic rock which runs on an easterly concave curve roughly north and south through Red Mountain. The most striking feature of this belt is its inability to support plant life. The rocks are mainly made up of an iron magnesium silicate called olivine, and contain little or no potassium or sodium, and not much lime. Chromite is found in these "peridotites" as they are called, and asbestos as "cross fibre" traversing the rocks in irregular veins. Compasses can perform strange antics and can be quite unreliable in this type of country due to local concentrations of minerals such as magnetite. Platinum, most valuable of all metals, is often found associated with this type of rock. In the north-west Otago peridotite belt in 1885 samples of the first nickel-iron alloy to be found occurring naturally on this earth outside a meteorite were collected. It has been called awaruite, and it is still a rare and valuable mineral which would be valued in any mineral collection. The original sample of awaruite-bearing sand first analysed by Mr. Skey, is still in the Otago University Geology Department Museum. Mining claims were once pegged out along the banks of Gorge Creek with the idea of mining the nickeliferous sands, but very little work seems to have been done there.

West of the peridotite belt a great variety of rocks appear, very different from the schists to the east. Remains of ancient lavas and welded ash showers are found, perhaps a hundred million years old. Amongst these are sandstones and finer grained argillites in great variety, interbedded with limestone bands. Further west still the Darran Mountains form part

of the "Fiordland complex," a convenient term at present applied to a mixture of gneisses, granites, and diorites, perhaps more correctly termed "amphibolites," which make up Fiordland west of the Hollyford and Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri. One feature of these rocks, consistent enough to be mapped over wide areas, is the direction in which the dark green and black crystals so commonly found, are streaked out to give information about the way in which the mountain mass has been sheared and twisted during growth. The relationship between these rocks and the sandstones, argillites and schists further east is still another incompletely solved riddle. Do they form a basement on which the sedimentary rocks have been deposited, or are they the solidified remains of molten rock which once invaded the mountain roots and have now been exposed by deep dissection of the invaded sediments by rivers and moving ice?

In almost any area in New Zealand a geologist starting to map new territory can find in the early Geological Survey records an account by Alexander McKay, dated somewhere about 1880, giving him a preliminary idea of the local geology, based on McKay's accurate observations and shrewd deductions. The north-west Otago area is no exception to this.

McKay travelled often on his own, often hampered by bad weather and crude maps. His camping gear would be considered pretty primitive these days. We now work under much-improved conditions, with the help of better field techniques and a greatly-increased knowledge of New Zealand geology, yet we still often find that we have come to the same conclusions as McKay did seventy years ago.

We can find McKay's account of his trip into the Routeburn and Hollyford areas in "Reports of Geological Explorations," New Zealand Geological Survey for the years 1879-80, pp. 118-149, which can be found in the Otago University library. Here we come across a most interesting description of the country as it was known at this time. The Olivine River was evidently called the "Whitburn Creek," and a description of a large creek flowing in to the "Whitburn" and joining it above its junction with the Pyke fits very well with what we now know as Forgotten River.

The maps of McKay's day showed the Dart extending back into the hills no further than the Beans Burn mouth. He was very much puzzled about the size of the Dart at Glenorchy, and deduced from this that the river extends much further back into the hills, and he thought also that it might rise in some fairly large glaciers. We know exactly how correct his deductions are to-day.

McKay met with some very bad weather while working in this area. He established a camp at the top edge of the bush below Lake Harris Saddle overlooking the Hollyford, and travelled from here north along the western slopes of the Lake Harris Mountains. A description of this lonely trip in his own words takes up a line or two only, but is packed full of meaning for any tramp who knows the country.

"After remaining for a week under such shelter as could be found in this place, the hopeless condition of the weather and failing provisions compelled a return to the camp at Lake Harris. This proved no easy task, as the ground which had to be passed over is exceptionally rough even for this district, and dense fogs prevented choice in the matter of selecting the best road."

The late Professor James Park made an even more arduous trip with one field hand through the country inland from Big Bay, and collected information for his map and geological sections under the most difficult

conditions. He had been instructed to connect up McKay's work with that done by a man named McFarlane, who described the area east and south of his headquarters at Jackson's Bay. For a story of courage and endurance in pursuit of an objective, Professor Park's account is well worth reading. (See "On the District Between the Dart and Big Bay" Report of Geological Explorations, Geological Survey of New Zealand, 1886-87, pp. 121-137.)

Sir James Hector, who was later to become director of the New Zealand Geological Survey, made a historic trip up the Hollyford from the Coast and over to Queenstown. His hurriedly written account and the story of the discovery of the "Greenstone Pass" can be read in the Otago Provincial Gazette No. 274, for November 5, 1863.

At this time he was provincial geologist for Otago, and he was actually following routes which had been used by earlier explorers, but he was the first to recognise the importance of the Greenstone—Hollyford route as a comparatively easy way from Queenstown to the West Coast. Hunting for routes to the West Coast across the mountains seems to have been a favourite occupation of the early surveyors, and they evidently attached more importance to the western harbours and inlets than we do to-day. Hector's findings on this trip caused great excitement at Queenstown at the time.

Following in the footsteps of men like Hector, Park, and McKay in attempts to unravel still further the story of New Zealand alpine geology needs rope and ice axe as well as geological hammer, but there are many rich rewards still waiting for those who would set themselves the task.

—IAN McKELLAR.

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MT. KYEBURN—A WINTER ASCENT

A party of three, plus packs and skis in and on the old Ford, we left the city for a last fling on the snow, this time on Mt. Kyeburn, 5,390ft. After an uneventful run up, shortly after midnight we were lying in our bags drinking tea by the Kyeburn River, a few miles beyond the Pass Hotel.

We rose at six to see a windy, red dawn; at 7.15 we were away, up the Dansey's Pass road for perhaps a mile, before dropping to the river valley. After following this for another mile or so we turned up a narrow tributary, which brought us, after a scramble, against a ridge leading steeply up to the snow. As we climbed, the wind increased, and when we struck the main ridge we found it quite difficult to make progress at all during gusts. On reaching the snow as the sun burst through the cloud, the party optimist was certain the wind was dropping! Instead of climbing directly to the summit we crossed over the ridge and continued to the western side, in search of shelter for a boil-up. The amount of snow about was a pleasant surprise, for from the valley it had seemed that our ski-ing would be extremely limited.

Our boil-up was as short as we could possibly make it, for numbed fingers and toes did not make for pleasure. Clipping on our skis we swagged up to the ridge connecting Kyeburn and Buster, dropped the packs, then in a series of wide traverses climbed to the summit of Mt. Kyeburn, time about 2 p.m. The peak proved to be an excellent view-point, embracing as it did the St. Mary's Range—culminating in Domett—to the north; the cloud-capped Alps to the west and swinging round to the south the sweeping brown distances of the Maniototo Plains, flanked on either side by the snow-covered ranges of Rock and Pillar and the Old Man. The east face of Kyeburn swept down in a most impressive snow-slope, corniced at the top, a run to test any skier, we agreed. Behind projecting rocks we basked in the sun for ages before turning our skis back down the west face. This slope was really quite steep, but running into the teeth of the nor'-wester as we were, it was possible to take it all straight. Loaded up again, was pressed on in a westerly direction for about a mile, almost off the snow, when we noticed some tooth-like rock out-crops that promised to give us shelter for the night. A fast tussock-dodging run took us to this haven, the tent was up in no time, and we were quickly inside for the long-awaited boil-up, time about 4.30. After a long spell we again put on boards and wandered round the snow-covered ridges for an hour or so, but the strong, bitter wind eventually drove us back to the tent. We developed quite a good "fug" while cooking tea, and retired early to bed, warm and happy. A slight change in the direction of the wind caused the tent to slap and crack all night, but quite a good night really.

We all woke at sunrise, poked our heads outside and watched the snow-covered peaks catch the first rays of light, then hastily closed the flap, for the air was extremely chill. When we looked out after breakfast the strong north-west wind was still whistling through the rocks; at 8.30 we set off over the rolling snow towards Domett. We ran for two hours, fighting the steadily increasing gale all the while, until we were on a small peak, looking over the valley at Cone, Grayson and Domett. Running off the snow we sheltered behind an enormous broken jumble of rock—an excellent bivovac site—and planned future ski-tours. Turning back to the tent we had to ski in crab-like fashion all the way in order to keep under any control whatever, stinging clouds of wind-blown powder snow

also did their best to make things unpleasant. In the tent again we had a meal before packing up and heading home. With the wind behind us we made good time round the side of Kyeburn on to the south face. From this point we had the finest run of the trip, a long traverse of half a mile or more at a speed that could be increased or decreased merely by side-slipping. All too soon, however, we were off the snow and the skis were on our backs as we wandered down through the tussocks. In the narrow passes of the ridge the wind swept through with a force quite capable of pushing us off our feet, so that it was a relief at last to drop completely out of the gale, for the first time since starting out. Another hour and we were off the hill altogether, walking the last few yards down the road to the car, with only hot, wind-and-snow-burnt faces to tell our story. Back again next year we hope, with more snow, less wind—until then au revoir, Kyeburn!

—GORDON McLAREN.

"LAKE CASTALIA: WILKIN VALLEY"

O work of alpine glory carved in snow, in rock, in ice,
Wrought by a master's hand,
Castalia, thou'rt sheer perfection.
The soul of man stands still, stock still
On seeing thy awesome beauty face to face:
The harsh and rugged cutting thro' which the river,
Gathering speed roars in a mighty torrent
Down into the valley, past the rocks and snow
Out into the broader pasture lands,
And winding thro' the richness of the fields,
Meets at last the lapping waters of Lake Wanaka;
The purity and unstained whiteness of the snow
Bordering the deep green waters bearing floes of ice;
Above that still, the savage grandeur of the rock;
And then again the topmost wall of snow,
Snow which ofttimes melting, breaks away with cataractine roar
And crashes in a cloud of powdery dust
Onto the rocks beneath.

O there is much in this that fills the thirsty soul of man
And to his parched thoughts and feelings
Comes as the very wine of Paradise,
And each and every element of the whole
Pays fitting tribute to God's love and craftsmanship.

—D. C. BILLING, 6/4/49.

EVEN AS YOU AND I

When Noah sailed the ocean blue,
He had his troubles, same as you,
For days and days he drove the ark
Before he found a place to park.

DANSEY'S PASS

Our party of four left from the Club-room about 10 o'clock on the Friday night. As far as Dunback very pleasant travelling conditions were enjoyed, but up on the hills beyond we ran into fog which made slow going until we hit Pigroot Creek, where four figures—henceforth to be known as the Fast Party—made a restful sight as they lay in their bags. A speedy cup of tea on the Thermette and we were as dead to the world as they. By six we were up, fed and away over the last hill towards Lower Kyeburn. Then off the main road and on towards Kyeburn diggings—the Fast Party having meanwhile hurtled past us on the road, and being occasionally visible as a small patch of dust in the distance. The Pass Hotel was still well asleep as we glided past and started the grind up towards the Pass, which was reached soon after 8 a.m. No sign of the Fast Party, who must have gone further on. We left the car with light packs and scrambled up the hillside to the north to a height of about 4,000ft., then continued sidling in the face of a keen westerly wind. Presently we came in sight of our objective, Cone (just over 5,000ft.), and saw that to reach it we could traverse a fairly long bumpy ridge to the left, or cut straight into the stream bed below and up the opposite face. The latter was unanimously chosen as being less exposed to the weather, and we romped down easy slopes. The map's statement or deer in the locality was confirmed by two corpses found on the descent. A smart rain storm found us looking for—and luckily finding—shelter, then we started to make height fast. The face we were on was partly sheltered from the wind and was steep enough to climb at a good speed, and before long we were approaching



ON SUMMIT OF MT. KYEBURN (5390ft.).

