



OTAGO

Outdoors

TRAMPING CLUB

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SAFETY IN THE MOUNTAINS

Elsewhere in this issue we comment on that excellent publication, the third edition of the New Zealand Federated Mountain Clubs' booklet, *Safety in the Mountains*. In an adjoining paragraph we refer to the findings of the Committees set up by the Federation to enquire into the circumstances of two fatalities which have occurred since that issue. In such matters we in the south have been singularly fortunate. Fatalities amongst tramping and mountaineering parties have been very few. Search or rescue parties have also been very rare, and in most cases have been due to misunderstandings or thoughtlessness rather than real emergency. And therein lies one moral—that the searchers who have been called out in all good faith and have sacrificed working time or experienced hardships when no real emergency existed may well be reluctant to go out another time when relief is really necessary.

How long will fortune continue to smile upon us in the south? The answer lies to a large extent in the extent and effectiveness of our own efforts. We believe that the great majority of our members approach the mountains in a spirit of thoroughly good common sense, and that they take very much to heart the extent of their responsibilities. Most of us have read one or more of the many excellent publications available; some have attended Instruction Courses; and probably all have discussed with other trampers, in one form or another, the principles of trip planning and equipment. It behoves us all, not only to *read*, but also to *heed*, the illustrations cited and the principles set down. And we should all, not only observe these principles ourselves, but let others see that we do so because we appreciate their thorough common sense.

Fundamental to all members of the mountain fraternity are the principles of Tramping Etiquette. Such matters as respect for the rights of land-owners, care of huts and fences, good conduct on public conveyances, and control of fires should not need to be stressed again; but occasional acts of carelessness persist, and being pin-pointed by their very rarity they often operate, in the mind of the public, to obscure the good conduct of the majority. Sometimes newspaper reports of parties—usually not Club parties—getting separated, overdue or otherwise in trouble, tend to be remembered by the public at large to the discredit of the Club—one more reason, if such were needed, for our observing throughout the best principles of Safety and Good Conduct.

The education work, publications, radio broadcasts, and other steps taken by the various Clubs are not directed against members' individuality or best interests. Rather are they aimed to preserve for us all the delights and companionship which is so richly found in the hill country. By our efforts and the influence of our example we can play our part as good Club members and preserve for our successors the pleasures and privileges we enjoy to-day.

—W. S. GILKISON.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Every year when the leaves have fallen and the mists on Swampy settled comfortably down for the winter, the President sucks the end of his pen introspectively, and, after a night's cerebral anguish, produces a Presidential Letter for *Outdoors*. The second hurdle is how to persuade the Editor to publish it. Having overcome this by using the weighty argument of "tradition," he then faces the major problem of how to prod Club members into reading it. Philosophers who were approached on this point pocketed their fees and observed that the problem could not be resolved as it was a "circular" one, and that the issue was a dead letter or something. They never do give a satisfactory answer!

Let us begin, then, by asking each member a few questions. In the first place, why did you join the Club? Has it fulfilled your expectations, and if not, what do you intend doing to improve it? Are you making positive contributions to the success of your Club, or are you a sideline critic?

If it has failed you in some measure, small or large, will you help us to prevent a recurrence, and make ours an organisation which will command interest and respect in the community? It is so easy to forget that each tramp has responsibilities not only to his Club, if he belongs to one, but also to our society. The tramp who behaves irresponsibly, who makes a nuisance of himself on trains and buses, who shows discourtesy in any of its many forms to the public, does a grave injustice to the cause of tramping. Either he is not a true lover of the hills or he has yet to grow up. Even the tramp who, though thoughtlessness or carelessness about his tramping etiquette, exposes his actions to strong public criticism, does the club a dis-service. No one expects you to behave like "a straight-laced, prune-faced bunch of prissy mouthed brothers and sisters of charity," but for heaven's sake remember that there's all the difference in the world between high spirits and bad manners.

With that off the typewriter, let's have a look at the Club's record over the past year. Masses of bods have swarmed over to Cave Creek and done a really grand job on Jubilee Hut. The two-ton jig-saw jumble of timber, aluminium, iron, glass, and paint lying three or four hundred feet up Lamb Hill was a depressing sight, but the present shape of this material shows that several hundredweight of food and countless gallons of sweat were well expended. Quite a bit has still to be done before the hut is completed, but all those who have helped in the Jubilee Hut project, in one way or another, are sincerely thanked.

Sunday trips are still the mainstay of our programme, with week-end trips arranged at approximately monthly intervals. Members are urged, in planning their tramping trips, to make the fullest use of the official programme, as only by this means can the Club attain its maximum development.

A very successful trip was run by private transport to the Kurow district, and a bus trip to Deep Stream coincided with one of the few really fine Sundays this summer. Despite the weather, the picnic at Kari-tane was attended by well over 40 members and friends.

Christmas was a disappointment. Although reasons and excuses can be offered, the fact remains that there was no official Club trip. It is easy to point the finger of blame in some direction or another, but if we each, with a few exceptions, directed the accusing finger inwards, we would find the solution to our Christmas failure. It is up to each one of us to make next Christmas an outstanding success.

The Easter picture is very much brighter. Thirty-one members and friends enjoyed excellent tramping in the Eyre Mountains. There was

much activity in the Mataura and Roberts Valleys, Symmetry and Eyre Peaks were climbed, and a round trip of the area was made *via* the Mataura, Lochy, Longburn, and Roberts Valleys.

During the year the Club has endeavoured to give its members ample opportunity to meet socially as well as on the hills. The club rooms continue to be a rendezvous for many members on Friday evenings. Films have been shown and talks given there from time to time. A change of club rooms was made in April, and has met with general approval. A club ball was successfully run at the Brown House in September, and a barn dance held at the Leith Valley School in May was even more popular and proved to be the social highlight of the year.

One of the important aspects of the Club's activities is the publication of a monthly bulletin. This year the high standard previously set has been maintained, and members kept well informed of matters of tramping interest. The system of issuing a news bulletin approximately every month and publishing *Outdoors* annually is serving the Club admirably. Because this year was a short term, *Outdoors* cannot be included in this survey, although the year's events will provide the raw material for its articles.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the well-being of the Otago Tramping Club, and to wish you all many happy tramping days in the future.

—WILF. BROUGHTON.



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MISTAKE CREEK, EGLINTON VALLEY, AND NGATIMAMOE.

MISTAKE CREEK (Easter, 1950)

Inspired mainly by the splendid photograph of Mistake Creek and Mt. Ngatimamoe contained in *Moir's Guide Book*, our party—Gordon McLaren, Barbara Napier, and myself—made plans to visit this valley during Easter, 1950. We were unable to obtain much up-to-date information on the valley or track, and in being guided by Moir, who says, "2½–3 hours to the top flats," we did not worry overmuch.

Setting out on Thursday in the "Red Terror," Gordon, our pilot and guide, soon had us in Gore. The weather could not have been worse, and although we were relatively snug in the car, we found it necessary on occasion to don parkas, so strong was the driving wind and rain. The urge to press on was strong within us, however, and about 1 a.m. we arrived at Balfour, some 10 miles from Lumsden. Here we spent a very comfortable night in quarters, which, although not provided for the way-side camper, were voted to be adequate in every respect. By Friday morning the sky was still very grey and visibility was limited, but there was a tendency toward improvement. Te Anau was reached at about 10.30 a.m., and by 1 p.m. we were boiling up in the Upper Eglinton. The weather had gradually improved as we drove up the valley, and we now basked in bright sunshine. We were overjoyed at the prospects ahead, and the only thing which tended to restrain our enthusiasm was a view of Mt. Ngatimamoe, which dominated us from across the valley. Never had we seen a more inaccessible or forbidding-looking mountain, and we anxiously recalled the milder opinions of those climbers who had been on the peak in years gone by.

On the Eglinton road near our lunch-time camp is an AA notice which reads, "Mistake Creek Track," and it was here that we made our first mistake. A line of blazes took us off to the right, and happily we followed them until the river was reached. At lunch time we were looking right across to the bush-clad entrance to Mistake Creek, but now on reaching the Eglinton we did not find the junction of the two rivers as we had expected. We decided, therefore, that we must be below the junction, and accordingly set off upstream. By 3.30 p.m. we were not so sure, and a quick reconnaissance by Gordon confirmed our doubts. It was now a case of retrace steps downstream or try our luck with the intervening spur. We chose the latter, and by good fortune managed to drop into our valley about one mile upstream. A good track was followed up the true left bank until we came to an obvious ford. Continuing up the true right bank, we made the mistake of re-fording after about three-quarters of an hour—an instruction contained in the 1934 *A.J.* It looked the reasonable thing to do, but we soon discovered our error. Fallen timber, old and new, made progress very slow indeed, and by nightfall we could just discern a large area of ribbonwood across the stream. We crossed with some difficulty, and after easier going reached what really is the first big open part of the valley. It was now dark and too late to reach the top flats. Saturday morning dawned very fine, and we set off at 8 o'clock along a good track on the true left bank, reaching the top flats in one hour. We now found ourselves directly below Ngatimamoe with about one mile of open flat ahead before the valley was terminated by a large cirque. As the day was fine, we decided then to push up to the col below the mountain and if nothing else have a look at it at close quarters. After scrambling up some steep but solid rock and snowgrass slopes, we reached new snow and traversed round over broken country to the col. It must have been 2 or 3 o'clock when we reached the col and further progress was out of the question. The recognised route up the peak could now be seen. This

was a rock ridge of not unreasonable angle on the north face, and if all went well the summit would be two or three hours from the col. Apart from the mountain, we had an excellent view into the head of Falls Creek, which flows in a huge cataract into the Upper Hollyford. Also clearly visible were the East and West Peaks of Earnslaw and others of that district. Having clicked our cameras, we hurried off away from the col and the cold wind which had sprung up meantime, and made for the tussock, where a late luncheon was enjoyed. Returning to camp by dusk, our weather signs told us that the nor'-wester was nigh, and, sure enough, Sunday brought strong winds and rain. As the day wore on the rain increased, rendering any major activity impossible. We took the opportunity, however, of visiting the large glacier and lake situated at the head of the valley. On a fine day they would have made a wonderful sight. The lake is of purest turquoise blue, and the ice caverns of the glacier reach to the water's edge.