—W. S. Gilkison.

the final pyramid which looked fairly formidable. In fact, it was quite easy, with a piece of rock leading to the summit, where we found good shelter. Ahead, buried in the cloud, was Mt. Domett, a thousand feet above us, and we speculated on the whereabouts of the Fast Party. Then, as there was no sign of clearing, we headed back to the valley, climbed the ridge beyond, and while I returned on a level traverse back to the Pass to pick up the car, the others worked down a ridge further west to explore the geography that way and to locate the reputed hut. This was duly found about three miles below the Pass (three miles from the hotel), and we started quietly along the road towards the latter to keep the rendezvous with the main party, when a cloud of dust appeared behind and along came the Past Party. They had had a most successful day, finding a very comfortable hut on the far side of the Pass near the road, whence they had decided that the route to Domett was too far, too wet and too cloudy for that day.

Back at the rendezvous, we awaited the rest of the party, until some thirty of us were together. A few decided on the civilised comfort of the hotel, a dozen or so camped on an old homestead site just across the stream, and the rest adjourned to an equally attractive spot among the trees about half a mile up stream. The weather looked fine, and the hut accordingly ignored. Most were to bed early, but a few restless spirits could not be comforted. However, by 4.15 a.m. the main party was busy with fires and breakfast, being away before six from the roadside a mile or so upstream. The easiest route to Mt. Kyeburn was directly up from here, and soon bodies were to be seen scattered over miles of the steep hillside. The day was perfect, except for a bank of cloud over the western ranges, and as the parties converged on the summit, at various times between 9 and 10 a.m., they were able to spend a good deal of time in identification and enjoyment of everything. Away to the west were the Remarkables, and further north Glenmary beyond the hollow of Lake Ohau, but the Main Divide peaks were hidden in the cloud.

When we started to think of the descent, varying ideas were put forward. Some of the party returned as they had come; others by a roundabout route through the top diggings and over Mt. Buster; and a third group made a round trip over the hills to the north, which led them to a patch of beautiful alpine daisies and other high-level flowers. Early in the afternoon everyone was back except those who stayed on top and went to sleep in the sun, and after another wash and boil-up we reluctantly headed for home. Some went over the Pass and down to Oamaru by the Tokarahi road—getting well tied up in the process—some travelled by Pigroot, and some by Middlemarch. We were all sorry to leave, and wished we could have had longer to nose about the fascinating old diggings—to say nothing of those which are still being mined. The old relics, the Pass Hotel, the weather, the lovely camping sites among the trees of old homesteads, the hills themselves—all added up to make a most satisfying and enjoyable week-end.

—W. S. G.

A young lawyer attended the funeral of a millionaire financier.

A friend arrived at the funeral a little later, took a seat beside the lawyer, and whispered, "How far has the service gone?"

The lawyer nodded towards the clergyman in the pulpit and whispered back tersely, "Just opened for the defence."

TROTTER'S GORGE

"Trotter's Gorge—never heard of it." Such a beautiful place, too, and yet so many people don't even realise that it exists.

It's just a small country road, turning away off the main highway and rolling inland between ever-narrowing cliffs, which every so often seem to disappear and give way to small patches of flat grass land, broken by groups of tall trees reaching up to the heavens, as if in competition with the cliffs around.

Gum trees, too—quite a good many of them—and that reminds me of the last time we were there, as we gave a lift to two Australian girls who were "hitching" their way through New Zealand and happened to be so doing when we passed the Gardens about 9 o'clock one Sunday morning. They clambered into the truck and were silently given the "once over" by those male members present, and I dare say by the girls, too.

Conversation flowed freely, and in no time Mt. Cargill, with its fine view of the harbour and Peninsula—the Kilmog and Palmerston, were all behind us.

Our Australian friends left us at the turn off, complete with string bag, out of which protruded all manner of possessions, sprinkled here and there with condensed milk, that had been slowly oozing over all on the journey up.

Then just a short distance—a very short distance (or so it seemed to those of us who had been out on Saturday night)—and we had to uncoil ourselves from comfortable reclining positions and adopt our next mode of transport—Shank's pony. Packs up, and away we went.

In less than five minutes we met six of our members, who had travelled up by car, already indulging in a boil-up. It looked good to us, too—so good, that when we came to wood, water and plenty of sunshine some ten minutes later, packs were dropped with one accord, and we lunched without further ado. However, our leader, who apparently must have a small appetite, soon had us on the move again and we were off for our first objective, the "South Peak."

The first part of the journey led up the Gorge, which becomes increasingly more rocky up the sides, just like pictures of a Texas canyon. In fact, if you let your imagination run away—it would be quite possible to see a cowboy come riding swiftly down the trail, then smartly rein in his horse behind a huge boulder, just in time to miss a shot which whizzed past—took his hat with it—and left an echo cracking down the valley.

But, the South Peak, to get back to it, or up it. We climbed at a good pace and arrived at the top about one o'clock. Visibility could not have been better, and we were able to see for miles around. Below, on one side, lay the narrow valleys leading in to Trotter's Gorge, while on the other, the hills became ranges of mountains, receding inland as far as the eye could see. Over all, the sun shone warmly, and the sea reflected the blue of the sky.

Moeraki, facing north and lapping up every available drop of sunshine, looked most inviting tucked away at the bottom of the cliffs.

After taking full advantage of the view, we lay down and sprawled about in the long grass, with shirts hanging out and boots turned up, to renew our strength for the North Peak. Sweets were tossed around and various refreshments from jelly to fruit consumed.

Our worthy leader had with him a telescope, and while some of us were looking across toward the North Peak, we imagined we could see something moving across the lens. Yes, there it was again—surely the advance party, and there just couldn't be another black and scarlet cap such as that one, this side of Mt. Cook. But no, under more careful scrutiny, we realised that it was only a few sheep wandering slowly up the mountain side, and the coo-ees which had been ready to pass from our lips, died where they were born.

It was time we were making a move, although we were all loath to leave the top. Then someone suggested that it would be a grand idea to make the trip suit the day, and the day, being very hot, and ideal for swimming, why not swim?

Five minutes later saw us crashing downwards, losing height much faster than we had gained it, toward a branch of the river which would eventually lead us back to the Gorge. Once into the bush and it was only a matter of sliding a little further, then the icy coolness of the water was gurgling down many a parched throat—delicious. The North Peak could wait.

After the dry grass above the bush line, everything looked moist and green and very inviting. The old game of throwing stones to see who could make the biggest splash and become the wettest, was indulged in and enjoyed by all, as we literally sloshed our way down the creek bed.

Now and then we passed deep holes, but kept hoping for a still better one a little further on. Soon the men found one to their liking, and no doubt wasted little time in diving under, while the ladies moved on downstream to see what else was offering. Perhaps they were not quite keen enough or perhaps it was the grey clouds which rolled over just then, but in the end they contented themselves with a paddle and a few minutes with the old boots off.

All the way down, as the creek twisted and turned, we caught lovely glimpses of clean pools on rocky ledges, with green ferns and branches reaching down as if to drink the cool nectar. Manuka trees and colourful St. John's Wort lined the track as we neared the Gorge again, and all helped to make our path most pleasant.

By this time, too, the evening sun was slanting through the trees and casting long golden patterns on the water before us.

All this beauty—then, horror of horrors, we emerged from the bush to find a horde of people picnicking in the clearing which is very popular for such outings. Hardly a parking space anywhere, yet when we had passed through in the morning all had been quiet and still.

Another boil up and tea, as we watched the crowd slowly disperse. Then we, too, packed up and piled aboard the truck. As usual we sang lustily and none too sweetly all the way home.

And so concluded a most enjoyable day, made so by good fellowship and the peace and harmony one feels when out on the hills.

—V. McG.

In a gay and carefree mood a man telephoned a friend at two o'clock in the morning. "I do hope I haven't disturbed you," he said cheerfully. "Oh, no," the friend replied. "That's quite all right. I had to get up to answer the 'phone, anyway."

SIX WHEELS GO NORTH

Some laughed, others scoffed, and the rest just didn't believe us when we first dreamed of a cycling trip. St. Clair Esplanade was the place, and the time Sunday afternoon, when we three began to wonder why Wellington was the most northern point that any of us had seen.

After much wangling and saving, the 29th October saw us packed and very excited, gathered on the railway station, with friends, some C.T.C. members, too, wishing us Good Luck.

We travelled by train and steamer to Hastings, where our adventure was really to begin. On Wednesday we limbered up by biking out to Cape Kidnappers and walking round the coast to see the Gannets. A milometer on one of our bikes read 480 miles when we left Hastings, and when we arrived back in the evening it read 450 miles. We didn't ride backwards, either. A slight adjustment soon set it going the right way.

The next day, our pannier bags strapped to the carriers, together with our small tent, we were on our way.

Napier was reached in good time to have a look round before dark.

We managed an early start on Guy Fawkes' Day, with the weather still perfect. God was in His Heaven, and the world was fine, especially when two empty trucks pulled up. Three bikes, six bags packed to the brim and three girls, seemed no trouble. All in the day's work. They certainly arrived just in time, too, for the road they covered was particularly bad, especially over the "Devil's Elbow."

At Tutira we pedalled again, and by this time it was too hot for comfort. Our aim for the night was Wairoa, and our chances of reaching it seemed pretty remote. After a very stiff push, with the back wheels skidding and slipping in the gravel, we flattened out on the grass for a breather. Believe it or not, another truck collected us and off we sped to Wairoa in record time. An old roadman, Michael Horan, with whom we all had afternoon tea, told us that being three girls, we'd have no need to bike far. That was what he thought.

To reach Gisborne the next day was very hard work, with the sun just belting down. This proved one of the hottest and longest days of our whole trip, the last twenty miles being pedalled in darkness over a road thick with potholes and traffic.

Three girls sleeping out in the Gisborne camping ground made some eyes pop out, but we were too tired to pitch a tent.

Our sunburn, a date with some soap and water, and a desire for a break and a look round, were all good reasons for our spending the best part of Sunday swimming and trying to keep out of the sun. Pushed off in the early evening, on round the lovely East Coast.

Tolaga and Tokomaru Bays were passed, and ahead was the notorious Ruatoria. Two fine Maoris in a truck drove us there in style. After the hair-raising stories by the Hastingsites, and an encounter earlier in the day with three white chaps dressed as cowboys, in a flash two-seater car, we had expected nothing short of a hold-up in the main street. Instead, the truck driver dropped us off at his front gate in a quiet back street, and insisted on our meeting his wife and having a supper with them.

Later, while window shopping, we were accosted by the local "bobbie" who informed us that next time we jumped a tram without paying our fare we'd be locked up. Reckoned that he could tell that we had come from

Dunedin and couldn't do enough for us. He arranged for us to see the Maori Memorial Hall, not long completed. The carvings and crafts were beautiful.

Next evening saw us at Te Araroa (the long road), a very small settlement just before Cape Runaway. Here we camped on the front lawn of a small cottage, where a grand family of about ten lived. The Hovell youngsters were shy and quiet, but we found them good company, especially singing round their piano. That was the day we had a broken chain. Meryl made a good job of finding the missing link, and we were all wondering what to do next when two Maori drovers, waving acquaintances of ours, rode up. Took five of us to fix it beautifully off the bike, and then pull it to pieces again and put it on properly.

November 11th brought our first rain. We had begun to think that it couldn't up there. Our road skirted the coast, sometimes high up and sometimes right down on the water's edge, crossing now and then fern covered creeks and cascades already beginning to swell.

At Hick's Bay we bought provisions at the local store and kept a large crowd of Maoris highly amused. We don't know yet what they were laughing at. An interpreter would have come in handy.

The weather had cleared a little by the time we reached the Cape, and when we stopped at Waihou Bay the sun was out again, but only long enough for us to dry out properly. During a grand meal put on by some fisherfolk, the electric storm broke. Thunder and lightning such as we had never seen roared and flashed across the sea.

Our main wish from here on was that we could see just one Pohutukawa in full bloom. There are thousands of them lining this sea coast. Whakari, or White Island, with its continuous smoke, was clearly visible between storms.

Opotiki brought us back to civilisation with a jolt. For one whole week we'd been away from shops and bright lights.

On to Whakatane, then Rotorua, where we spent a day looking round. By this time the pace was on, in order that we could reach all our mail and photos which, we hoped, were piling up in Auckland G.P.O.

Thursday, the 18th, found three dirty, tired brats in shorts and tartan shirts, scanning letters on Princes Street, Auckland, ignorant of all passers by. It was great to hear from home.

Once again total strangers showed us the sights, rushing us from one place to another. For three short days we remembered our feet and forgot our pedals. Although our stay was too short, it was good to be on our way again, leaving civilised clothes to be checked back to Wellington.

Hamilton was reached early because of a farmer in a truck. Even at this late stage we were still amazed at the folk who asked us if we'd like lifts—on down to Otorohanga, then Waitomo Caves. Reached Te Kuiti in time to cook a large tea before boarding a train at 7 p.m. on 24th November. Tumbled off at Palmerston North at 4.15 a.m. and were on the road at 5.

What grand roads. For the first time during our three weeks on wheels we rode three abreast. Not for long, though, as it didn't take any time for the traffic to grow.

Just before Waikanae we admired an old homestead which turned out to be "Tatum," Scouting training ground for New Zealand, and we spent two pleasant hours having a good look round.

We arrived at Wellington only just in time to check our bikes on 25th November, nearly four weeks from home, with the meter reading 980 miles.

All of us could have stayed longer. We hope to meet again the fine people who made our trip one which we can never forget. All that we can do to repay them, is to pass on the kindnesses, showered on us, to others who may cross our paths.

—MARMITE, SHOO-FLY, and MIDGE.

MOIR'S GUIDE BOOK

AN APPRECIATION

In 1925, two years after the inception of the Otago Tramping Club, a guide book was published. It was a unique document, furnishing a wealth of information to trampers, and yet without the effusive air of detachment which in guide books is all too common. In other words the man who wrote it knew and loved the hills and valleys he wrote about.

So far as the Club was concerned, it made the planning of Christmas trips very much easier, and until the members of the Club had themselves become familiar with the Southern Lakes district, the book was a concise source of information, handy enough to go into a pack. One could conjure up two pictures, entitled "Before" and "After." In the first instance a party of trampers are looking beseechingly for—shall we say George—who is the only one who has been in the locality before. To say the least one can sympathise with George and his responsibilities. In the other picture, the same trampers, but momentarily nonplussed, are looking in their packs for Moir's Guide Book.

Unfortunately, as time went on, the book became harder and harder to come by, and even those still in possession of their now dog-eared copies found that even in the unspoilt valleys beyond the lakes, time does not stand still. Bridges had washed away and huts mysteriously changed their position. But in spite of these drawbacks, even at a time as late as 1939—fourteen years after publication, and long after it had gone out of print—the prologue was often to be heard upon the lips of Club members—"According to Moir's Guide Book."

Obviously such a gap as this had to be filled, which is where A. H. Hamilton and our own Scott Gilkison came in. You all know the rest. The modernised version, so eagerly awaited, exceeded all our expectations. If such a thing is possible, it is a book more unique than was the original in its own time, which to my mind is nothing short of marvellous. So in salutation,

I remain,

—"BLUSHINGLY ANONYMOUS."

Two golfers were annoyed by a couple in front of them, slow and obviously new to the game. At one hole there was a particularly long wait. One of the offending couple dawdled on the fairway, while his companion searched industriously in the rough. At length the waiting couple at the tee could no longer restrain their patience.

"Why don't you help your friend to find his ball?"

The idle golfer in front turned with a smile—"Oh, he's got his ball," he replied blandly. "He's looking for his club."

FOLLOW THE LEADER

From time to time, members of the O.T.C. have been urged when leading Sunday or week-end trips to put in a brief report to the President, with details of the trip and names of members present. In spite of reminders in the Bulletin, trip leaders have sadly lapsed on occasion. Perhaps the following might serve as a guide to future leaders:—

O.T.C. DAY TRIP, SUNDAY, 26/3/49

Leader's Report

Leader: W. Broughton.

Names of those present: Mrs. W. Broughton.

Scheduled Trip: Harbour Cone and Mt. Charles.

Narration: Trip members boarded the 10 a.m. bus at Queen Victoria Gardens in an orderly manner and without incident. Remarks were made that it was pleasant to shelter from the heavy hail sweeping the streets.

The party proceeded by motor-coach to the far side of Anderson's Bay Inlet. To this point, no other Club members, such as South Dunedin or Anderson's Bay enthusiasts, had appeared. In view of this circumstance, the leader took advantage of a temporary lull in the storm to suggest a different trip as a rugged alternative to the one scheduled. Briefly, it was that we should send all those equipped with slashers to the front and force our way to the residence of the leader and his wife. This destination was attractive, particularly from the point of view that it was easy for everyone in the party to find his or her way home from there.

This scheme was democratically agreed upon—indeed, there were no dissentients. Alighting from the bus, we blazed a trail through South Dunedin, making full use of what natural cover was offered during the heavier hail showers. It was tough going through heavily lupined country in difficult conditions, with the ever-present danger of rapidly rising gutters. Thus it was with exclamations of delight that we happened upon a road-mender's hut in Coughtrey Street.

To our surprise, we discovered that this rustic road-mender was also a member of the O.T.C., and we exchanged reminiscences while enjoying tea and hot scones provided by a young married couple who spent most of their time catering for him. His advice about the condition of the track further on was invaluable. Eventually, we resumed our journey along what is referred to by the outback station-owners in this district as Forbury Road. Although not in the best condition, this route is not difficult to follow for the experienced tramp.

After following it for some 15 minutes, we branched off to the left along a little-used track which skirted a dangerous cliff face and led directly to our destination via a vegetable garden. The track was in poor condition, overgrown with gorse, and the committee could well consider a working party on this track and garden in the near future, taking precedence over such ventures as the Christmas Creek new housing site.

Our goal attained, we spent a very pleasant afternoon and evening there, and all agreed that it had been a thoroughly enjoyable and unusual trip. A vote of thanks to the host and hostess was carried unanimously, and the leader was urged to recommend to the committee that more of this style of trip should be put on future programmes.

ROUTEburn-ROCKburn-ROUTEburn

MARCH, 1949

The day after we arrived at Routeburn Huts was not promising from the weather point of view. Cloud was down to the bushline, and the start of our trip by way of North Branch and the Col to Park Pass was delayed till prospects were brighter. Meanwhile, we made a reconnaissance of the Routeburn side of Emily Pass and Caples Saddle, which was of value to us during the second half of our stay in the district.

Next morning, however, the sky was clear, so L. W., of Invercargill, and I set off early for the head of the North Branch. The going was good, the air was fresh and the scenery most enjoyable. Within an hour we were on our way up the first flat, keeping to the true right bank of the river. From the flats we could see the head of the valley with the Col slightly to the left of the cirque. On the right the Momus-Somnus-Nereus ridge rose sheer from the valley floor—beech forest clothing the lower slopes except where the trees had been stripped off the bare rock by avalanches. So far we were making good time, with plenty of shade from the sun from the high valley walls.

The first obstacle to easy progress was a series of rapids where the river drops steeply from the head of the valley to the second flats. The stream was crossed and the scramble through thick sub-alpine scrub was made up the left bank. Deer tracks would probably be found higher up the slope and would be worth searching for to avoid the exertion and time lost in forcing a way through the scrub and rocks. Shortly the head of the valley was reached and here we saw the first deer of the trip—two which were interested in us, but made no attempt to increase their distance from us.

After lunch and a few photographs we started on the ascent of the Col—a steady climb of about an hour and a-half up soft snow. The colder conditions near the snow slopes had delayed the flowering of a number of fine alpine plants which filled the crevices in the cliffs on either side. What certainly must be a fine view of the country west of the Lower Hollyford, and Mts. Madeline and Tutuko in particular, was spoilt for us by thick, low cloud filling the Hidden Falls valley. We had to be content with a view looking back down the Routeburn, which was still free of cloud.

At this point we were just a little uncertain about the next few miles, as our notes described the route in the opposite direction. However, the same height had to be kept from Lake Nereine to the North Col, so we did likewise in the opposite direction, finding the country very steep and rocky. Little could be seen of the Hidden Falls valley, well below on the left, and nothing at all of the upper slopes of Nereus on the right. It would seem that when travelling in either direction on this route, it is most essential not to lose height, for in one case the party will pass below the Col, and in the other the main ridge into the Rockburn by Lake Nereine will not be crossed even at its lowest point.

About 4.30 p.m. we reached the lake, which lies at a height of about 5,000ft. on the Rockburn side of the main ridge, and on the top edge of the bluffs forming the valley wall of the Rockburn. The slopes of Mt. Nereus rise sheer from the southern shores of the lake. In extent the lake is somewhat smaller than Lake Harris, but surrounded by barren slopes, patches of snow and piles of huge rocks, it possesses a sinister and uninviting atmosphere.

Keeping the lake on our right and its companion lakelet on our left, we soon had our first view of the Rockburn Valley—at this stage about 2,500ft. below us. It seemed quite close and accessible, but steep cliffs separated us from it and only by going round to Park Pass can an easy descent be made. An experienced rock-climbing party would find little difficulty in making the direct ascent or descent, but neither of us possessed the skill or equipment to attempt it.

Our instructions told us that our next land-mark was a lakelet, and soon we saw one at a slightly lower level. True, it was rather small—more like a pond, in fact—but it seemed to fit in with the general direction we were travelling, so we made for it. Following deer tracks round the top of the bluffs we soon faced the direction of Park Pass (now full of low-lying mist), with the glacier high up to the right. The tracks were becoming less distinct, and the tussock giving way to bare rock, but we were still hopeful of easier going around the corner. By this time the pass was well blotted out, and with only an hour of light left it was obvious that we would have to reach a suitable camp site soon if we were not to spend the night on a ledge. At last it seemed inadvisable to proceed on our present course with bluffs closing in on all sides, so we reluctantly turned back to pitch our tent beside the lakelet which had led us astray. Sleep came despite some apprehension lest the rocks serving as tent pegs would be insufficient for their purpose if the weather changed.

The first job when we got going next morning was to find the correct route to the Pass, so we made for a point higher up on the same shoulder where we had become blocked the previous night. The full length of the valley lay under thick morning mist, but we were in the sunshine and the surrounding peaks stood out against a clear sky. Once again the going became difficult, but we were far enough round to see the route down to the Pass and a short climb up the face brought into view the lakelet which should have been our landmark the day before. Soon we reached the Pass, well above its lowest point, and the cameras were busy recording the upper reaches of Hidden Falls valley up to Cow Saddle and Fiery Peak; the Park Pass Glacier and Mts. Tutuko and Madeline. By now the morning mists had cleared and we made for the flats at the head of the Rockburn, where a leisurely lunch and a sunbathe were a fitting interlude in a day of fine scenery and good tramping.

In the early afternoon we set off down the valley, keeping to the left bank and finding it easy going—even in the tongues of bush which occasionally came down to the river, where we found blazed deer trails leading over the spurs. Deer were common on all flats, often not bothering to make for the bush if we were not on their side of the river. After cooking an early evening meal at Ampitheatre Flats we reached First Flats in time for another boil-up as the last of the sun struck the tops of the Chaos peaks.