Sunday night was stormy and wet, but we managed to remain dry within the tent. On Monday a most discouraging sight met our eyes as water swept all over the flats. We now became somewhat concerned about our chances of crossing the river, and we packed up as quickly as possible. Following down the true right bank all the way to our first ford of the upward journey we reached this point in about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. On viewing the roaring torrent we all felt very "iffy" about our chances of fording until suddenly Gordon spied a tree which had fallen across the stream. At this stage the writer sampled the waters at first hand by falling in, and had to be hauled out by the scruff of the neck. This was an illuminating experience, for it showed that once balance is lost there is very little hope of extricating oneself unaided. After about three-quarters of an hour we had all squirmed across the tree trunk and were ready for the last part of the journey. In the lower valley there are some beautiful specimens of native beech. The bush is very open, and the effect is that of a vast park. The Eglinton was forded without difficulty, Mistake Creek being the bigger of the two streams, and we followed the correct track out to the road. When entering the bush at the signpost, one should bear very slightly to the left. We blazed all the appropriate trees near the road, as the existing blazes take one off in the wrong direction. This must have been the cause of many people going astray.

After changing into what dry clothes we had left, we set off in the "Terror" once again, reaching Mossburn the same evening. A variation of our wanderings was made by returning *via* Queenstown into Central Otago, and this journey was marked for some very fine views, petrol blockages, falling bumper bars, and other minor happenings. We finally chugged into town at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, our mechanical friend and conveyance bravely doing her best to get us there on a greatly restricted fuel supply.

Mistake Creek Valley is a very beautiful spot and ideally situated for a 10-day tramping or climbing party. There is a big main tributary valley at the top flats which we did not have an opportunity to investigate, as well as many peaks, passes, hanging valleys, etc. If the track is known it is an easy 4-5 hours from the road to the top flats, where there are splendid camping sites; the glacier and lake are attractions which one does not find very often.

—R. E. M.

"I have resolved, for the future, to climb mountains, or at all events to climb one mountain each year. . . ."

—Professor Conrad Gesner (1543).

ROUTE BURN RAMBLE

On Wednesday, 28th December, 1949, our party, consisting of Betty Beatson, Daphne Hunt, Bill McLeod, and self, left Queenstown aboard the crowded *Earnslaw* bound for the Routeburn. The weather office predicted rain, but we weren't worrying. At Kinloch the clouds closed in and rain sent people hurrying for shelter. We were fortunate in obtaining the only four spare seats in the bus, which gave us an hour's start on the 25 trampers left at Kinloch. Two and a half hours from the swing bridge on the wet, muddy track brought us out of the gorge on the flats, with the huts not far in front. Smoking chimneys gave us a feeling of comfort to come, when the valley looked so dismal with snow right down on to the bush. At the hut, six O.S.C. members gave us a friendly welcome.

Thursday morning dawned fine, revealing a magnificent sight of mountains coated with snow down below bush level. By 10 a.m. we were ready with light packs and were off up into the North Branch. The track is of good gradient and easily distinguished until the upper levels are reached, where it is necessary to force through scrub. This valley is not very long, taking 2½ to 3 hours to reach the foot of North Col, but offers a wonderful view of Mt. Somnus, with its huge rock buttresses and gleaming snowfields. Bill and I went on alone to endeavour to climb to the top of North Col, from which I believe an extensive view of Hidden Falls, Bryniera Range and Darran Range can be obtained, but when within one hour of the top time and deep snow made it impossible to reach the Col that afternoon, so we reluctantly turned back. Returned to the huts at 7 p.m. to find more trampers in occupation.

Friday was the highlight of our trip, as we spent five hours on the Harris Saddle basking in the sunshine and taking in the exquisite view. The conditions were those which are very seldom experienced on the saddle. The ground was thickly covered with snow down to Lake Harris, which made the surrounding peaks stand out so prominently against a cloudless sky. We could see up the Hollyford to the Homer, Lake Fergus, and all surrounding peaks, and after the 400ft. scramble to summit of Conical Peak saw Mts. Madeline and Tutoko.

Many trampers passed over the saddle to Howden, and we were amazed at the lack of unity in two of these parties, for when reaching the saddle they showed great annoyance of the fact that some of their party were slow, and seemed quite willing to proceed without them.

Saturday we packed up, and once again headed for the North Branch, this time to camp out and have an early start to climb through North Col on Sunday. The day was very hot, so we made a camp an hour up the valley near a tarn. For the afternoon Bill and I erected and enclosed the tents in a rope fence to keep the roaming steers away. The New Year's Eve was enjoyed round an open fire, and all that disturbed the peace of the night was the occasional screech of a kea. I was awakened at 3 a.m. by the sound of rain on the canvas, and got little sleep until 5.30, when we climbed out to inspect the "wicket." North Col looked very dismal through the mist, so we knew that once again we were to be disappointed. In half an hour we packed, had an orange, and headed back to the huts for breakfast. Nobody stirred at the huts, so we had a good opportunity to dry out and have a hearty breakfast. The rain increased as the day wore on, and we felt thankful for the comfort of the huts.

On Monday morning we set off with some reluctance to catch the bus at the swing bridge. Our tramping holiday was short, but we went everywhere we could in the short time, revelling in all we saw. We later learnt

that a couple at the huts went twice up on to the Harris Saddle for a view, only to see mist, also that we had the only fine days in that area for the Christmas period! The Routeburn is an ideal valley for a short holiday to base for day or round trips.

—G. W. CLARK.



DOMETT DIARY—October 9, 1949

- 2 a.m. to 3 a.m.: Various members of the party aroused from deepest slumber to find weather as forecast—showers, with fair intervals (the latter missing for the time being); arrived at meeting places under the watchful eyes of local constabulary and sympathetic cheers of late revellers.
- 3.30 a.m.: Emerged into a fair interval near Waitati. Interval continued until
- 5.15 a.m.: Oamaru at dawn, and
- 6.15 a.m.: Strachan's turn-off with Domett touched by first rays of sun.
- 6.45 a.m.: On the move and feeling pretty tired already; weather holding.
- 7.30 a.m.: Breakfast *al fresco* in watery sunshine.
- 7.45 a.m.: Going up—"long tussock ridges and deep gullies."
- 8.45 a.m.: Going up—stops for photography, scroggin, route selection (and resting) increasing.
- 10.45 a.m.: Off tussock into mist and evidence of recent snowfall—"spelling system" continued with great success; view of Hakataramea Valley, Lake Waitaki, and Waitaki Valley to the sea through mist.
- 11.30 a.m.: Summit Little Domett—photography with party looking like Scott's party at the Pole; lunch *al fresco*—very fresh.
- 12.00 a.m.: Moved off down slopes of mixed snow and scree to main Domett ridge, faintly visible at intervals through mist; fair intervals increasing—light snow showers in between.
- 1.15 p.m.: Summit—view, one of the best in the Kurow district—non-existent.
- 1.30 p.m.: "Spell" for light refreshment—ranges in the snow.
- 1.40 p.m.: Little Domett seems to have grown somewhat when seen from connecting saddle with main ridge.
- 2 p.m.: It's all down hill from here (except for the climb up from the river to the car).
- 2.30 p.m.: Another spell, during a fair interval and general sleepiness almost overcomes all members.
- 4.30 p.m.: At the car, and what a meal!!!
- 5.45 p.m.: On the road with appropriate songs from Scott.
- 8.30 p.m.: Getting near Waitati; fair intervals gone—rain and fog on the hill; the folks back home won't believe us when we say we had a perfect day.
- 9.30 p.m.: They didn't believe us—but we were too tired to argue.

—B. W. C.

Notice in a Country Hotel:

"The Management reserve the right to refuse admission to any person they think proper."

AWAKINO

We had heard some very good reports on the Awakino district during the year, particularly with regard to its ski-ing grounds and the sub-alpine hill formation, so it was with great expectations that we left Dunedin on a mild but overcast Friday evening in early October. Five of us filled Arthur Barth's station wagon, which bore us on in good time over perfect roads to Oamaru, and then Kurow (113 miles). Here we bedded down for the night at the Kurow camping ground—a very sheltered and pleasant spot. Saturday morning dawned full of promise, with bright sunshine everywhere, and already we could see the long snow-clad sky-line of the St. Mary Range towering above the lower hills. The approach to the valley is quite picturesque, but soon the scenery was forgotten as we got on to the ski club road, many portions of which were formed by members themselves. After a few interesting fords of the stream we reached a very fine cutting, reminiscent of "Gillespie Street" in the Matukituki Valley, and shortly afterwards the small hut at the end of the road hove in sight. A quick sorting of the gear and we started off up a narrow gorge on our way to the Waitaki Ski Club Hut, which is situated fairly high up the mountain side below a large basin where ski-ing activities are carried out. The hut proved to be a splendid structure, a little larger than our Green Peak Hut, and on looking around many lessons were learnt in the matter of hut construction. An excellent hot and cold plumbing system makes this hut about as ideal as any mountain accommodation could be. Of this, a well-known Tramping Club identity and keen critic of the ski-ing fraternity said, "I am both amazed and appalled," which pretty well sums up the Herculean task successfully undertaken by the W.S.C. in building the hut. The weather was by now deteriorating, and most of our party returned to the bottom hut—a short half-hour below.

Sunday morning looked doubtful, but Arthur and myself started off fairly early (?) up the nearest ridge for the top of Mt. Bitterness. After a pleasant 2½ hours' scramble up tussock and scree slopes we reached the top of the range, and there we found Martin Lush, R.B.H., and other celebrities gorging themselves with food on some nearby rocks. The weather was quite good, but a certain amount of mist concealed the surrounding country, and although blue sky could be seen above, the sun just couldn't disperse the mist. We resigned ourselves to a viewless afternoon, and proceeded along the range to Bitterness and so on to Awakino, where we dropped down into a large moraine-filled basin—obviously the bed of some ancient glacier.

The brief views we did have into valleys and basins on the north-western side of the range disclosed some fascinating country, but the lakes and peaks of the Cook district were to elude us on this occasion.

We were soon back at the Ski Club Hut again, and after a short jaunt reached the cars. Going home we ran into some of the rain Dunedin had been experiencing most of the day, so that we were really very fortunate in being able to move around at all.

—R. E. M.

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MR. BROUGHTON BUILDS HIS DREAM HOUSE

I think I should make it clear from the beginning that I do not regard this article as a contribution, but more in the nature of a levy. An imposition perhaps rather than a composition. On looking up the word imposition in my dictionary, I discover the following: "a task set as a punishment for misbehaviour in school." For some unaccountable reason this brings back memories of the Barn Dance and the return from the Eyre Mountains. As there is no telling where this train of thought will ultimately lead me, perhaps I had better change the subject.

My first reaction on being approached by the Editor to give my impressions of the Christmas Creek housing project was "Not me, Brother." However, he turned on such a "You can do it, it's easy" look that I said I would think about it. This, as any lady member of the club will confirm, is tantamount to acquiescence.

Jubilee Hut is undoubtedly a project of which Club members can be justly proud. As a comparatively new member of the Club I have never failed to be impressed by the unique combination of individualism, team spirit, and sociability which is characteristic of Tramping Club members. These characteristics are all apparent in the building of Jubilee Hut, hereinafter referred to as the Hut. Personally, I think the Hut site is an ideal situation, and those responsible for its final selection are to be congratulated. The surroundings are picturesque, to say the least. Not the least of the attractions to my mind is the odd wood pigeon or two which are frequently seen perched in the topmost branches of the native beech trees. The accessibility of water is another feature literally at the bottom of the front door step. Fresh milk, however, is not so easily procurable. The Hut does open up a certain amount of new country. It is surrounded by many interesting ridges and gullies, and in the future will serve as a base for a number of delightful excursions.

Already the hut has been responsible for many enjoyable week-end trips. At the same time it cannot be denied that the Hut must have given our Executive many anxious moments and a certain amount of worry before it reached the final stages of completion. The fact that they fully realised before embarking on this ambitious scheme that such an undertaking as was envisaged could not be conceived and delivered without a certain amount of blood, toil, sweat, and tears, is more honour to them. On the whole they have been supported throughout by the rank and file of membership. Everybody has played his or her part to the best of their ability. In some cases this has not amounted to more than a desire to add something to the aforementioned picturesque surroundings, but by and large working parties have proved very successful. While I am on this question of working parties it has occurred to me in the past that possibly better results could be obtained if the leader of the working party allocated specific tasks and generally endeavoured to co-ordinate the efforts of the available members.

I have been asked to make suggestions on the question of improvements once the Hut is completed. Immediate innovations that spring to my mind are an automatic boot and pack remover that will operate as soon as the weary footslogger crosses the threshold. Bearing in mind the influx of American tourists that is forecast for the future, maybe we can arrange for a resident cook and bottle washer. Perhaps we can persuade Ralph to contact Mr. Doidge on the question of financing such a scheme. In addition, I suggest we place a rustic seat outside the Hut for the benefit of the older members of the Club, in order that they might drink in the beauty

of the aforementioned picturesque surroundings. At the same time they could intertwine their fingers and reminisce on their earlier pioneering Sunday afternoon excursions to Ben Rudd's. So much for the ridiculous. If I continue much longer in this vein I run the risk of bringing the English sense of humour into further disrepute. Trying to be practical, I could suggest a pipe and a small hand pump to bring water up to the Hut. I would also like to see a small scale tree planting scheme in the immediate vicinity. The writer is confident that the Dunedin Amenities Society would co-operate and supply the necessary plants for such a scheme. We would, however, require the co-operation of local farmers to prevent the trees being caught up in any burning off that might take place from time to time. I look forward to the completion of the Hut, and I feel that next spring we should aim at a Jubilee Hut working party every week-end until the Hut is completed, otherwise there is a danger of the completion being postponed indefinitely. Let us therefore dedicate ourselves to the completion of the Hut, let us open it in due form, and then let us make plans for our next hut, bearing in mind that the success of our Club is simply the sum total of the successful efforts of all its individual members.

—"TIMBERWOLF."

From a Guide Book to Queenstown, Routeburn, Hollyford, etc., published in 1889:—

Food per man for a 10-12 day expedition: 6lb oatmeal, 3lb hard ships' biscuits, 1lb rice, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb tea, $3\frac{1}{2}$ lb sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb salt, a few onions.



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TALE OF A TRAMP

This is not in any way an account of an unusual trip, but just one of those ordinary trips which are so typical of the Club's activity between Christmas and other longer trips. It was an ordinary Sunday trip, and it had the two essentials to make it almost completely typical—first the leader did not turn up, and secondly we did not go the proposed trip.

We were supposed to start at Kaikorai at 9 a.m., and when I arrived at two minutes to, we had a total of four. This, however, was clearly too unusually early for most of our folks.

The leader on this occasion lived in a southern suburb, and by mutual consent we decided to give him 20 minutes. At 9.20, with some ten keen types straining at the leash and at the insistence of a certain gentleman (minus car on this occasion) we moved off. When we reached the Power Station we looked for the local strong man, but it being only 9.30 he also had not yet been seen.

Around about here we managed to get away from the scheduled trip, in that we went up the road past the pig farm, whereas we should have gone up the bridle track. This is where we put our leader wrong when, only half an hour late, he puffed and panted up the official route. After an hour or so we were on top of Flagstaff, and although fine and sunny to the east, Swampy and Co. were covered with the well-known fog. Our consciences were easily persuaded that it would be rash to proceed to Red Hut and Waitati under such conditions, and, of course, there was only one other place to go. At 11.30 we stopped for a leisurely lunch.

Eventually we remembered that we had some new members with us, and that we must get moving; so with George's blessing we headed down the Club track with Lake Whare as our first objective. I don't know how everybody else finds it, but after reaching the creek I never seem to go the same way twice; eventually, however, we reached the lone pine tree and looked down on the lake, which on a good day doesn't look too bad, but on this grey day it looked most ordinary.

Another boil-up was indulged in under the tree at Rollinson's, and then we set off for McIntyre's, *via* Donald McQuilkan's, observing as we went past that there is such a thing as official vandalism as well as the ordinary variety. In the late afternoon sun, however, McIntyre's made a pretty sight, and a further pleasant half-hour was spent here. Then on to Laing's Track and the bridle trail, and so home after a most delightful day. The leader, poor soul, completed the official trip. What a lot of effort he would have saved himself if he had only been ON TIME.

"TALL TIMBER."

[*Editor's Note:* We are always glad to have such notes recording that which is typical in the Club's life rather than the usual concentration on that which is unusual. Not that we suggest that the leader is always late, but the story has its moral for us all!]

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A MIXED CHRISTMAS

Perhaps in view of the consistent bad weather which prevailed during the Christmas holidays, we should not grumble at having lost any opportunities due to our mixed travels. Our holiday was certainly a little unusual, but none the less enjoyable.

In order to get the work on Jubilee Hut advanced more rapidly, Jack and Edna Hoskins, G. Mason, C. Andersen, J. Smith, and myself spent times varying from two to five days at Cave Creek during the first part of the holidays. Apart from having to work, we found this a most enjoyable diversion and derived much satisfaction from seeing the building take shape. Operations were conducted from a comfortable camp on the banks of the stream, and at regular periods throughout the day Mrs. Hoskins plied us with cups of tea and appetising meals. The value of this last cannot be overstated, for it enabled us to work for much longer periods. By Tuesday, December 27, we had managed to get nearly all the weatherboarding on, two windows installed, the door in, the roof on, and the whole had received a coat of priming paint. In the matter of painting we were ably assisted by Geo. Arras, who turned up unexpectedly at Tuesday lunch time. On Tuesday afternoon we took our leave and headed back up to Silver Peak Trig and so down to Double Hill and the Waitati Stream, where we camped just before nightfall. An early start on Wednesday morning enabled us to catch the 7.45 a.m. train into town, where the day was spent unpacking and repacking for the next stage of our journey.

On Thursday, December 29, our party, consisting of Jack and Edna Hoskins, J. Smith, G. Mason, C. Andersen, Joan Sanders, and A. and R. Markby, set out for the Upper Hollyford or Homer Camp, where we arrived at 11.30 the same night. The old Homer Camp was in an uproar when we arrived, it being mainly in the hands of a youthful garrison of cyclists from the north. After rendering first aid to one of the less hardy members of this party, we left them in charge and set up our quarters further down the road at what I think is called Cirque Camp. Friday, December 30, was a brilliant day, and, loath to waste it, we set off for Gertrude Saddle. A recent fall had brought the snowline almost to the top flats, but by a stroke of luck an earlier party had plugged an excellent line of steps to the pass. After some slight trouble with a slab of exposed rock, we reached Black Lake, situated in a little hanging basin below the saddle. At the time we were not aware of its presence, as there was not a trace of water visible in the snow-filled depression. A further hour brought us to the saddle, where we were rewarded by an excellent view of the Cleddau Valley and Milford Sound, as well as many of the very precipitous peaks of the district. The weather was absolutely perfect and everyone received a good scorching from the sun. The following day was occupied in an endeavour to board a bus for Milford Sound, but a surly driver informed us we were out of luck. Very annoyed, we returned through the Homer Tunnel to our camp.