The slight frost next morning promised another sunny day for our return to Routeburn Huts by way of Sugarloaf Saddle. Here again our back-to-front travelling led us astray, for after travelling for some hours down the track on the right-hand side of the gorge, we began to feel we were getting too far down towards the Dart. Directly above we could see a tussock-covered saddle leading to the Routeburn. Twice we turned for about a mile to search for a blazed track leading up to the saddle, and finally it was decided to force a way straight up through the bush. The saddle was reached, but not without much hard work and many a precarious

scramble up the rocky bluffs, where scanty shrubs made good foot and hand holds. Reaching our saddle, from which excellent views were had of the upper reaches of Lake Wakatipu on one hand and the whole of the Rockburn plus a glimpse of the Dart below Mt. Earnslaw on the other, we discovered that the Sugarloaf Saddle was further to the left and that we would have to work our way round to it or go down through the bush to the Lower Routeburn. We chose the latter course, and after 90 minutes of sliding down thick mossy slopes and dodging sudden drops in the stream beds we came out where the main Routeburn track crossed a rocky creek-bed before entering the bush at the start of the climb up to the Gorge.

A short rest, and we were on our way to the Huts, which were reached at 7.30 p.m. as the last of the sunset glow lit up the summit snowfield of Mt. Somnus.

—B. W. C.

PHRASES AND PARAPHRASES

An incomplete collection of "Martinograms" with definitions, gleaned from the Wilkin, Christmas, 1948.

Only Ankle Deep.—A term having direct reference to river crossings. It infers that the trumper of medium height will find the water level somewhere between neck and knee, and at no stage above the nostrils.

An easy bush scramble.—A savage assault with slashers in precipitous bush.

Half-an-hour's easy going and we'll be there.—A solid tramp in difficult country necessitating a dawn start in order to arrive for a late lunch, or a noon start in order to avoid pitching tent in darkness.

Fine to-morrow.—A pseudo-meteorological statement of crass optimism, and usually indicates that to-day's steady drizzle will be to-morrow's downpour.

Two slices of Bell's Brick make a meal.—Two thick slices of Bell's Brick, with a generous layer of jam and a substantial seam of butter, make an excellent appetiser for morning tea.

We'll be there soon after lunch, enjoy a laze in the sun all afternoon, and have an early night to bed.—A 15-hour trip in pitiless sunshine across exposed river flats, through thick jungle and up the occasional shingle slide before eventually, in the gathering dusk, sighting the objective over a few miles of broken boulder country.

A well defined deer trail.—A route to be forced through a tangle of ribbon-wood, fern and coarse bracken, with the suspicion of a hoof-mark at half-mile intervals.

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REES AND DART EXPEDITIONS

THE DART AND THE REES

Our party consisted of Pam Grayson, Gwen Mitchell (New Plymouth), Peter Scott, Bruce Milne, Geoff Mason and Bill McLeod. Leaving Dunedin by various means we joined up in Queenstown in time to board the "S.S. Ben Lomond" on December 24th to roll up Lake Wakatipu to Glenorchy, thence by bus to Paradise at 3.15. Everyone managed to appear keen, and we were quickly on our journey. Packs were fairly heavy, but the party was in high spirits and hearty was the laughter when Peter's 6ft. 3in. fell hind first into a small creek. We side-tracked at Mill Huts and had a half-hour bush scramble before again picking up the correct track, after which we had plain sailing to arrive at Chinaman Flat. Camp was pitched beside the Dart, with an excellent view of Mt. Earnslaw, and as darkness descended glow-worms came out to keep us company.

Christmas morning Bill woke us very early, and after a mammoth meal we left at 6.30 for Dredge Hut. It was a perfect day, and we dallied often to take photos and cool off. Deer were plentiful, and close enough to photograph. One long hard slog up over a high bluff is given in Moir's guide book at 800ft. (hope we never see one over 800).

Boxing Day saw us on our way to the Dart Hut. Cattle Flat was crossed in blazing sunshine, and after that long, long trek we boiled-up under the apple trees and lazed around for a couple of hours. The Dart Hut was reached at 5.30 p.m., and the party was thrilled to see it suddenly appear, as we had made better time than anticipated. Leaving the Dart Hut at 6.30 a.m. the next morning, we crossed that swing bridge and then up and on towards the Snowy Saddle. As we climbed round Mt. Headlong, we had a magnificent view of the surrounding peaks. During a rest someone let their pack roll away down towards Snowy Creek. How the owner must have cursed it—the rest blessed it, as they had a welcome rest while the pack was recovered. Crossing a snow-bridge saved a great deal of climbing—but the scramble round a steep gorge had the odd slip and crash of bodies. While the party rested and baked in the sunshine, Bill and Bruce did some scouting and climbed a high saddle, where an excellent view of the Upper Rees Valley was obtained. A fairly easy track was found up to Snowy Saddle, and once over we smartly found a cool spot and had a wonderful lunch, after which we simply romped down the Rees to camp beside Shelter Rock hut.

On the 28th Bill let us sleep late, and after a good breakfast we leisurely tramped down the Rees. We met several parties and took the opportunity of chatting with them and catching up on news. We camped two miles past the 25-mile hut, and that evening we saw some high country sheep dogs in action.

Our last day saw us slowly tramping towards the Rees bridge as if loath to leave so beautiful a valley. At the bridge we found a sheltered little nook to boil-up and clean-up before reaching civilisation (Glenorchy) again. A most enjoyable tramp was over; we had had good companionship, were blessed with excellent weather and glorious views of valleys and peaks. Our photos and happy memories remain of the Dart and Rees Valleys.

—P. G.

Human nature is that which makes you swear at the driver when you are a pedestrian, and at the pedestrian when you're the driver.

DART VALLEY—CASCADE SADDLE—MATUKITUKI VALLEY

On Monday, 20th December, Eila and Pat Doggart (two other members of the 1948 climbing instruction course), and I, met Ted Hyde, an Englishman who is tramping through many of the New Zealand valleys, at Glenorchy. After spending a very wet night at Paradise House, we made an early start up the Dart. Every few minutes we assured ourselves that "these are just the clearing showers," but by the late afternoon, when we reached Dredge Hut, it really had stopped raining, and from then on we had perfect weather—sunny and very hot. On Wednesday we went to the Dart Hut, and after a lazy morning in the sun on Thursday, we left for a bivvy just below Cascade Saddle, about 4 o'clock. On the way up we saw several small avalanches coming off Mt. Edward, but then, when directly opposite the fall, we saw a really tremendous one, which set up such enormous clouds of snow dust that we had time to get really good photos of it.

We did not leave the bivvy till after seven on Friday morning, so the snow was fairly soft. After taking a large number of photos from near the saddle we went on to the top of the Smith route. There was more snow than we had expected, and we three girls had some practice at step plugging (for which we were glad later), while Ted, who was not used to snow, went up on the snowgrass. We were surprised at the large amount of snow on the Matukituki side. Soon after we had started the descent, one of the party slipped about 30 feet, which very luckily had no serious results other than the loss of an ice axe, which is still there, in spite of a careful search. So the rest of the going was slow, but more or less steady, on the snow as much as possible, in preference to the snowgrass, which was very slippery, particularly for the one minus an axe.

When we reached the bush line, we spent a short time having a small "refresher course," then a long time—about an hour and a-half—looking for the beginning of the track. Eventually, about 6 o'clock, we were headed back towards a good bivvy site, to wait till the morning and cool down from the effects of the snow and sun—and then, of course, we found the blaze. Joyfully we rushed headlong (not intentionally, but owing to the grade, unavoidably), and after a very rough scramble we finally reached the valley, just as it was getting too dark to be in the bush much longer. We more or less collapsed into the tent of some Auckland boys, who had been up to the bush-line the day before, and renewed some of the blazes. But we were evidently the first to cross between the valleys this Christmas, and as far as I know, the only ones so far to come **down** to the Matukituki. I certainly would rather go up the Smith route than down it, but the other members of the party did not agree. Therefore, after a very welcome cup of tea at Cascade Hut we went on up to the Aspiring Hut, having a lively argument as to whether it would be easier going up or down. But once into our sleeping bags, on the luxurious mattresses of the new hut, we didn't think of that—we just slept.

On Christmas Day we potted round the hut and up the Valley. The packer from Jerry Aspinall's brought us a leg of venison, so the nine of us at the hut had an excellent Christmas dinner of roast venison. Next day the other three returned to Wanaka, and I joined Mr. Christie's party, from Wellington, to go up to the head of the valley, and Hector's Col. I then went back to the hut, hoping to join Neil Hamilton's climbing school for the two remaining days, but found that their first trip would be a

three-day one, so I returned to Wanaka, leaving the valley looking as though the weather were about to break again. So the end of the perfect weather marked the end of a perfect trip.

—M. C. W.

REES VALLEY, 1949

Party: R. Webster, I. Bagley, J. B. Baldwin.

The party left Dunedin on Saturday, 1st January, and arrived at Queenstown on that evening in a rather weary condition.

The scheme was to go up Lake Wakatipu on the following Monday, but a special boat on Sunday changed our plans. So Sunday saw us on board the "Earnslaw" heading up the lake into a keen nor'wester; as we progressed up past Pig Island the weather grew worse until when we finally arrived at Glenorchy there was quite a downpour. Unfortunately this weather dogged us for five days of our trip.

We were not the only party heading into the Rees, and so, between another Dunedin party, an Auckland University party and ourselves, we were able to hire a local truck. I personally know now that there are more comfortable modes of travel than the back of an open truck in a raw, wet wind. And so we uneventfully entered the Rees Valley. The tramp up the valley in pouring rain was no enjoyment, especially with 70lb. swags on our long-suffering backs, but at 6 o'clock on Sunday night we toiled up the last 200 feet from the valley floor to the 25-mile hut. We pitched our small tent outside the hut, and proceeded to satisfy the inner man with goodies consisting of a dehydrated vegetable stew followed by dried apples; two diets which we were to become heartily sick of.

Up to now we had not gained a glimpse of either the Earnslaw or the Forbes Peaks, and the next day showed little improvement in the weather, but after casting a doubtful eye over the scenery, we crawled out of our bags and began to break camp and cache our food below the hut. Soon after breakfast we were heading across the Rees River to the Earnslaw Hut track and onward to the Earnslaw Hut, where we boiled-up. Not long after this spell we again moved upwards, and another 20 minutes saw us looking down into Kea basin, still without a sign of Earnslaw or the Birley Glacier through the cloud. Soon we were just below the snow-line on Leary ridge, putting in our bivvy for an attempt on East Peak of Earnslaw. Kea Basin is aptly named, as we soon found out, and the latter part of Monday evening was spent enjoyably in throwing large pieces of "Leary ridge" at these very inquisitive birds.

The early hours broke bleak on the following morning, and so we decided our attempt on East Peak was off. At 4 a.m. we had finished breakfast, and were away up the ridge on to the lower snowfields of Leary Peak (8,000ft.). The snow was too soft for crampons, but just hard enough to necessitate kicking steps. Plugging up the snow slopes below Luncheon Col was monotonous and tiring, but the first sight of the Col renewed energy.

The sky by this time was grey, a cold nor'wester was blowing across the snow fields, and so, in the shelter of a rock we had a rather miserable second breakfast. Again we pushed on up the scree slopes to the first summit, then along the ridge to the higher summit, which was obscured most of the time by fog.

We were most impressed by the views of Sir William, Pluto, and the two peaks of Earnslaw, when the mists parted.