On Sunday morning the nor'-wester was on us, with rain by the bucket-full, and a miserable time was had walking down the road to Marian Camp. Here the Public Works foreman gave us a cheery reception and invitation to join a search party for a very deaf man who had lost himself in the Hollyford bush below Lake McKenzie. After looking rather stupidly at each other for a while, the full import of this was brought home, and with a sigh we resigned ourselves to the worst. The rain was very heavy, and so were our spirits as we set off in the P.W.D. truck down the Hollyford while the girls set out for Howden Hut, which was to be the

base for the searchers. The next two days brought no word of the missing man, and as we lay on our bunks at Howden on Monday evening ruminating on the fate of the unhappy gentleman, a lone stranger walked into the hut at about 9.30 p.m. The missing man had been found, or rather had found himself, and by way of consolation to us all he brought forth a bag of nuts which was passed round the occupants of the hut. He also had some geological specimens, which, however, he chose to keep for himself. The situation was so ludicrous that all tension was broken and we felt better. Leaving at 7 a.m. on Tuesday morning in heavy nor'-west rain, we set off down the Greenstone. The day gradually cleared, and apart from the length of our journey we had a pleasant time. We arrived at Lake Wakatipu at 9 p.m. and camped on a delightful prominence overlooking the lake. During the night a sou'-west change took place and snow fell on the mountain tops. The weather next day was cold and indecisive. Catching the *Earnslaw*, some of the party set out for the Routeburn, where they were nearly committed to two more search parties, while the rest of us headed off for Hawea by rural mail bus. Our object was to enjoy a few days' camping at Timaru Creek and other parts round Hawea, but still the nor'-wester persisted, and we finally left the district in a characteristic downpour with most of our gear as well as ourselves in very moist condition.

—R. E. M.



TUTOKO VALLEY

Party: Peter Brook, Ian Bagley.

Because our holiday was to be shorter this year, we decided to spend it tramping and climbing in an area easy of access. This was one reason for choosing the Tutoko Valley, which joins the Cleddau a few miles up from Milford Hostel.

Peter left four days before me on Monday, 5th December, with the bulk of our food and with the intention of packing it up to the Age Glacier, which feeds Leader Creek, a tributary of the Tutoko.

The weather at this time was just as unsettled as it was later. I heard, when I arrived on the Friday night, that it had been raining harder at Milford during the past few days than it was then at Te Anau. Saturday was cloudy, and we drove into rain in the afternoon at Homer, having had glimpses only of the mountains during the bus trip up. I walked through the tunnel with some people who were to meet the bus which runs a shuttle service between the Hostel and the tunnel. On the Milford side it was a little clearer, although the ceiling was still low. After about half an hour I got down to the bus and, unexpectedly, Peter was there. He had had bad weather most of the time, and was living in a disused Ministry of Works hut two or three miles down from Tutoko Bridge. He had carried a heavy pack through the tunnel on Tuesday, and left one large tin of food at Homer to be collected the next day. He collected this on the Wednesday, and on Thursday carried food and base-camp impedimenta up the Tutoko as far as the Leader Creek junction. It appeared that the information in the Guide Book was out-dated in some respects, especially river beds and dry watercourses. He returned to his hut near the Hostel that night. Then it rained and rained all Thursday, keeping him in the hut, which was very comfortable—rain-and sandfly-proof, and with bags of chaff as mattresses.



LEADER CREEK AND AGE GLACIER.

When I arrived at this comfortable residence the sun remembered us again, and so did the sandflies. There were two girls here also, who had set out from Dunedin on a hitch-hiking holiday only two days before. The hiking they had done by then was negligible—one hitch from Dunedin to Lumsden, and one from Lumsden to Milford with a Ministry of Works engineer.

We left this domestic happiness on Sunday morning with the Age Glacier as our objective. The weather was fine, but it did not look settled. Our way lay on the true right bank of the Tutoko through beech forest most of the morning, and someone from the Hostel had made the poorly blazed trail clearer with pieces of Government paper placed at strategic points on tips of ferns and twigs. This really was not of much service to us, because when the blazes became harder to follow after an hour's tramping the scraps would have led us astray but for Peter, who was not to be "had" twice.

Just before lunch time we came out of the bush on to flats spongy with Sphagnum. Here we had lunch opposite a hanging valley on the flank of Mount Underwood. We carried on up valley through flats, still on the west side of the Tutoko, and crossed it just beyond the Leader Creek junction at an easy ford. Here we picked up the tent from the cache Peter had made before, and proceeded up the south side of Leader Creek. The weather had deteriorated during the afternoon, and we were wearing parkas through the bush. The going was fairly level up to the Leader Creek Falls, where we had to climb steeply up an ill-defined ridge on the right of the falls. We continued climbing through thinning scrub near the Creek, and eventually found a promising camp site just above the snout of the Age Glacier.

It was raining as we pitched the tent, and all night it continued. The tent, an American Army one with no floor or door, leaked slightly, but we were quite comfortable in our bags and waterproof covers. It rained all Monday, too, and we spent the day cooking big meals on our kerosene stove, eating them and sleeping. Peter tried to woo "Hughie," the weather god, with his flute, but I ruined his efforts by my cacophonous accompaniment on a tin whistle; it still rained.

The next day, Tuesday, cleared by late morning, and we went down to Leader junction to collect the food we had left there. That night remained comparatively fine, and we decided to go up top on the morrow, weather permitting. We also prospected a route up the steep slopes above our camp to save time in the morning. We agreed with previous reports that it was dangerous packing up these slopes; there was a rock wall and a very steep scrubbed trail above the Age Glacier; not a pleasant spot with a pack and no means of using the rope for belays.

It was still fine the next morning, but all the signs of a bad nor'-wester were present. We decided to risk the weather, but left rather late for climbing—6.30 a.m. The going up the snow grass was rather than we had anticipated, and we reached the rock and snow after two or three hours' arduous route finding. Here I would like to say that this type of country, steep snowgrass and scrub, is common in this vicinity, where all valley walls are very steep and every care should be taken on it, especially as it is usually wet.

The weather was still clear, but the nor'-wester was still blowing, and it looked as if a bad spell was in the offing. We took photographs of the glorious ice-falls off the south-west face of Mount Tutoko and the Madeline ice-plateau, which joined below us to make the Age Glacier curving round out of sight. We could not see in to the Tutoko Valley at all, but we could see Mount Grave and the range on the other side of the valley.

We could see also our objective, the snow peak of Mount Madeline. Our route lay over easy snow slopes, avoiding the few crevasses of the Madeline Plateau. This would be glorious ski-ing country if it was easier to get up to it. Time was getting on when we reached the steeper west face of Madeline, and the snow, which had been soft before, was worse. We sank up to our knees at every step, and the slope got steeper above two small crevasses we had to cross. From here we moved one at a time and we gained height slowly, until it was decided, with two hundred feet to go, that retreat was the wisest course. This was accomplished without incident, although we faced the slope in order not to break away our steps in the descent of the steepest part of the slope.

When we left the Madeline Plateau to descend the steep slopes down to our camp, I felt that I was going down into a bottomless chasm, but the sight of our tiny tent and visions of a savoury meal soon banished my feelings of insecurity.

Although I was sleeping very soundly that night, the drumming of very heavy rain awakened me in the early morning. I have not seen rain like the downpour we had that day. Our camping spot was a good one, on the slight promontory on the steep hillside beside a small stream. On the Friday, the second day of rain, our camp site was an island in the midst of a slope of rushing water. The booming of avalanches off the ice-fall on Tutoko above the Age Glacier, together with the noise of rain and rushing water, made talking difficult. The rain slackened at mid-day and ceased later in the afternoon.

The following morning we dried out our gear and packed up to go down to the flats below Leader Junction, in Tutoko Valley. The sky was clear except for a few puffs of cotton wool clinging to Tutoko, Madeline, and Grave.

We made a very comfortable camp just inside the beech forest, and made friends with a pair of bush robins whose area we had invaded. The sandflies were very persistent here, and probably these birds, which eat sandflies, were attracted because we were always surrounded by them. We made friends with a weka here also, who liked prunes but not dates.

On Sunday we walked to the head of the valley in brilliant sunshine. There was heavy bush to go through for some way above the flats, and we found it easier boulder-hopping up the river bed. The head of Tutoko Valley was filled with avalanche snow and rock debris, which was still falling intermittently from the hanging glacier north-west of Mount Tutoko. The only outlet from the head of the valley is Grave Couloir, a 4,000-foot ribbon of snow and ice between otherwise unbroken rock falls.

If one had a knowledge of geology and botany this would be the place to put it to the test. I saw a wide band of pure white quartz on a huge block of granite that had fallen from Tutoko, and also many interesting shrubs in the sub-alpine growth.

On Monday we had to return to the Milford Road, and when we arrived at our previous residence we were surprised to see it effectively locked. There was a notice on it saying that it was not a public hostelry. We found shelter in an old bakehouse on the site of the future motor camping ground. We went by bus to Cascade Camp on Tuesday, and on Wednesday by bus and train home to Dunedin.

It seems that the weather is generally better later in the summer in the Sounds area, and that our experience was not unusual for December. Tutoko Valley has grand scenery, and the view of the south-west ice-fall of Mount Tutoko from Tutoko ridge on the Milford Road should be sufficient to persuade the tramper to venture further.

—IAN BAGLEY.

MILFORD MISADVENTURE

On New Year's Eve we were camped near the Homer Tunnel, and decided to walk through the tunnel and catch the tourist bus down to Milford. The intensive publicity campaigns connected with this area had naturally aroused a keen desire to experience at first hand the scenic glories and sandflies of the Milford area.

The trek through the tunnel proved quite uneventful. We were preceded by Mr. and Mrs. Hoskins, who, as they gingerly picked their way through the tunnel hand-in-hand, contrived to look like Darby and Joan in tramping boots and parkhas. Fortunately there were no falls of rock. Falling water there was in abundance. Whether it was the kind known as Heavy Water I cannot say, but I do know it was cold and very wet. Unfortunately, the publicity campaigns proved more successful than we had at first anticipated, for when we arrived at the bus terminal on the other side of the tunnel we found a miscellaneous collection of trampers, hikers, and tourists, all with the obvious intention of making the same pilgrimage. When the bus arrived it soon filled and left an overflow, whereupon the driver curtly informed us—I cannot recall the exact words—that the bus was full, there would be no more trips that day, and we had “had it.” He added in an equally surly tone that it was no use anybody walking down, as he would not bring them back.

So after a last, long, lingering look towards the Promised Land, we retraced our steps through the tunnel, convinced that the G.T.B. intend to maintain the Milford Sound district as a “closed shop” to the “outsider” who elects to see this beautiful country without seeking the assistance of the Government Tourist Bureau. This department is undoubtedly doing excellent work, but incidents of this nature do nothing to add prestige to the department. Possibly this bus is intended mainly for residents of the Milford Hostel, but if there is a demand during the holiday season for a more adequate service, surely it is up to the Government Departments responsible to satisfy this demand. After all, it is the taxpayer who is footing the bill for the development of the Homer-Milford area. The O.T.C., as a representative body, should take steps to bring this state of affairs to the notice of the responsible persons.

—“TIMBERWOLF.”



NORTH OF ASPIRING

During the winter of 1949 Arnold Hubbard, Martin Lush, and I drew up a plan involving first a reconnaissance of the approaches to the Coxcomb Ridge of Aspiring, and secondly a traverse from West Matukituki to South Wilkin, *via* the Bonar, Therma, and Volta Glaciers and Glacier Dome. For all this snow travel we planned to use full-length skis, and we had food packed into both valleys so as to keep packs to a minimum during the actual crossings.

December 24th: A long train journey, from 10 p.m. till about 6.30 a.m., brought us to Cromwell, and about an hour later we were deposited with all our gear in Wanaka. We had a few hours here waiting for a taxi, and by 1.30 we were away from Jerry Aspinall's garage. Reached Aspiring Hut at 5.30 after numerous halts, the packs feeling pretty heavy. Light showers most of the way, heavier when we reached the hut, but opinions in the hut were all optimistic—it had been blowing N.W. and raining for over a month, and it just couldn't last much longer. Retired early, but woke during the night to hear loud claps of thunder rolling round the hills, with heavy rain on the roof.

December 25: Still raining hard, but decided to take food and gear as far up the valley as possible. Arrived at Liverpool Stream very wet and cold. After several attempts we managed to get across at the cost of a thorough wetting. In the bush above Shovel Flat we decided that as rain still extremely heavy we would cache everything and return before the streams became impossible. After calling at a rather dejected tent full—Russell Gregory and Co.—camped below the junction, we splashed happily down to the hut again.

December 26th and 27th: Still raining hard; getting rather annoying now. We caught our first evening glimpse of the big peak glowing a brilliant orange through the drifting clouds.

December 28th: The rain has stopped, so we left at 8 for a bivvy at the head of the valley. Picked up some of the gear at Pearl Flat, then carried on as far as the bivvy rock above the bush, where we stopped in very doubtful weather. The afternoon was spent bringing up the rest of the food from Pearl, carting the skis on to the top of the waterfall, and improving the camping site. Rain changed to snow, and by nightfall we had 3in of snow round the rock, but we were warm and dry after a fine meal cooked over the smoky scrub fire. The local keas came down into the camp looking for mischief, and at least amused us for quite a while.

December 29th: Woke to see the sun shining from a clear blue sky on to a scene of great beauty; from well down in the bush below us, up on the peaks high above, everything was a brilliant sparkling white. After much deliberation we left at 10 a.m. with packs of food, intending to take them as near to Bevan Col as the new snow would allow. An hour later we were above the waterfall, after crossing several avalanche tracks. Picking up the skis we plugged on, knee deep and more in the soft, dry snow. This was hard work, and combined with the business of route-finding through boulders, crevasses, and steep slabs, it made the climb to the snow basin below Hector's Col most exhausting. Then we put on skis and skins and climbed easily in long traverses up to the snow arete off Bevan; this became too steep for skis, so we flogged a foot track to the top and looked over—but Bevan Col had again vanished in the mist. We decided, therefore, again to cache the food and ski back while the route was still obvious. The snow was very wet and heavy, and turning was practically impossible on the steep slopes, but the run down was really enjoyable and for this purpose the skis thoroughly proved their worth. Then we ploughed off down the valley to find that all the new snow had disappeared from round the bivvy rock. A pleasant evening cooking and eating round the bivvy, drying clothes and chasing keas. For me almost the happiest hours of all on a climbing trip are those spent in the evening at a bivouac high in an alpine valley. The air is pleasantly fresh to a sunburnt face that tells the tale of hours spent high on the peak. The sun has just set in a blaze of orange and the billowing mists down the valley still reflect the glow. The only sounds to disturb the stillness now are the pleasant roar of the river a hundred yards below the bivvy, the lonely call of the kea wheeling about the black bluffs above, now and then the muffled thunder of an avalanche roaring off Mt. French to spread out in a wide fan only a few hundred yards from the camp.

December 30th: Away at 7.15 on a fine, clear morning. Snow conditions rather soft, but in yesterday's steps we made good time to the basin. Here we put on the skis and moved off to Bevan Col under a blazing sun. Just below our cache we watched the Film Unit plane circling round Bevan and Bonar, diving off down the valley to drop several parachutes to Aspiring Flat. Shortly after we arrived the plane returned, and we were treated to a grandstand view of the second drop. (Only later did we find

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that our presence upset all the pilot's calculations—he thought we were the official party, and hence that our ridge was French Ridge, and that therefore that was where the gear had to be dropped—much to the discomfiture of the Unit party later!)

A glorious five-minute ski run down to the food dump, and a very hot half-hour climb saw all our gear up on top. Then we loaded everything into our heavy packs and skied down to and across the Bonar and over to Shipowner Ridge. All crevasses were well covered, and in half an hour we were over. The climb up to the foot of the N.W. Ridge—about 1,500ft—was very tiring in the full force of the afternoon sun; about 300 feet from the top we struck the ice-bulge of the glacier, removed skis, and cramponed up to the rocks. On a wind-drift hollow not far below the crest of the ridge we dug a small cave, just large enough to hold us for the night, then tumbled wearily into our bags about 10 o'clock.

December 31st: A wonderful morning, but we decided against trying Aspiring, as we are still doubtful of the snow conditions on top. We have still some food to bring up from the glacier, and the weather should surely hold for another day. We skied back down to and across the glacier, and decided to climb to the top of Bevan to get some photos of Aspiring. Billowing cloud started to move in from the coast, and soon hid all the big peaks, but not before we had seen two parties descending the summit ridge of Aspiring. We had an enjoyable scramble up easy rock to the top of Bevan at 1.30, but unfortunately our view was limited to glimpses of the valleys below us, with never a peep at the "big fellow." We waited an hour on top, but in vain; on the way down we rescued one of the air-drop parachutes, and at the bottom we met three black dots we had watched trudging across the glacier—Geoff Milne and party—and were surprised to learn that a large party had traversed Aspiring by the S.W.-N.W. ridges. We were back at our cave by 6 p.m., still in thick fog, and celebrated New Year's Eve in appropriate manner.

January 1st, 1950: Looked out at 2.30 and again at 4 a.m.—a strong N.W. wind and steady drizzle, so back to sleep. All suffering from sunburnt faces and swollen lips, even a touch of snow-blindness—very painful. Our plans are now to get across to the Fastness Ridge as soon as possible and leave Aspiring for another time.

January 2nd: The usual thick N.W. drizzle, which continued all day. We climbed up the ridge behind the cave and gazed over a sea of swirling cloud, but by evening it was again raining heavily. A roaring gale developed about midnight.

January 3rd: Heavy rain continued till afternoon. Conditions are rather grim now, as our sleeping bags are wet, like everything else in the cave. There is a terrific thaw going on, a schrund has opened up at our door, and about a foot of snow tunnel has vanished. We have food for only one day after this, so to-morrow is the crucial point of the trip. In the afternoon the weather seemed to be improving. We climbed to the ridge again and had some beautiful views through the breaking clouds. Over to the Waipara we had glimpses of waterfalls and bushy hillsides, all amazingly bright in the sun. Later we put on skis again and had a delightful hour on a face high above the glacier floor. The mists again closed in when we crawled inside for tea. At sunset we scrambled up the rocks again and saw that out to sea the sky was clear and blue, and a hard frost was setting in so hopeful of a real improvement.

January 4th: The usual 2.30 alarm showed the usual low cloud sweeping up the glacier. We had a hopeful breakfast, but by 4 conditions were hopeless, and at 5 snow began again. The morning seemed terribly long, enlivened with excursions every half-hour to clear the tunnel of drifting

snow. A mid-day brew of Oxo, dried milk, with some brick crumbled in for thickening, left us with sufficient for one full meal. We all agreed that to move at present was an impossibility. To bed on short rations.