On the top it was very cold and some snow fell. A four-second exposure on Verichrome film just brought West Peak out of the murk, and after waiting fruitlessly for a good look at East Peak, we moved off the summit and down to the bivvy, where we had a good meal. In no time we were trotting down to the Earnslaw Hut, and thence to the Rees Valley and 25-mile Hut, which we reached at 7 p.m.—in rain.

Wednesday was still misty, with intermittent drizzle. We lazed around the hut until 3 p.m., when the more energetic member of the party influenced us to pack our swags and head up-valley with intentions of climbing Mt. Clarke the next day. Both the Rees and its tributaries were up and flowing fast, and some difficulty was experienced in making crossings.

On arrival at Clarke slip we found a suitable site beneath the beech trees for our tent. We cooked tea and moved into our bags with a longing to see the sun the next day; alas, the rain poured down during the night and continued throughout the morning. The climb was off—and so were we, back to the 25-mile Hut, with parkas doing but little to keep out the moisture. The shorter member of the party had trouble in crossing the Rees and 25-Mile Creek. (A party of Christchurch trampers found the latter impossible to cross about four hours after us, and so spent a wet night on the "wrong" side.)

Later on in the evening a thunder storm swept down the valley. We cursed it, but it was a godsend, and cleared the weather for the rest of our trip.

Friday saw us drying out at 25-Mile Hut, and taking things easy in the heat of the sun. On Saturday we left at 5 a.m. for Snowy Creek in order to climb Mt. Headlong (7,846ft.). We passed the familiar Clarke slip and found the cool bush which the track winds through to Shelter Rock Hut, most enjoyable in the heat of the day. At the hut we had lunch and again moved on up the Rees to the Snowy Saddle, and then down to the tarns by the Snowy Creek. The tent soon went up, and after our usual stew we admired Mt. Edward, the Dart Peaks, and worked out a route up Mt. Headlong from our position above the bivvy. The weather looked promising as we retired to our bags.

Next morning the Primus cooked up a quick meal. At 8.30 a.m. we crossed Snowy Creek and gained height quickly on the easy tussock slopes beneath the snow. Many photographs were taken of the Dart and Whitbourn peaks, and Earnslaw in the blue distance. A snack of dried fruits provided energy which had been lacking in some of the party. Soon we were on the scree and snow beneath the first rock peak, which we imagined was the summit, but we soon realised our error and proceeded to traverse across a ridge at the right which overlooked a quite heavily-crevassed little glacier. Steps had to be cut in the steeper snow above, but a few hundred feet saw us in sight of the true summit. A grand view presented itself from the top—a panorama of peaks from Earnslaw, across the Dart to the Whitbourn Glacier, the Dart Glacier and onwards to the beautiful pyramid of Aspiring. The Virgin Peak beyond Headlong looked most impressive from our point of view.

We lazed on the summit for an hour or more in a hot sun, and then reluctantly ploughed down the slopes which had softened in the afternoon heat. Not long afterwards we crossed a small schrund which provided some interest to the climb. Quickly we lost height, and soon the gorge of the Snowy hove into view. Here the only difficulty of the whole climb

was encountered, the river was up, making the rope a very necessary article in crossing. Not long afterwards we were back in the bivvy drying out wet clothes and cooking up stew—just by way of a change. And so into our bags.

Next morning, Monday, we packed up and returned back over the Saddle to Shelter Rock Hut, where we collected the food we had left on the way up, and then proceeded down to the Clarke Slip. Here we again pitched our tent, and after tea we prepared for our climb on Mt. Clarke the next day.

We were abroad at 3.30 a.m., and away after breakfast—the morning was brilliantly clear, with the stars shining brightly above. Soon we were approaching the head of the slip and dawn was breaking over the Richardson Range. Not long afterwards we were on the main ridge, and a fine view of Earnslaw and Hunter Peaks greeted us. The ridge was quite uneventful, except that we could have used crampons to advantage on the frozen surface of the snow. Soon we were in sight of the summit, with the Osonzac twins and Glacier showing to advantage on our left. The few crevasses around the summit gave us no trouble. A cold wind was blowing on top, but the view more than compensated for this—from Lake Wakatipu in the south to Aspiring in the north—the panorama was grand and many films were used.

Only too soon we came down from the summit off the ridge via the slip to our bivvy, and back to the 25-Mile Hut, where we rested up. Next day we reluctantly packed out of the Valley down to Glenorchy in a tourist bus, and thus to Queenstown. And so ended our most enjoyable stay in the Rees Valley.

—J. B. B.

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TWENTY-FIFTH JUBILEE DINNER

To mark the Club's twenty-fifth birthday, which fell on 23rd August, 1948, a dinner was held at the Brown House in September of that year. Gaily coloured long frocks, and formal dress suits, the murmuring burble of social pleasantries, the decorative lighting, civilised manners and civilised dress, all made a striking contrast to the usual trampers' "boil-up" among the hills. The evening was a great success.

The menu of many courses was discreetly interspersed by the helpful administrations of two wine waiters, who maintained a steady, solid pace throughout the evening. The fact that "Keas' Delight" turned out to be kidney on toast and that "Klister Custard" looked suspiciously like plain baked custard appeared to disconcert no one, and trampers' appetites were game to tackle even "Elcho Sinker." Incidentally, the hand-printed menu cards with their realistic stick figures were popular and gathered many autographs.

During the whole evening the room sounded to the eager gossip of the seventy members and past members who were present. One of the most satisfying sights was that of the earlier members renewing past acquaintances and gossiping about the good old days, "When men were men and pansies only grew in flower gardens."

The younger members provided a dash of entertainment with popular items coming from a string duet and a vocal quartette.

Toasts were honoured to "The King," "The Club," "The Founders," and "Associated Institutions." The speakers were the President, H. Tilly, Councillor C. J. Hayward, Messrs. W. McFarland, R. B. Hamel, J. P. Cook (of the N.Z.A.C.) and R. Markby.

However, even the best of things must end, and the dinner broke up to the full-throated chorus of "Auld Lang Syne." Let's hope we will be present at the Fiftieth Jubilee Dinner.—(Mrs.) "SWEET ADELAINE."

ANNIVERSARY DINNER, SEPTEMBER, 1948

AN APPRECIATION

The Committee, in its wisdom, had decided that the best way to celebrate our Twenty-fifth Anniversary would be to hold a Dinner.

For some weeks before the Committee could be observed in conversation with various groups in the Club room of a Friday night, assuring all and sundry that this would be a dinner extraordinary.

Well, let me say here and now that it was all that and more, and as one who has a few dinners under his belt, I think our hard-working Committee should be very proud of its work.

The food was marvellous, and speeches were interesting, but a word to those who in 1973 will organise the Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner.

Please note, omit that beverage which at present gets under the name of "Hock." It is positively an imposition to tie one's shoe-laces the morning after.
—"ANON."

(Editor's Note.—We feel sure that all who attended will agree with the words of appreciation above. Being over 30 now, we will no doubt be in the "reject" class by 1973, but in view of the evident youth of our correspondent, we trust that he (or she) will still be an active tramper and Club member twenty-four years hence, and as such will be able to take a leading part in the organisation, and will see either that the offending beverage is omitted from the bill of fare or that the show is held on a Saturday night, thus overcoming all objections.)

DEHYDRATION OF FOOD

Because all vegetables, fruit and meats contain from about 70-98 per cent. of water, it is obvious that dehydration of these will considerably decrease the weight and bulk. Another great advantage of dehydration is that food, if dried properly and kept dry, will keep practically indefinitely. If dehydrated under the right conditions, it will re-hydrate to a condition which quite resembles the fresh cooked food, both in quality and appearance. The attached chart is based on a chart from the book, "Dehydration of Food," but as this book applies mostly to large-scale plants, it has been adapted from our own practical experiments and experience to suit the requirements of small-scale dehydration.

EXPLANATION OF CHART:

Processing.—All material, whether fruit, vegetable or meat, requires a certain amount of processing. For example, potatoes require to be washed, peeled and cut into small cubes.

Treatment.—Since all food contains certain bodies (enzymes and bacteria) which may cause damage to the material while being dried, they must be inactivated. In general, most vegetables require to be scalded in steam. We scalded our material in the copper, by making a wire frame, over which butter muslin was stretched. The material was placed in the muslin and scalded over boiling water. In the chart various scalding times are shown, but these depend on the temperature of the steam and the size of the slices, etc. If the material is scalded until it becomes more or less transparent in appearance, it has fairly certainly had sufficient scalding (regardless of chart times).

Loss.—We have given some indication of the wastage due to peeling, etc.

Drying Temperature.—Most food is dried at about 150 degrees F.; for best results this should not be exceeded.

Shrinkage Ratio.—Is simply the ratio of **volume** of wet food to volume when dried.

Wet Weight and Dry Weight.—For dehydrated material to keep, it must contain less than a given percentage of moisture. As the average person has no means of performing moisture determination, the chart gives some indication of dry weight obtained from a given weight of material. If it is not convenient to weigh before and after, a general indication is that food dried out until so brittle that it snaps, is usually dry enough.

Storing Processed Food.—The food, after dehydration, may be placed in preserving jars so that it will remain dry. A useful alternative is to seal the food into waxed paper bags; these may be waxed by painting roughly with hot paraffin wax, then placed in a fairly hot oven, so that the wax impregnates the bags evenly. By taking several folds in the top and sealing with a hot iron, the bags may be made airtight. In this manner the food is ready to take away on trips in weighed quantities, which will assist rationing and distribution of food.

Apparatus for Simple Dehydration (see sketch):

1. Shell or box consists of a wooden box 2ft. x 2ft. x 1ft. 6in. deep, made of well-seasoned timber, so that when it comes in contact with heat of heater element it will not warp or crack. A drier of these dimensions is capable of drying 8lbs. of most fruit and vegetables at once. The box should be free of knot-holes or cracks between the planks, and if possible should be lined around wall with Pinex as a heat insulator.

DEHYDRATION CHART

Material	Processing	Treatment	WEIGHT				Shrinkage Ratio	Drying Temp. (Degrees Fah.)		Remarks
			Original	Loss	Wet	Dry				
Potatoes	Cut into ¼-in. cubes	Cut into 3% salt solution: scald at B.P. 5 min.	9lbs.	2	7	1	7-1	Below 150		Time taken, 20 hours. Transparent, yellowish appearance
Carrots	Slices ¼ x ¼ x 1in.	Scald 3 min.	6½lbs.	½	6	14oz.	10-1	Below 140		Time taken, 12 hours
Parsnips	Slices ¼ x ¼ x 1in.	Scald 5 min.	6½lbs.	½	6	14oz.	10-1	Below 140		Time taken, 12 hours
Onions	Slice (usually fall to pieces)		2lbs.	—	2	2oz.	14-1	140		Time taken, 12 hours. Brittle when dry.
Cabbage	Shred—Core	Scald 5 min. Sulphur 20 min.	10lbs.	1	9	14oz.	10-1			Very brittle when dry.
Celery	Use crisp stalks	Scald 2 min.					20-1	150		
Beef Steak	Remove surplus fat: mince (large cutter)	Heat in jam pan, stirring continuously to prevent sticking to bottom (¾-hr.). Temp. about 190 F. all this time.	7½lbs.	½	7	1¾		150		Brittle when dry. Remove from drier and store in air-tight containers.
Apples	Slice ½ x ½ x 1in.	Sulphur 20 min.	10lbs.	2	8	1½		160		Hard and brittle when dry.
Pears	Peel and core: cut in ½ like dried apricot	Cut into 3% salt solution. Scald 30 min. Sulphur 20 min.	6lbs.	1½	4½	12oz.		150		Scalding is necessary. Salt solution prevents browning but does not alter taste.
Gooseberries ..	Top and tail, cut in ½	Sulphur 20 min.	6lbs.	—	6	14oz.		150		Very hard, transparent appearance. Taste quite good.
Blackberries ..	Wash		10lbs.	—	10	30oz.	3-1	130		Excellent results.
Raspberries ..										
Loganberries ..										
Nectarines ..	Remove stones, Halve	Sulphur 20 min.	6lbs.	1½	4½	12oz.		140		Excellent results.