January 5th: We woke at 1 a.m., very cold and wet. Being nearest the entrance, I dug my way out through thirty inches of new drifted snow. All seemed quiet outside, so hopefully I went further out, and there saw the most exquisite scene it has ever been my fortune to see in the hills. The sky was clear and brilliantly starry, the moon shone over the vast snowfields and peaks, all pure white to below the bushline, with new snow, and in the valleys far below streams of mist broke the dark, featureless depths. The bitter southerly chilled me to the bone, and I was glad to retreat to the caves and set about trying to convince the others that what I described was genuine. Then we discussed the future: the Wilkin was a full day and more away; we had a scant meal left; nevertheless, it was worth a try if we could be sure of the weather. At 4.30 we abandoned the cave and started out. The morning was still bitterly cold, and it was a great relief to remove crampons on the ridge above and overlooking the Therma Glacier. Prospects looked good: light cirrus cloud drifting over from the south, while down in the valley cotton-wool cloud lay stationary. We put on skis to make a fast descent to the Therma Glacier floor, over a foot of new snow, dry and powdery. Here we fixed sealskins and commenced climbing steadily towards the Volta Ridge. Soon we had to put the rope on, as we were in amongst numerous crevasses, many treacherously masked with the new snow. We had many fine views of the country ahead, mile after mile of rolling snowfields and glaciers. But now we again began to have suspicions about the weather—the clouds in the valley started rising, driven by the nor'-wester we knew so well, although up above the southerly was holding well. At 11 we were near the Volta, but the clear patches above were getting very scarce. A few minutes later we stopped in thick mist and lunched off a slice of Bell's Brick and discussed the situation. Over the ridge was the familiar swish of new snow avalanches sweeping the next part of our route; it was quite obvious we would have to wait till evening before trying it. So having regard to the weather prospects and our meagre food supply we decided the risk was too great and retreat to the Matukituki was our only possibility—a bitter pill to swallow after our high hopes earlier. The retreat to Shipowner Ridge was far from pleasant, with heavy packs, crevasses everywhere, poor visibility and so on. The descent to the Bonar was slightly better, as the ceiling lifted a little, but we still ran in long traverses, kick-turning at the end of each leg. Trudging over the glacier to Bevan Col, we watched numerous black dots moving to and from the food drop, and on reaching them at 5 o'clock found it was the Film Unit digging caves in the col. We stayed an hour, then carried on for the valley. By the time we were over the snow arete rain had set in once more, with black clouds boiling in through Hector's Col. We missed our way and had to waste more time finding the correct route. Then we took off skis and glissaded the rest of the way back to the basin. In gathering dusk we carried on down the black, streaming slabs and down to the valley. Stumbling on in pitch darkness and all very sleepy, we reached the bivvy soon after 10, in heavy rain.

Although so tired, we were now also very hungry, and heated up some tins we had got from the Film Unit—incidentally having to wake up one member of the party as each tin was ready. Then we made a drink of rum and cocoa. I lay back in my bag to drink it—and woke next morning with it full beside me. Next day we had thought of going straight through to Aubrey's, intending to get a taxi to Wanaka and home the following day, but on reaching Aspiring Hut were prevailed on to spend the night there. Our tales of food shortage brought forth much food and

drink, also breakfast in bed—what a contrast! We left about mid-day for Nger in heavy rain, which continued all afternoon and evening. The taxi, ordered for 5 p.m., arrived 15 hours later. We spent the night in the chaff house adjoining the locked hut. And so to Wanaka, and next morning a leisurely journey home through Central, planning wistfully for better luck and better weather next year.

—GORDON McLAREN.



WESTHAVEN

"As the bus proceeded on its way to Paradise, we shouldered our packs . . ." Thus begins many an article about tramping, and it is very comfortable to be able to dispense in this manner with the prelude to the actual tramping.

For my own part I find it hard to know where to begin. I feel I should mention the imposing spectacle of the Kakanui Range as viewed from Weston on a bright day in August. I think I can safely skip the joys of towing a caravan through Christchurch on a wet night, while the prospect from Kaikoura is sufficiently well known not to need repetition. Having arrived in Nelson Province, we began to feel the transition from tourists to trampers, but though such small trips as we did were very enjoyable at the time, they are hardly worthy for inclusion *Outdoors*. On the other hand, to lump a number of them together and present them like a string of sausages is not much better. The whole trouble is that these trips lack continuity, and are like widely-separated components of a jig-saw puzzle.

Those who have been fortunate enough to spend any length of time in the lower reaches of Motueka Valley will be able to appreciate my meaning. It is necessary to climb very high before gaining perspective of the graceful proportions of Tasman Bay. The eye reaches from the coast of Marlborough and along the chain of tussock-clad hills which stand sentinel over Nelson Town, and continuing to rise on its inward course to the St. Arnaud Range. Somewhere thereabouts is the source of the Motueka River, its other bank graced by hills of even greater interest, predominant among which is Mt. Arthur, beloved of the Nelson Tramping Club. The whole view is very fine, and is seen at its best in spring time, when the higher peaks are lavishly coated with snow.

Some of the most interesting country is in the vicinity of Mt. Haidinger, which you can see without leaving Collingwood. A scramble through the bush to one of the clear patches gives some impression of the immensity of its bluffs. One mere creek had its origin in a huge cirque of dolomite cliffs, while the ridge beyond was a cascade of cliffs only partly hidden by a foam of bush. It might have been possible to scramble up here and stand on the dizzy pinnacle which is the most pronounced feature of Mt. Haidinger, but it was a very hot afternoon and the dual reflection that there was water down below, as well as a road leading round towards Westhaven, was not without effect.

Westhaven Inlet is very interesting indeed, its shoreward edge deeply indented by minor creeks whose tidal estuaries give entrancing glimpses into the bush-clad hills. The narrow isthmus running to the ocean channel offers a sharp contrast. Devoid of the concealing bush, a rugged skyline is presented, enlivened by dizzy crags rising to upwards of 700 feet. This region being approachable only at low tide, it is necessary to time your arrival accordingly.

After some two miles the road crosses the last creek and emerges from the tidal area, passes Kaihoka Station, and comes into view of the first of the lakes. At a hut near the corner of the lake the road divides, the left

hand proceeding along the crest of the peninsula to the ocean channel, the right hand following the lakeside in the direction of the second lake. After boiling up we followed this track beneath its canopy of almost tropical foliage, and from the second lake we climbed on to a dividing ridge and looked over a lupin-clad shoulder to the ocean beach. From here to Cape Farewell lay a succession of bold cliffs, far more impressive in appearance than their meagre altitude (700 feet or so), and surmounted by broad grassy ridges.

Rain was now imminent, and we retreated by the quickest route to the hut and there indulged in a lengthy boil-up which would have the double effect of prolonging our stay in this attractive locality and of giving the tide time to go out. When we emerged once more the shadows had lengthened; we looked down on the lake in its tropical setting, across the full body of water at Westhaven Inlet. Remembering this, we were not particularly surprised on our return to the beach area to discover a vast sheet of water. We climbed over the shoulder of the nearest hill so as to skirt some at least of the water, which reached with long fingers into every creek bed. Having arrived at the tip of the first there was no time to stop and decide the best way to go—we had to make our decision as we hurried along. Thinking to make a bee line to the tip of the next finger of water, we made for the top of the spur—and back down again to take our chance of wading, for the bush that lay ahead looked far from inviting.

The last shred of light disappeared as we emerged from the chest-deep water of the next creek. The rest of the trip to the road was not so bad, and with the exception of the final creek the water was hardly above our ankles. We were naturally a little mystified at the lateness of the tide's recession—until we got home again and consulted a calendar. Only a couple of days out—but two days, on our carefully-calculated "low water" time-table, made an awful difference! It was a mistake we will try not to make again.

—NORMAN BONSELL.

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TABLE HILL TREK

Some ten miles from Milton and merging into the Tuapeka district lies a secluded area of rough, undulating hill country. One hill in particular stands out above the rest, its flat-topped summit being clearly discernible from the hills above Milton. Appropriately enough it bears the name of "Table Hill." It had always held a fascination for us, and we planned some day to explore the region, not only to climb to its summit, but to catch a glimpse of what lay beyond.

Maps of the Milton and Tuapeka districts were procured and plans went ahead to arrange a week-end trip.

Marked on the map about one mile distant from the back of Table Hill was defined an isolated hut. Here we intended to spend the night, but we packed up a small tent to use in the event of our proposed lodgings being tenanted or non-existent. Leading from the hut in a southerly direction we traced a track which follows a devious course of about five miles towards the environs of Waitahuna township.

The weather report had been studied attentively with a good deal of optimism on our part—light showers and cooler weather being predicted. The day for departure, however, dawned bright and sunny, and we had at that moment no qualms as to what the weather might be.

The first part of our journey along seven miles of narrow, winding uphill road was leisurely traversed in a motor truck. We disembarked near an isolated farmhouse, depositing behind some trees our bicycles, which we were relying upon to speed us on the last lap homewards on our return.

With a farewell to a rather nonchalant brother, shouldering rather weighty packs, my sister and I set off along a wide grass road-line. This track leads off from the termination of the gravelled road, following a gradual turn to the left, winding down over an easy course across a large hill called Table Mound. It finally joins up with a metalled road somewhere in the vicinity of Milton. A mile's tramp brought us to a red tin shed sheltered by a tall row of macrocarpas. Here we crossed through a fence, setting a south-westerly course which led us over a wide stretch of low, undulating tussock country towards Table Hill. Here and there lay piles of schistic rock heaped up like huge cairns. The brow of a hill was soon reached, from where we beheld not very far distant the unusual form of Table Hill, its flat-topped brow standing out characteristically above the adjacent hills. Beyond lay a great panorama of hills. Some were small and crowned with silver tussock, others larger and covered with green bracken and scattered areas of scrub, while further back some were purple and hazy in the distance. Far away on the skyline some rugged mountain peaks showed up darkly. Down in the nearby valleys grew patches of native bush, with clematis showing here and there in snowy-white clusters.

Another short tramp brought us to the top of a steep hill, from where, several hundred feet below, one of the tributaries of the Tokomairiro River carved out a devious course through a narrow rocky gorge. Down over the side of the hill we scrambled, sliding most of the way on the seats of our pants over the tussocks until we reached the side of the river. The ravages of hunger were upon us, and we scurried off to gather wood for a fire.

Meantime the sun had disappeared behind some sullen clouds and the sky was becoming quickly overcast. Thunder heard faintly in the distance soon came crashing and roaring overhead, heralded intermittently by vivid flashes of lightning. Quickly unrolling the tent, we erected it in a makeshift manner under some nearby scrub. Just in time, for down came a formidable battery of huge hailstones with a continuing roll of thunder, which seemed to echo all the more vehemently in between the narrow

gorge, vivid lightning preceding each new outburst. Under the shelter of our tent we watched and waited, feeling none too secure in our predicament, while all around hail banked up, spreading over an extensive area of hills a thick white covering. Without abating, the storm continued for 15 minutes, bringing in its train a steady cold drizzle.

We lit a fire with the wood we had fortunately kept dry, relished some biscuits and cheese washed down with a mug of hot tea, re-packed, and prepared to attack the steep opposite side of the gorge. Access was now made all the more difficult by the thick layer of slippery hailstones. After much pacing up and down the side of the river, which had become considerably swollen, and not finding a suitable place to jump across, we plunged through in boots and slacks, pushed through a belt of rain-drenched scrub, and began a slow, tiring ascent of the hill.