2. Tray should be detachable, made of a wooden frame with a galvanized wire mesh, bottom tacked on. The tray should be made sufficiently rigid to hold the weight of fruit and to prevent warping.

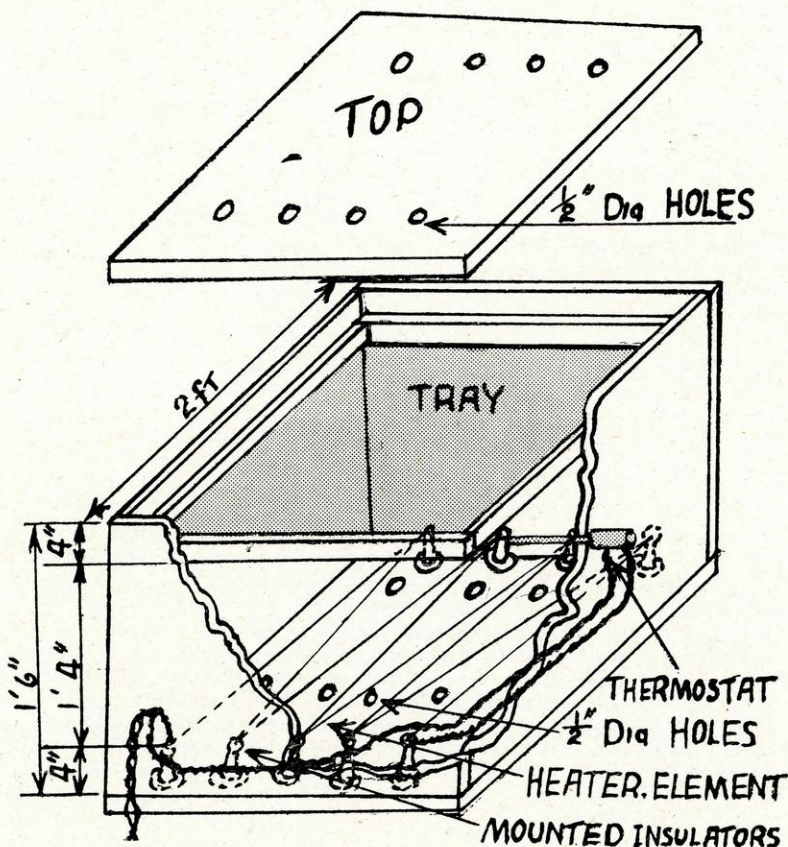
3. Bottom of the box is perforated with holes about $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch in diameter, evenly distributed throughout the bottom and with a total area of 4 square inches so as to allow an air current to pass through.

4. Top of the box is detachable and good fitting, also perforated with $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch holes with total area of 4 square inches.

5. Heater element should be approximately 1 k.w., which gives ample heat. A bar heater element is quite satisfactory, but better results will be obtained from an element zig-zagging evenly over the bottom of the box, and mounted on mica or porcelain insulators. This gives a better distributed heat. A reflector under the element makes for greater efficiency.

6. Thermostat should be capable of keeping the temperature within 2 degrees of the desired heat (range 130-160 degrees F.). A water heater thermostat with sheath taken off is quite satisfactory.

—A. AND J. O'KANE.



JUBILEE HUT WEEK-END

Many are the tales we have heard and read about the building of huts, and now we have experienced for the first time (for most of us) just what is involved in collecting bits and pieces of material from a large variety of sources and transplanting them, as it were, in an assembled form in an inaccessible spot in the hills. A long period of preliminary ground work having been completed, it was with something almost akin to relief to shoulder a swag containing cement, pieces of timber and sundry other items for the major working party on the 2nd and 3rd April, knowing that at last we were going to see something for our efforts.

With the welcome assistance of Mr. Winter, whose name could have been closely associated with the weather on this memorable Friday evening, twenty-five happy boys and girls tottered slowly up from Double Hill towards the Peaks, each bowed beneath his share of the foundations-to-be of Jubilee Hut. The sky was starry and clear, and the strong sou'-wester had a distinct edge to it. As yet there appeared no sign of the week-end snow and hail as laid down by the Weather Office. Two hours sufficed to see nearly everybody at the hut, and after some silent confusion, the party of twenty-five prepared for bed. A mild enquiry about starting out at 7.30 a.m. for the hut site met with very limited approval, and it is a sorry fact that it was not until the writer had given everyone breakfast in bed that a faint stirring was apparent. However, the party eventually got under way again, and by mid-day most of the cement, timber and members had arrived at the site.

It was at this stage that a serious omission was discovered—nowhere could there be found the length of rope which was to pull the buckets of gravel up the rope-way from the creek to the site. The fact that a certain member had forgotten to bring the rope seemed as good an explanation as any, and some of the party quickly proceeded to rob the rest of the party's packs of their drawstrings. These, when joined together, made a formidable life-line and, apart from the first break, which was followed by a bucket of gravel wrapping itself around the post at the bottom, proved a good makeshift. Then things began to move. That tireless person, Jack Hoskins, soon had the first concrete pile finished, and with a good team mixing concrete and another bringing up gravel from the creek, the organisation ran smoothly. As the afternoon wore on it became something of a race against time to complete the seventeen piles before nightfall. By a bit of extra effort, however, the last pile was finished at 6 p.m., and the hitherto pathetic piece of excavation on the hillside now looked less pathetic—in fact, it looked almost business-like with rows of neat little stumps protruding from the ground, each with its specification 18in. of wire sticking out the top.

The job done, everyone set off at top speed back for Green Peak Hut, where the girls had helpfully agreed to go an hour earlier to prepare a meal. The girls did a very good job altogether—first carrying the regulation 12lbs. of cement and pieces of timber to the site, then setting to with grubbers to help complete the excavation, and finally feeding hungry mouths on the main party's return to the hut. From observation it would be quite safe to say that some girls in some working parties are a great deal more use than some men. The work generally was conducted and carried out in a satisfactory manner, and if it is any indication of what the future holds, then we should have no worries about the completion of the hut.

On Saturday evening, confusion reigned everywhere at the hut, and the writer, along with some other outcasts, spent a happy night in the tussock with a nest of fleas left by some wretched but doubtless good-intentioned sheep dog. Sunday was a fine day, and with sighs of relief the party broke up and headed for home by various routes.

The first step in the building of Jubilee Hut had been completed.

—R. E. M.

EASTER WORKING PARTY

Even though the prospect of Easter recreation meant carting loads of timber and cooking pounds of sausages, we were looking forward to it with more or less the usual joys of anticipation.

The "Central Express" journey was typical of a rush day, with gramophones, footballers, and general city crowds mixed up in glorious confusion. As representatives of the Tramping Fraternity we were rather noticeably in the minority, a fact which, however, did little to dampen our spirits. Our thoughts on seeing the timber sitting on the Hindon Station may have been rather varied, but nobody seemed to mind giving up the hut building idea and prospecting into the various trips we could do.

Once at Roberson's farm we split up into parties and, with a few customary adjustments to packs and boots five of us started the long slog up Lamb Hill. The view widened with every step, and with the glimpses of fresh snow on Rock and Pillar our conversation continually turned to ski-ing. Round the side of Lamb Hill, down into Orbell's Creek and in no time we were at the cave. Needless to say the preparation of a feed took a good deal of time and concentration—sausages, bacon, and the mushrooms gathered on the way making a very tasty meal. We were not too sure as to whether the mushrooms really were mushrooms, but they smelt gorgeous enough to satisfy our doubts. Anyway, we survived!

A space levelled out and filled with bracken made a wonderful bed, and to lie in the back of the cave and look across the valley to the moonlit hills was a somewhat eerie and most unusual experience—some of us managed to sleep.

Breakfast was late next morning, and with the thought that we had an easy two hours' tramp ahead of us we shouldered our packs and set off down Orbell's Creek. Very soon we were in the unknown country of the left-hand branch of Three O'Clock Creek. It was much smaller than the main branch, and rose very rapidly with ridges coming down steeply to cut the creek into twisted bends. As soon as the stream narrowed into a gorge we struck up the ridge to the right and once on the tops decided to make "My Brothers" Hut for the night.

Barbara and I were rather mystified by the name "My Brothers," as by this time Julian, Gordon and Ralph all seemed to have brothers with huts.

A good laugh, an explanation as to whose hut it really was, and we re-named it "Our Brothers"—after all, we were all one happy party.

We wandered on along the ridge. Ridge, however, is rather a misleading term, for they were continually broken by gorges and to use the old musterer's advice of "Keep to the b— ridges, and don't go down no b— gully" was quite out of the question.

Looking back we had our last view of Lamb Hill and the Silver Peaks, while through in front rose the peak of Mt. Watkins. The unknown hills to the west were already growing dark with the shadows of evening,

and made us hurry across Three O'Clock Creek, and up to the still sunny ridge to the hut. And what a hut it was—a big table with chairs in the kitchen, and a bunk room with heavenly mattresses.

Even though the range was not a Shacklock, we cooked a sumptuous meal. Admittedly we had the goods—2lbs. of chops, 2lbs. of sausages, 2 Jays pies and some rashers of bacon! Here one of the party gave us a most pleasant surprise by bringing forth a tin of peas and a tin of plums. The peas helped the sausages down considerably, the plums followed effortlessly, and Julian was a great chap. . .

Next day the grass road led gradually up the hill toward the distant Rock and Pillar range. We were feeling fine—it was a grand day, there was a grand view, and our packs were definitely lighter. We passed through the old Nenthorne gold diggings, but little remained other than a few shafts and sod walls to indicate what had once been a populous town of over 2,000.

As the day slipped by, the hills became soft and mellow in the evening light. All thoughts of city strife left us, and we loved the hills for their peacefulness and for their beauty. . .

We boiled-up at Nenthorne Valley, and feeling much refreshed started the search for somewhere to rest "dem weary bones." The first possibility was entirely out of the question, being an old deserted house full of junk. Further up the road we came to a most inviting hut. Blinds were drawn, however, and the door locked; we decided we would never make a burglar, and moved on.

Finally we settled in at another deserted farmhouse. It was surrounded by odd huts and buildings, and we spent quite a while browsing into old drawers, etc. A fruit tree did not remain long untouched, and we ate green pears for the sheer delight of eating something we hadn't carried and hadn't paid for.

Another feed, another sit round a glorious cone fire, and we were ready to curl up for the night. . .

Next morning was perfect—the air was still, the ground was white with frost and there was a haze over the floor of the valley. The bases of the Kakanuis were shrouded in mist, while their peaks cut into the clear blue sky. But the trip was nearly over. Reluctantly we packed up for the last time, moved over the hill into the Moonlight Valley and up the other side to a point commanding a fine panorama of the country, from the Kakanuis and Rock and Pillar, round to the rolling hills over which we had come. From there we wandered gradually down on to the Middlemarch plains, to enjoy a glorious wash and a most refreshing ice cream.

And so onto the train and home, after a trip which we will remember as one of our happiest holidays.

—J. M. N.

ATTEMPT ON MT. BARTH-AHURIRI VALLEY

Party: Arnold Hubbard, Russell Gregory, Bill Brookes.

During the first week-end in December, 1948, we made an attempt on Mt. Barth in the Ahuriri Valley.

This mountain, which is situated at the head of Canyon Creek—a tributary of the Ahuriri—had been climbed only once, in 1936. Its choice as our objective was mainly due to its relatively easy access, having regard to the limited amount of time and petrol at our disposal.