Once the top of the slope was reached we came upon an easy spur leading up to the outer flanks of Table Hill. Our pace was quickened in eagerness to peer over the crest in searching for a glimpse of the aforementioned hut. Sure enough, perched high up on the side of a bare line of hills about half a mile away, stood a grey, weather-beaten building with a large brick chimney. Maybe it was a shepherd's hut, but there were no obvious signs of life about. Not many minutes elapsed before we had reached our objective, where a rather apprehensive approach was made to one of the windows, whereupon we beheld two wooden bunks, a small table, a cupboard, and other rough furniture, besides a good stock of cooking utensils.

It seemed evident that no one had been about the place for some time, so we tried the door which, by good fortune, opened readily. Here was a veritable tramp's haven. A pile of dry wood stacked in one corner was soon crackling and flaming as we placed our billy and a pan full of sausages and eggs over the grate.

Fortified with a good meal, and warmed by a roaring fire, our spirits were soon much revived, and we "turned in" to enjoy an undisturbed night's sleep.

The morning dawned more hopefully, with the sun streaming through at intervals, but rain clouds still hung forebodingly in the sky. We determined to set off home after lunch, but in the meantime carry out some exploring of the area. Across the valley from the hut a portion of the pipe-line marked on the map presented itself, carved out high up on the hill and disappearing round a bend. We scaled the hillside and set off on what seemed an endless tramp, following the ditch around the sides of numerous bracken-covered hills, where in places landslides had obliterated its course. Finally it terminated in the floor of a tussocky valley. To obtain some idea of our position, we scrambled through thick bracken up to the top of an adjacent hill. Rows of bleak scrub-covered hills met our eyes, the only sign of habitation being a few lonely sheep grazing down in some of the scattered valleys. High up on our right rose a huge barren hill where, winding and twisting up its steep slopes we could discern a narrow clay track. Frowning down upon us from the summit towered an extensive rampart of dark grey rock. A grey mist was drifting in from the west and enveloping the far-away hills. We had mislaid our compass, but, referring to the map, ascertained that the track to the right was probably that marked as Black Swamp Road. The scene was bleak and uninviting, and time was too short to allow us to proceed any further, so we turned back to the pipe-line. Deviating our course later by following a different branch, we were led up over the top of a tussocky hill, from where a marvellous view of Waitahuna was obtained with the yellow, scarred areas of the gold diggings showing up prominently. Far behind us rose the snow-covered peaks of a distant mountain range. The Nuggets,

off the coast from Kaka Point, showed up purple and clear in the distance, while the hills of home also looked a long distance off. A short detour brought up within easy reach of the hut.

Dinner over, hut tidied, wood replaced, we set off on the homeward track at 1.30 o'clock, walking up over the summit of Table Hill. The sky had cleared, the sun streamed down, and we were feeling pleased that we had covered more new ground, gained more experience, and were taking back with us home pleasant memories to add to a score of tramping exploits.

Later we found out that the area in which the hut stands is known as Hangman's Gully, a very appropriate name, we thought, for such a bleak, isolated valley.

—M. C. J.



QUEENSTOWN DIARY—December, 1949

- 17th: Arrived Queenstown for a fortnight, full of hope of scampering over every hill in sight. Wind N.W.
- 19th: Saw *Earnslaw* depart for Glenorchy. Wind south; weather promising fine—perhaps the nor'-wester has blown itself out at last. Many shooters on board, but no trampers.
- 20th: Wind back to N.W. Early morning ascent of Ben Lomond and glimpsed Earnslaw, Aspiring, and Christina before the clouds blotted out everything. Rain all afternoon.
- 21st: Saw *Ben Lomond* off to Glenorchy with three young ladies hopefully bound for Olivine. Heavy rain.
- 23rd: *Ben Lomond* creaked off for Elfin Bay and Glenorchy under a staggering load of Tararuas, Hutt Valley, and O.T.C. members. Wind now strong N.W.
- 24th: Alarm at 4 a.m. Rain. Woke at 5. Clearing slowly. Left at 6 for Double Cone with Bill McLeod, Gavin Clark, and Ron Stewart (Invercargill). Reached summit 1 p.m. Visibility poor, but could sometimes see the other peaks and at least one glimpse of Queenstown. Snow of mixed quality. Careful descent of upper slopes, ran down lower ridge, return to Queenstown in time to greet the *Earnslaw* from Kingston with a load of optimistic holiday-makers and mountaineers. Heavy rain all night.
- 26th: Saw *Ben Lomond* off to Glenorchy with one large Club party heading for the Dart as well as other optimists. Strong N.W. wind and rain up the lake.
- 27th: Wind N.W. Need I say more?
- 28th: Saw *Earnslaw* off for the Head, with Gavin and party for Routeburn. Usual weather forecast, "Rain in South Westland." During the day heavy rain developed in the lake, reaching Queenstown in early afternoon.
- 29th: Wind switched round to the south, a clearing day with snow halfway down Ben Lomond.
- 30th: Off at last. Bright sunny morning and my last chance to have a look at the valleys at the Head. Up to Glenorchy per *Earnslaw*,

then by truck to Rees Bridge and off up the valley. Swag not very heavy—three days' food, but rope and two pairs of crampons aboard in case I met anyone interested in a climb. Travelled the first mile or two with a Canterbury party, then pushed on alone. A glorious dip (complete immersion) near Arthur's Creek. Met an Auckland party at the hut, and I was informed that Earnslaw and 25-Mile Huts both full. I looked up to Wright's Col to see if any sign of the O'Kane-Rosie party, but East Peak was so plastered with icicles that climbing was clearly off. Decided to camp at the old O.T.C. 1946 base at Hunter Junction. Arrived dead beat about 7 o'clock to find the whole area pretty full of Tararuas, so I carried on as far as the Big Slip and dosed down for the night.

31st: Another beautiful morning. Up at daybreak, away just after 5; shortly before 7 I stirred up a couple in Shelter Rock Hut; they hadn't a fire going, but offered to get one on and make me a brew, but I wanted to get the big climb over before the sun reached me, so carried on. Fairly slow progress up to the Saddle. It was colder down the other side, so I travelled better. Crossed the stream just above the Natural Bridge, which some people won't believe exists. Then round the side of Headlong and eventually down to the Dart Hut—2 p.m. I had expected to greet R.B.H. and his merry men there, but the only inhabitants were four Tararuas and an Auckland party who arrived just after me. I enjoyed a brew of Tararua tea, rested an hour or so, and left at 4 for the Lower Dart. Weather thickening up again. An interlude to inspect and report on the bridge at Whitbourn Flats, then carried on towards Cattle Flat. Met two Victoria folks on the way, advance guard of a party of twelve. I had seen another party of 12, also Victoria, across Snowy Creek in the morning. Half-way down Cattle Flat before dark and I picked a spot beside a rock with a slight overhang, where I stored a bit of dry wood in case of rain overnight.

1st January, 1950: No rain last night, but thickening up now. Moved off about 5 in the first of the drizzle. At the foot of the Flat I surprised the rest of the Victoria party, just awakening to a new day (and year)—my first attempt at "First-footing." Rain getting heavier, and reached Dredge Huts about 8.30 in a downpour. In residence were two Canterbury chaps just off down valley, one Victoria, and our own Ross, Ross, Bruce and John (arrived about midnight from Routeburn). A quick snack, then I joined the Canterbury party, very glad of their company over the next eight hours as we squelched down the Dart. Had to climb both bluffs, Sandy and Chinaman's. Weather clearer as we got past the latter. The long grind up Chinaman's Flat had us all pretty weary and very glad to call it a day at the foot of the next flat.

2nd January: Off to a good start, we slogged down to Paradise and there humbled ourselves to accept motor transport the next 12 miles. And so aboard the good ship *Earnslaw* and back down the lake.

—W. S. G.

Start thinking NOW about your contribution for the next issue of *Outdoors*. To-morrow you may have forgotten most of the spicy incidents.

FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF NEW ZEALAND

The increasing tempo of activity of the Federation over the past year or two shows clearly that that organisation is fulfilling a real need and is helping the cause of all Clubs as well as individual members. In recent years the Federation has been fortunate to have had a succession of exceedingly able officers in its key positions, and it may be a source of satisfaction to us to know that the present President, now in his second term of office, is our near-neighbour, Harry Stevenson, of Oamaru, the man who own way we may also pay a compliment to the hard-working and efficient five years ago dragged to the top of the Rock and Pillar Range all the materials needed for the building of the present hut there. Perhaps in our Secretary, Mrs. Mavis Davidson, of Wellington.

One of the outstanding achievements of the past year was the appearance of the third edition of the Federation's handbook, *Safety in the Mountains*. Under the capable supervision of some of our friends of the Tararua Club, and with assistance from recognised authorities in all districts, this booklet is a most valuable contribution.

Other aspects of the year's work have been the special safety broadcasts arranged before Christmas and Easter, giving a last-minute reminder of some of those elementary precautions that are so easily overlooked; and the Federation's active participation in the Search and Rescue Organisation, now operating on a national basis with Government backing. Members of our Club take a prominent part in the latter. Other matters dealt with include the provision of facilities in various districts, and these range from availability of aerial maps to accommodation at the Chateau Tongariro and the provision at Milford Sound of stores available to visitors.

One of the less pleasant functions of the Federation is the preparation of reports concerning accidents in the mountains, and the drawing of any necessary moral therefrom. Concerning the death of a schoolgirl near Mt. Holdsworth last December, the report says: "This unfortunate accident shows how necessary it is for members of parties strictly to follow the instructions given to them, and we cannot too strongly stress the need for the retention at all times on any trip of windproof and rainproof clothing. It is absolutely wrong to leave this sort of equipment on the track to be picked up on the return journey. The sudden and unexpected deterioration of the weather on this occasion emphasises the folly of discarding spare clothing." Later in the month a young man was swept away and drowned in the Taramakau River, not far from Arthur's Pass, and the following extract from the report deserves the attention of all who venture off the beaten track:

"This accident shows very pointedly that the state of a river ford cannot be judged by appearances. In this case the bottom was very dangerous, but only on the far side, and so the party, relying on the firmer bottom on the take-off side, were trapped. There is only one safe rule, and that is, that when a river is swollen and discoloured, the ford should either not be attempted at all or the rope should be used. Members of parties should not be slow or ashamed to ask for the rope. The leader should err on the side of caution and insist on the rope being used, even in cases where the members of his party feel confident that it can be dispensed with. It passes the bounds of comprehension why people should be reluctant to take safety precautions, especially in rivers. Climbers who would not dream of venturing on an ice slope without roping are sometimes all too reluctant to use the rope in river crossings."

We commend to the attention of members the lessons to be drawn from the above reports. In instituting enquiries into such incidents, the Federation has no thought of apportioning blame on individuals, but is vitally concerned with finding out just what caused each accident in order that it may not be repeated by others.



TRAMPING AMONG THE CLASSICS

Holding firmly to the belief that reading material for the Christmas trip must follow the tradition which has taken Dickens, Trollope, and Chaucer to the mountains, one member of our party last Christmas introduced to rain-soaked Routeburn Valley "Four Great Tragedies," by William Shakespeare. Some lines from the above, when torn from their context, seemed so suited to our immediate surroundings that they are perhaps worthy of repetition here.

Romeo and Juliet: Act I, Scene 4—"Give me a torch—I am not for this ambling; but, being heavy, I will bear the light." Act II, Scene 1—"This field-bed is too cold for me: Come, shall we go?" Act IV, Scene 4—"Make haste, make haste, Sirrah, fetch drier logs. Peter will show you where they are."

Macbeth: Act I, Scene 1—"When shall we three (four) meet again, In thunder, lightning and in rain." Act IV, Scene 1—"Round about the cauldron go, etc. Double, double toil trouble, Fire burn and cauldron bubble," etc.

And finally, the "River-crossing Scene" from *Julius Caesar*, Act I, Scene 2: . . . "Once upon a raw and gusty day, the troubled Tiber chafing with her shores, Caesar said to me, Dar'st thou, Cassius, now leap in with me into this angry flood, and swim to yonder point. . . . I plunged in, and bade him follow: so indeed, he did. The torrent roared: and we did buffet it with lusty sinews: throwing it aside, etc., etc."

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THE LOCHY AND THE ROBERTS

As I look back on this very enjoyable trip, I can only describe it as one of haziness—haziness of maps, haziness as to where we were going, as to where we were when we got there, and as to where we had been when we got back; but from this haze, as from a thick swirling mountain mist, come fleeting glimpses of the hills, and occasionally through a gap in the void a momentary majestic snow-covered peak stands out in my memory.

This state of affairs started when, at 3.15 a.m. the bus deposited us at the gate of Fairlight Station, and I endeavoured to follow, in the darkness, the other four members of the party who had decided to set off immediately for our future base camp. I remember first identifying the voices, then viewing the shapes from which they emanated from as many angles as possible, and finally deciding to follow something that had no particular shape but could be recognised from its peculiar "squelch, squelch" as it sludged through the mud. This shape evidently had a facility for following other queer shapes, and at 4.30, by the light of a candle, the four faces I had seen in the bus were all outlined against an array of bunks which were quickly claimed and put to their proper use.

Friday was a very indifferent day, with mist obscuring the hills. One party made a start up the Roberts, but most were satisfied with climbing the adjacent hills in order to plan their trips for the following day and work off their tiredness from the night before. On Saturday most parties made an early start. Ours moved off at 10 with the idea of going straight to the head of the Mataura, over the saddle and down to a hut in the Lochy, and return the following day. By the time we reached the first two huts in the Mataura we realised we had been a little ambitious; alternatives were discussed over the mid-day meal, and we were ready to move on when our learned legal friend came into sight. We had had some difficulty getting into the hut, and now could not resist the temptation to sit about and give misleading advice. When finally a track had been worn round the hut and no key could be found for the door (which had no lock), we showed them the secret and moved on.

Our party of five now made good time to the next hut, which is set in beautiful surroundings. From this point the track follows through bush and later mountain scrub and open tussock to the head. We kept carefully to a cattle track through the scrub, took the final pinch very slowly, but were on the saddle in $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours from the top hut. (This saddle cannot be seen from below, and a smaller saddle high on the right is sometimes mistaken for it.) Evening was approaching, so we did not tarry long; in our hurry to try to reach the hut (if it existed) we did not take much time to look down on the Lochy from above; but we did fairly soon realise that, contrary to the maps, the Lochy swings almost at right angles to the head of the Mataura. About a mile west of the saddle it breaks into two branches, between which is a peculiar peak that seems to be falling backwards into the Left branch. A mile or so down valley (to our right) we saw the two lakes we were looking for, and below us a ribbon of water flowing down marshy-looking flats into the upper lake.

The route now led down past a hard sandy clay chute, and due to its steepness we were not long in reaching the floor. A good track led us past the first lake and finally to the hut, which we found as darkness was falling, $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours from the last hut. It lies just above the lower lake and is well provisioned, but firewood is scarce. The chimney was down, and chinks in the walls allowed plenty of fresh air to circulate; the one bunk in its present condition would sleep five. The two lakes are each about fifty acres in area, and ducks are in abundance.

Next morning we suddenly decided, in lieu of returning over the pass, to try the Lochy-Roberts route. We had no map, but we were afraid our chances of catching the bus home were fairly slender; but thinking of our fellow-members clambering over all the surrounding peaks and putting our modest trip to shame, two of us decided to try the round trip. Past some rocks and through a patch of bush—on the other side we watched a couple of deer run for shelter—and so on down the Lochy, with every minute now precious. On the way down we saw five large, inviting, bush-filled valleys join the Lochy on the northern side, while on the southern side is the Longburn and a smaller tributary. We have been working on a map of this area for the Club, to show huts, etc. We took a few minutes to sit behind a bush and roar at a stag, which responded gallantly. We carried on down the right bank, veering round to the right under the bluff slopes which lay between us and the Mataura. Further down these seemed to fall right into the river, but we found a way below them; just beyond this, where the first valley comes in on this side is a dipping yard with a beautiful swimming pool alongside. Ahead the mountains were giving way to lower and more tussocky country, while a high saddle promised to lead to the Roberts. Across the river, in a small clump of bush is another hut—small, comfortable, very tidy, and well provisioned. We started off again and were into the bush and starting to climb when we stumbled across an old brick-clay six-man hut, where a deer shooter and a boy were staying. They were amazed that we thought of going over the pass, and could give us no information; we had a chat, but were glad to be under way again and to leave the sandflies behind—the only place in the valley where we found them. The Lochy we thought a very pleasant valley, with scope for all grades of trampers, mountaineers, and rock-climbers. The country is certainly mountainous, although lacking the grandeur of the peaks of the main ranges.

High above the hut we followed a fence line some distance from a bluffy outcrop, and finally reached the saddle in under two hours. The way was steep, but we faced it cheerfully in the firm belief that before dark we would be safely in the shelter of the Roberts Hut. Our information was that the Mataura, Lochy, and Roberts formed a large triangle. On reaching the saddle, however, the triangle fell like a pyramid of empty tins. Below us was another valley parallel with, and as deep and steep-sided as the Lochy. Just where was the Roberts?—and the bus? The view left little impression. To the north-west, range upon range of snow-covered peaks, northwards two major peaks drained to the Lochy, and further east the Lochy flowed into Lake Wakatipu, beyond which we could see the Remarkables, the Crown Range, and other landmarks. We found later that the valley below us was, in fact, the Longburn, which joins the Lochy near the lake; beyond were a series of lower, more tussocky ridges, with occasional peaks, all running roughly parallel with the lake. Directly south from us and across the Longburn were three tussocky passes; we decided to head for the middle one, which looked the easiest and was a good deal below us.

A ridge on our right promised a good route down; beyond it the way almost directly down on two huts beside bush on the other side of the was blocked by steep bluffs, but the ridge led well down without losing much height, until suddenly just before dark we came over a point and looked stream. We managed to make them after a scramble down the last face in gathering darkness, and spent a good night. Next day the bus was due to start at 2, so we made an early start, still sticking to our triangle idea (but with at least one extra valley as an obstacle on the way!). An hour or so saw us on the selected saddle, and away went another pyramid of tins. Below us was another valley still running parallel to the Lochy; we began

to wonder just how long this process was going to repeat itself. And now a storm blew up, and I discovered I had left my oilskin in the Longburn Hut. The only thing was to follow the valley out, wherever it might lead us; we had more or less rationed our food all the way, and the present state of affairs did not promise an early improvement.

As we hurried down the valley we saw many hinds and fawns, and could even have witnessed a stag fight, but our main object was to get somewhere to get in touch with Fairlight Station and put a stop to any search parties. Four hours later we arrived at the base camp—somehow this stream had turned out to be the Roberts after all. The words we could see written on our worthy President's face struck well and truly home, though he was much too much of a gentleman to say them. We joined the home-coming party, and after a week's careful thought the haze started to lift and we were able to piece together pretty well where we had been. Must go back some time.

"GRANDPA."



"KARITANE IDYLL"

Six gallant sea dogs put out to sea
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A tough cut-throat crew of the old garrison,
And a new deck hand, Mag. Harrison.

The sea was rough, the weather was bleak,
The whole crew moaned when she sprung a leak,
"The men must be saved," skipper George said
"The women can sink, they're as heavy as lead."

The females yelled, the he-men roared,
They shouted for Drake to come aboard,
They shouted for Drake, but Francis was busy
Trying to rescue little Lizzy.

They lost their oars, they lost the boat,
The girls couldn't swim, they forgot to float,
So they left behind the raging main,
Towed to the shore by the gallants O'Kane.

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