Friday in Dunedin was a day of boisterous winds and intermittent rainfall which, by nightfall, had settled to a steady downpour. However, at the appointed time—9 p.m.—our party, together with Don Patterson, whom we took as driver, set off in the comparative discomfort of a heavily-loaded Vauxhall 10. Despite the disagreeable state of the weather, the gloom was somewhat dissipated by the Weather Office's comforting prediction of an approaching anticyclone.

Oamaru was reached by 11 p.m., and after satisfying our gastronomic requirements at the local piecart we started for Omarama. We decided to leave the roughest part of the road, from Omarama to Birchwood Station, until daybreak. The time was opportune for a few hours' sleep.

However, not for long were we to enjoy the warmth of our bags, for the dawn was heralded by light rain, and at 4 a.m. we packed up and set out on the final stage of the motor journey. As we proceeded, the wisdom of choosing daylight became more obvious, for the road was in a bad state, and many washouts, caused by the November floods, necessitated very careful handling on the part of the driver, and much road relief work by the other occupants of the car. By 6 a.m. we had arrived at Birchwood Station, from which we were to proceed on foot.

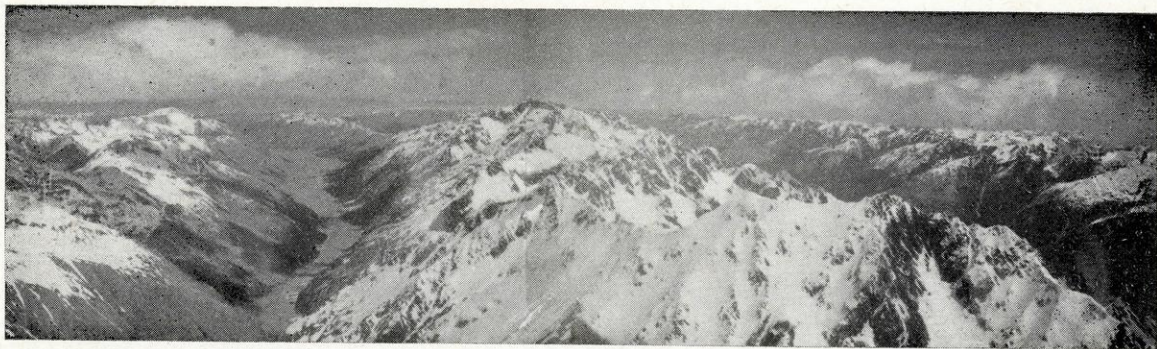
Our first thoughts were of the weather. Although it was not raining, a heavy blanket of fog obscured the head of the valley and confined our vision to below 3,000 feet. This sight did not exactly fill us with enthusiasm; however, optimistically trusting in our weather experts' prediction, we set off for Canyon Creek.

After traversing easy undulating slopes for some time we arrived at the junction at about 10 a.m. Our first thoughts were culinary ones, since we had not had a decent meal since the previous evening. We declared our fast over and partook of a conglomerated mess of eggs, chips, bacon and tomatoes. Then, taking advantage of a temporary break in the clouds, we bathed in hot sunshine till about 12.30 p.m.

It was with some reluctance that we took leave of Don, and directed our attention to the gruelling work of climbing over one of the walls, some 500ft., which bordered a deep and impenetrable canyon. By taking advantage of a fairly clearly-defined track along a diagonal striation on the northern wall we were able to gain the scroll plains within the lip of the hanging valley. For the next hour or so we followed the general course of the river. The going, except for an occasional patch of boulder-hopping, was easy.

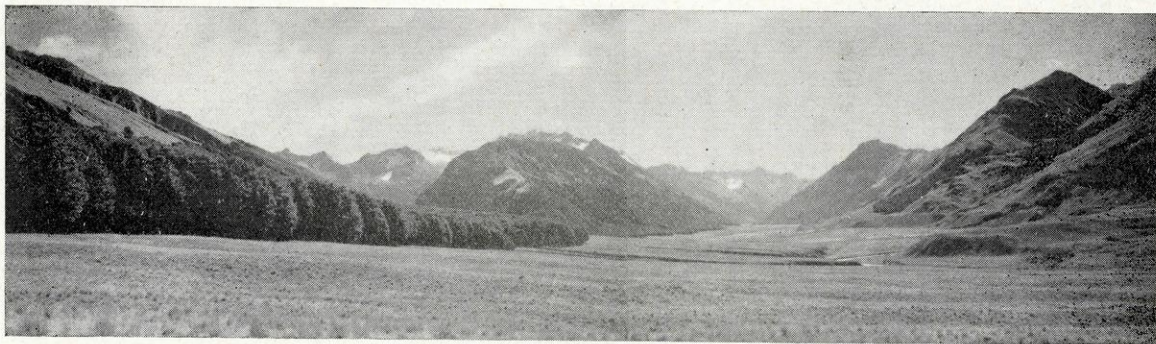
To gain the inner cirque—our objective for that night—it was necessary to force a large glacial step of some 400ft. in height which completely cut off the upper valley from the lower. The only obvious route lay up the valley wall to the north of the step, and then, by traversing a natural ledge, the cirque should be gained. This proved to be correct, for after scrambling up a couloir of avalanche debris and climbing on some easy, though exposed, rock, we reached the cirque by 5 p.m.

This cirque is a perfect example of glacial action, for its walls rise precipitously on each side like those of a great amphitheatre. Above these the glaciers of Mts. Heim and Barth cascade over in great icefalls, strewing the cirque floor with huge erratic boulders and many tarns. The choice of a bivvy sight was not difficult, for, by pitching the tent on the leeward side of a large boulder in a locality clear of avalanche danger, we were assured of a relatively sheltered position in the event of bad



AHURIRI VALLEY FROM MT. HUXLEY.

—W. S. Gilkison.



AHURIRI VALLEY AND MT. BARTH.

—H. J. Stevenson.

weather. A meal was quickly prepared on the Primus (for we were above the vegetation limits), and the rest of the evening was spent in reconnoitring the approach to Barth, which rose into the mists above the northern wall of the cirque. About 8 o'clock the curtain of fog began to rise, and in the gathering twilight Barth was disclosed to us for the first time. We were thus able to draw some conclusions as to the route to be followed on the mountain itself. About 8.30 p.m. we crawled into our bags and, apart from a quick glance outside at 9.30 p.m. to satisfy the weather eye that it was clearing, we settled down to await the summons of our alarm clock.

Our awakening next morning synchronised with the coming of the dawn (the alarm having failed to work), so that no time was lost in preparing breakfast and getting away. The weather was such as to exceed the hopes of the highest optimist among us. We could readily appreciate our altitude in the deep blue of the sky, which contrasted sharply with those eastern slopes already scintillating in the early morning sun, and with the shadowy sombreness of the cirque's walls. Indeed, the universal serenity, with Barth clearly defined and as it seemed almost within hand's reach, was to provide a case of retrospective irony when later considering our experience on the mountain.

However, our hopes ran high, and we made short work of climbing the eastern wall of the cirque. Thence by a series of couloirs and relatively steep snow slopes we reached a saddle south of Barth and overlooking the upper Ahuriri. It was now 6.30 a.m., and the high peaks to the south stood out so clearly that identification was comparatively easy—Castor, Pollux, Aspiring, Earnslaw, Tutoko and a host of others. As yet our view to the north was obstructed by the mass of Barth. We started up the ridge leading towards the eastern skyline ridge; the going here provided no real difficulty, and after half an hour's climbing we decided we could afford a short spell for a second breakfast.

From this point onwards the nature of the climbing changed rapidly. No longer could we all move at the same time, for the ridge began to steepen considerably as we approached the face below the skyline ridge. We began to appreciate how easily the size and steepness of a mountain's face can be underestimated, for it was much larger, and was becoming much steeper, than we had anticipated. Even greater caution was necessary as we approached the skyline ridge, for the snow, which up to now had not been particularly firm, began to soften so that large masses went slithering off down the mountain with every step. It was, therefore, with some relief that we approached the skyline ridge, being under the impression that once there an easy gambol along the ridge would take us to the summit. But we were sadly disillusioned, for on poking our heads over the skyline we were met, not by the broad aerial highway which we had imagined to exist, but by a razor-edged ridge with a narrow cornice of two or three feet, below which the mountainside fell away steeply, invisible at first, but appearing below as a series of bluffs and steep snow faces. However, hoping that the ridge would broaden out further up, we commenced our cautious ascent of what appeared to be a veritable ice gendarme, rejoicing at least that the crest of the ridge gave perfect anchorage. Our final disappointment came when on reaching the summit of this little gendarme, we saw the true summit of Barth about 500 yards away and separated from us by a steep rock wall at our feet, which merged into a ridge similar to the one we were on. It differed, however, in that, instead of possessing just one cornice, in parts it boasted

two—one on either side of the ridge. The mountain's final triumph was in its perfect ice arete, which swept up to the summit some 200 or 300 feet above us. Considering the limited time at our disposal (it was now 10 a.m.), and lacking the necessary equipment to complete such a climb (a hand grenade or two to remove the cornices), we had no alternative but to turn back. So, after a brief panorama, which included Cook and its satellites, we commenced the descent. We have since learned that the previous ascent of Barth was made by the N.W. ridge, and the route we were attempting had not been climbed.

Even greater caution was necessary, especially on that particularly steep face below the ridge, and although it was only about 400 feet in length two hours were taken in descending it. Shortly after this a slight variation from our upward route gave us an exhilarating glissade for some 200 feet down to the saddle. From there it was only a matter of ploughing through soft snow—often up to our thighs—down to where this gave way to rock and tussock, and finally to the floor of the cirque and camp.

It was now 3 p.m., so that, after hastily striking camp, we set off for the lower valley, by-passing the step this time by continuing further down the terrace and descending to the valley floor by way of a steep scree slope. We arrived back at the mouth of Canyon Creek at 6 p.m. Shortly after we met Don, and the weary return trip down the Ahuriri commenced.

By 9 p.m. we reached Birchwood, and left at once for Omarama, and so at 5 o'clock next morning to Dunedin. Our brief sojourn in the hills was over.

We are satisfied that for such an expedition a non-climbing member of the party to act as driver is absolutely essential; without Don we would never have reached home that morning, if at all. —W. B.

A DAY ON MT. COOK

On Monday, 10th January, we came down the Tasman from Malte Brun Hut after an enjoyable but unsuccessful climb on Green the day before. We were bound for the King Memorial Hut, 6,800ft. up on the Haast Ridge. I went on down to Ball Hut to pick up some more supplies, while the rest of the party went straight up the Haast Ridge. The day was perfect, and prospects for the morrow looked very promising. I left Ball at about 4.30, with a fairly heavy pack, over the Hochstetter Glacier to the foot of the Haast Ridge, where I waited for an hour for the sun to sink behind Tasman, so as to leave the ridge in the cool shadows of early evening. After a long pull up the ridge, for once revelling in the joy of feeling really fit, I arrived at the hut at about 8.30 to find everybody in bed. After completing arrangements for an early start I hopped into bed and snatched about two hours' sleep before the alarm rang. As I was under the table (owing to a full hut, not the usual reason!), I was first up; a nose outside the door confirmed that the night was still clear and starry, and we started to prepare breakfast.

By 12.30 everything was cleaned up, and we were ready to move off. For a start we did not have to wear crampons, as we followed the steps of a party who had climbed Silberhorn the previous day. By the time we reached Glacier Dome, Harry Ayres' party had got well into the lead and we did not see them again until we reached the foot of the summit rocks. After climbing on to Glacier Dome you have to drop down 800ft. on to the floor of the ice plateau; this and the Linda were

free from serious breaks, but it is an eerie feeling walking across a 20ft. crevasse on a narrow bridge at 2 o'clock in the morning. From Silberhorn corner we had to wear crampons; and as conditions underfoot were perfect it was not easy to follow the crampon trail of the first party. Another half-hour and we were under Clarke's Saddle, and we knew that from here on we were in avalanche danger. However, this is understood by all who climb via the Linda, and we pressed on with much haste. The ironical part about climbing up the Linda is that everybody makes as much speed as possible up it, yet the further up you go the greater the danger. For those who do not understand the Linda, look at it this way. Imagine a long trough about 2,000 to 3,000 feet deep, nearly a mile wide, rising up at an angle of about 30 degrees. That is the Linda. Now, at the top end of that imagine a very steep hanging glacier, the ice cap of Mt. Cook, and the danger should be obvious. However, we got to the schrund at the foot of the summit rocks just as dawn was breaking. Here we encountered some nasty ice of a peculiar green colour, which required some rather cunning step cutting. By this time we could see the first party in the sunlight, and making their slow way up the rocks; slow particularly because a great deal of ice was hanging to the rocks and had to be chipped away. We had a rather prolonged spell here to avoid the lumps of ice which were whizzing round us everywhere. By the time Harry's party had reached the centre of "Jacob's Ladder" most of their debris were falling over to the western side and we were able to proceed. So far I had been first on the rope, but we now changed round and Phil Cook led up the rocks, making quite good time. We could see the first party moving up the ice-cap, and by the time we had reached the top of the rocks the others were practically on the summit. After a spell and a bite to eat we, too, started up the icecap; crampon conditions were quite good, and as the others had cut all the necessary steps we were able to proceed without much delay. We met the other party descending, about half-way up the icecap, and after some cheerful back-chat we went our respective ways, and at 9.15 we stepped up the last foot in height of N.Z. and were on the summit of Mt. Cook.

On looking round, my first impression was one of disappointment at the view. But after a while my eyes developed a better perspective to appreciate the hundreds and hundreds of miles of peaks, valleys and tremendous glaciers. My first thought was to pick up all the old familiar landmarks in the N.W. Otago country; then came all the local peaks. But, as many writers have said, the view from a high peak is so extensive that it cannot be taken in at one short visit—so I must climb again to complete my impression. There was not a cloud in the sky, and as I lit my pipe on top I held the match up and it barely flickered. But there is was, we were on top of Mt. Cook on a perfect day, and it certainly was a glorious feeling. After a very short half-hour on top and a last look round we started off down. As the surface of the icecap was deteriorating under the blazing sun and it was nearly two hours since the first party had ascended, I had to cut a lot more steps down to ensure safe cramponing down. This did not take long, and less than an hour later we were on the rocks again, having another snack. This was delightful; from a height of nearly 12,000 feet we were able to gaze upon all the high peaks of the Alps, spread out in one glorious panorama which even the best of cameras could not reproduce properly. A chill southerly breeze was now springing up, and we started to move off down the rocks. The first party were now almost off the rocks, having spent much time garden-ing on the way down, and by the time we were half-way down they were

racing off down the Linda at great speed. The rest of the trip down was uneventful; we made good time down the Linda and arrived back at the hut at 4 o'clock. The next day was spent lying round the hut, and the next the weather had packed up. By this time my party had to go home, so they left on Friday morning with Jim Forsyth, while I joined up with Harry Ayres for a traverse of Mt. Haidinger (the first North to South traverse). The weather packed up properly on the Saturday, so we made our way down to Ball Hut after a very satisfying week's climbing.

—M. H. DOUGLAS.

CLIMBING IN THE REES—1949

Party: A. Hubbard, R. Gregory and W. Brookes.

We left Queenstown on Monday morning, 11th January, on board the "Ben Lomond" en voyage for the head of the lake. The well-worn "Alpine" track up the Rees was followed as far as Arthur's Creek Hut, and after a few hours' easy climbing we arrived at Earnslaw Hut.

At five o'clock the next morning we started the long and weary climb to the snowline, thinking that, if weather conditions were favourable, we might reach the Bedford that day. We climbed out of Kea Basin on to the ridge and very soon reached the top bivvy, not far from the snowline. Further progress that day was now out of the question, for a heavy mist had descended over Earnslaw and Leary, and since our knowledge of the route over Luncheon Col was negligible, we thought it discreet to remain where we were. The rest of the day was spent making a level traverse to the Leary ridge and into the West Hunter in an effort to find an easy route into the Bedford, but the heavy mist limited visibility to a small area.

The following morning brought favourable conditions, and we started for East Peak of Earnslaw. But success was not to be ours as yet, for as we approached Wright's Col a light layer of fog began to thicken, and very soon Earnslaw was blotted out. To make matters worse a light, sleety rain began to fall which created a thin film of ice over the rocks, so we retraced our steps back over Leary to the lower snowslopes, where, time lagging heavily on our hands, we decided to dig a snow cave. Having no better tools than ice axes and crampons, progress was necessarily slow. When we had half finished it Arnold had the misfortune to spike himself with a crampon. During the afternoon food was brought up from the lower bivvy and cached in the snow cave. Later two of the party climbed to Luncheon Col in a vain attempt to observe the route to be followed on East Peak. A short scramble to the low summit of Leary—visibility nil—and a long glissade back to camp completed the day's activities. Optimism burned low in camp that night.

Thursday, 13th, contrary to popular superstition, proved to be our lucky day. We were greeted by a perfectly clear sky and a hard frost which gave promise of good crampon conditions. Indeed, this was the case; Leary was traversed and Wright's Col reached in record time. With the rising of the sun we were provided with a superb spectacle. Every valley in the Alps, it appeared, was filled with low cloud out of which the peaks jutted like so many islands in a sea of fog, each tinted pink by the sun's early rays.

After leaving Wright's Col a narrow gut gave access to the scree ledge above. This led up to the huge bluffs which form the northern face of Earnslaw. On the whole the climb was quite straight forward and presented no real difficulty apart from a period of vigilance while negotiating the bluffs. The previous day's snowfall had lightly covered the rock

with new powder snow, while ice had formed in the more sheltered places. Above the bluffs a steep scree slope led to the final pyramid of snow, and the summit was reached by 10 a.m. Two glorious hours were spent here, during which time much speculation was made as to the identity of the host of lesser peaks which surrounded us. Most of the notable peaks of the Alps could be seen to good advantage, especially Tutoko, which impressed us immensely.

The descent was more in the nature of a scramble, for the snow had melted from the rocks during our stay on the summit. On returning to the bivvy, which we reached at 3 p.m., we reluctantly parted with Bill, who was returning to civilisation. Although we did consider crossing to the Bedford the next day, we thought better of it and decided to have a rest day instead.

On the following evening we set off for the snow cave intending to enlarge it in preparation for our occupation that night. Corrugations were made in the floor to allow free air circulation (theoretically, at any rate), while every spare article of equipment which lent itself to the contours of our bodies was literally pressed into service. We had anticipated a cold night, but this proved incorrect, and we spent a relatively comfortable time in our snow cave.

Foggy conditions prevailed during the early morning, so that we did not leave the cave till 7 o'clock. The snow had now softened considerably, and our journey over Luncheon Col and Shepherd's Pass was very slow and fatiguing. After establishing camp in the upper Bedford we had time to study our surroundings. Towering immediately above us was the rock spire of Pluto, while beyond this the huge cirque under Wright's Col was a fine sight. Sir William, with its large snowfields looming through the clearing fog, gave promise of an interesting climb.

At 12 o'clock we set out to climb Pluto. Unfortunately we missed the better chute and climbed a slightly more difficult one slightly up valley from the other. A short scramble along the ridge took us to the base of the final tower, which was climbed by way of a series of ledges. The summit was reached at 3.15 p.m. We took the notes, left on the previous two ascents from the cairn, and recorded our own.

From this focal point in the Earnslaw group the view was indeed magnificent. The massiveness of Earnslaw's faces, which completely dwarfed our own peak, could be appreciated to the full. After a valuable hour spent in orientating our position to the other peaks of the district we commenced the descent, and in two hours we were back at the bivvy again.

Although the next day was fine the previous day's work had taken its toll, so the day was spent in collecting firewood from down valley and in reconnoitring a direct route to Pluto Col from the Bedford in preparation for an attempt on West Peak on the morrow. At 4 a.m., with the glimmerings of the dawn, we left camp. After following a diagonal course up the initial scree slopes we arrived at the bottom of the first large chute up-valley from our camp. This chute, which had appeared to give reasonable access the day before, now lost most of its promise in the cold light of dawn. We cut steps up the frozen snow till we gained a rib of rock. Further progress was impeded by a rock wall which appeared impossible to force on one side, and on the other was swept by a waterfall. The only weakness in its armour was an uninviting crack which led upwards to a point beyond which we could not see. By the use of caution

and a piton, the wall was surmounted. A change in the course of the waterfall made it necessary for us to pass under it, and this was accomplished only after receiving a thorough drenching. From here an easy crampon climb up moderate snow slopes led us out on to Pluto Col. The sun was just topping Pluto Peak as we sat down to consume our second breakfast, during which we made a close analysis of the various possible routes by which West Peak might be climbed.

Having come to a final decision as to our route we traversed the west face until we reached a steep couloir under the Seven Sisters ridge. We followed this up till it gave way to snow slopes, the ascent of which was greatly facilitated by the use of crampons. By-passing the gut to which these slopes led, we took a diagonal course back across the face to the N.W. ridge. Continuing up this ridge for some distance, we were stopped by a nick which formed the head of the gut we had by-passed previously. This necessitated our climbing down some twenty feet to a narrow razor-edged ridge, the negotiation of which required great caution. Fortunately this was our final obstacle, and the summit was reached at 11 a.m.

Our stay on the summit was short, due to the threatening nature of approaching nor'-west clouds. Yet we had time to appreciate the magnificent ice falls which plastered the great southern face of Earnslaw. Beyond this chaotic spectacle, and in vivid contrast, lay the deep blue waters of Lake Wakatipu—placid in the morning sunshine. By way of a variation on the descent we thought that we might have a look at the Seven Sisters ridge. However, progress—a few feet in extent—was made only after doing battle with the hardest of green ice. Lacking a suitable tool to deal with such phenomena, we were unjustified in proceeding further, and instead cut our way down a couloir which dropped away directly from the summit ridge. A succession of snow slopes and chutes led us rapidly downwards to where, in the comparative safety of the lower slopes, we were able to enjoy a few glissades.

Rather than descend to the Bedford via our morning route to the Col, we decided to continue down Spaniard Valley and follow the Dart bushline to the mouth of the Bedford. This decision was to provide us with a long and wearisome journey, for we had badly miscalculated the distance. Consequently, it was two very tired climbers who, at a much later hour than anticipated, crawled into their bags that night.

An increase in the strength of the wind the next morning finally precipitated the deflation of our tent, and consequently extinguished any hopes we had had for a well-earned rest. By 12 o'clock we had begun the long trek back over Leary. Such was the velocity of the wind on Luncheon Col that a considerable amount of scree was being lifted bodily from the surface and blown in all directions. After a short rest in the lee of the ridge we continued down the mountainside to Earnslaw Hut, where a roaring fire soon restored our spirits.

During the next 24 hours our only activity was an alternation between the porridge pot and our sleeping bags. A day spent in this way refreshed us considerably, and the return journey to Glenorchy was made without incident.

As we cruised back down the lake Mt. Earnslaw disclosed its remote and austere battlements for the first time in several days. However, the vision was a momentary one, for very soon the mists descended once more and the scene of our activity over the past two weeks was curtained from our eyes.

—R. G.

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