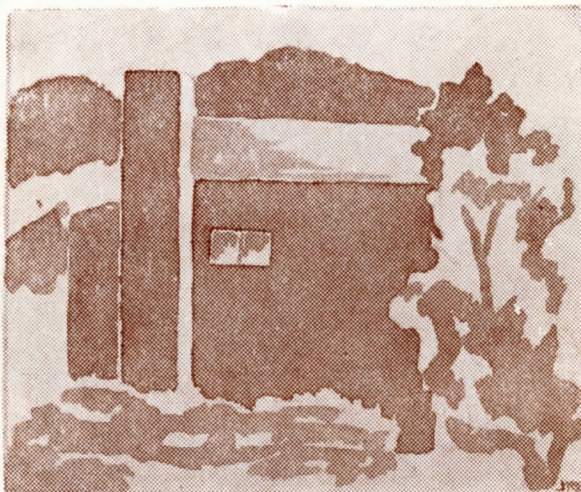


# OUTDOORS



BEN RUDD'S

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

September, 1956  
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# Otago Tramping Club

(Incorporated)

-:-:-

## OFFICERS FOR 1956 - 57

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Miss N. Gamble, Messrs. F. Austin, R. Cunningham, G. McDonald, G. McLaren.

Hon. Editor: B. W. Campbell

Hon. Auditor: H. S. Tilly

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

An Annual Message to members of the Otago Tramping Club should be simple to prepare. So it is-if we keep it light and on the surface. For the Club is in exceedingly good heart: working parties are well supported, the Clubroom attracts full attendances, and day and weekend trips are being energetically pursued. The programme ahead is designed to provide for a continuation of this activity, and possibly some extension of it as well. We in Dunedin are fortunate indeed in the great range and variety of tramping country right at our back door.

One thing, however, gives me a great deal of concern. Our membership today is active and energetic. So was our membership in 1946. But in the meantime there has been practically a complete change of faces. Practically none of the trip leaders, office-bearers and so on of the ten years ago are taking an active part in things today. The same thing exactly happened in the decade before that, and in 1946 we had substantially none of the young men of the thirties. Again, why? Perhaps we could blame the war then, but we can't now. I felt in 1946 that we had a core of active enthusiasm that could withstand all the ravages of age, matrimony or business cares. The spirit endures but the faces have changed. How strong then we would be if the old faces were still there, lending their advice, their support, and their standing! Can I appeal to the present active members to look on their Club membership not as a matter for a year, but as something deserving continuing support. Only thus will the Club reach the heights it should attain, and only thus will the individual reap the full satisfaction he can expect from his tramping activities.

Meanwhile, however, we can take ample comfort from the all-round enthusiasm and activity of Club members.

Long may it continue.

W. SCOTT GILKISON.

EDITORIAL

In presenting this year's "Outdoors" we do so in the hope that it reflects as far as possible the Club's activity over the past twelve months. The trips described in it range from the purely local to ones far off the beaten tracks, from modest adventures to days on the high mountains where the mind is lifted from the commonplace and keyed to a high pitch for hours on end; with the spirit elevated and renewed far from the tooming city. Lacking only is a record of Sunday trips which have many supporters but, it seems, few advocates in print.

It is pleasing to have many new contributors to our pages, with a good representation of the younger, more active members who are tasting the enjoyment of finding for themselves new tramping territory, new techniques and new experiences.

In conclusion, the Editor wishes to thank all those who have helped to make this issue of "Outdoors" a pleasure in the editing and, we hope, well worth the reading.

B.W.C.



## ROUTEburn RAMBLE (A DAY OF SURPRISES)

Extract from the Log of Christmas Trip of three Club Members and two friends, all N.E.V. Rovers (1955-56.)

Bill Roberts, Jim Agnew, Len Davies, John Robertson and Merv. Cranefield.

Wed. Dec 28. A hot day, clouding over later.

We were woken early when steers attacked our camp, wrecking the fireplace. Camp was situated in the flat above the Routeburn Huts. After breakfast we packed and were on our way by 7.30 a.m. The track leads into beech forest about 100 yards below the huts, it then circles round and climbs to the rock bastion above the Routeburn Falls. It took our party about an hour to reach the rocks. From here we went through the open natural basin to the outlet of Lake Harris where we arrived at 9.50 a.m. Here we set up camp about 30 yds from the lake under the bluffs along which the track runs to Harris Saddle.

We decided to go in and find Lake Wilson, so, after a yarn to three people from Dunedin who had followed us up, we set off along the right hand side of the lake at 10.30 a.m. All went well till we reached the last bluff where Len and Merv climbed up a chimney. It was rather tricky so they dropped the rope to the others. Here Bill gave us a thrill when he slipped and all but fell in the lake.

We then climbed over the bluff and down to the valley at the head of Lake Harris, where we expected to find Lake Wilson. We rounded a bend that blocked our view and found to our disappointment that the valley was very short and there was no lake. So we stopped on the grass verge by the river and had dinner. Over lunch it was decided to climb a saddle at the head of the valley to see if we could obtain a suitable view of the Hollyford.

It was a steep climb and half way up Bill and Jim decided to stop, but the others carried on. After a climb up a small snowfield we reached the saddle and found to our surprise and joy that there was a large lake just in front of us. We did some exploring and found the outlet in a thundering waterfall about 30

yards to our right.

On the way we saw a lonely deer running amongst the rocks. We found a large gully leading conveniently in our direction and followed it up and were soon on top. We were just in time to see Madeline, towering Tutoko, down the Hollyford to Lake McKerrow, and in the far distance Martin's Bay before they were all covered by mist.

On the way down we climbed onto a saddle and viewed from it another, but smaller, lake which apparently drained into High Falls Creek. Only a lonely rusty sardine tin spoilt our feeling of utter isolation and discovery. (Was it the same tin I found in 1949, and was similarly disappointed ? Ed.)

At 1.45 p.m. we returned to the others and found them waiting in the valley. On the return journey we went round the other side of the lake (L. Harris), up to Harris Saddle and back to Camp. We found that L. Harris possesses a small island.

We were all sitting round a small waterhole, which I then discovered close to camp, drinking "Andrews" when along bowled a very astonished Aussie. We swapped yarns and he told us to our sorrow of the death of Davie Gunn.

Footnote: Returning on the boat we met Peter Chandler of the Invercargill Tramping Club who is surveying the area and he agreed with our theory that the unknown lake drained into High Falls.

'Cas.'

#### Melancholy Note

'I can't understand the mentality of one,  
I can't understand at all  
Why he should ruin what others have done  
By carving his name on the wall.'

Cas.

(Written at Routeburn Huts.)

ROUTEburn - WITH A DIFFERENCE

Many hundreds and thousands of tourists and trampers have travelled from the Routeburn to Howden and the Greenstone or vice versa. But I wonder how many of these have done it under such delightful and unconventional conditions as I found.

I left the bus at the Routeburn crossing on Wednesday January 25 at about three o'clock, and wandered quietly up to the Routeburn Huts. These are always a pleasant spot, but I thought I would spend the night a bit higher, so moved on again at about five. Some distance above the bushline I stopped to boil up and have some food, but conditions were so attractive ahead that I carried on towards the Harris Saddle. After following the narrow winding track round the bluffs overlooking Lake Harris, I came out on the saddle shortly before dark. From the top of the saddle I gazed across the Hollyford towards the Darran Peaks, mostly buried in cloud, and listened to the roar of the river, almost 4,000 feet below. In case of rain I collected a small heap of firewood and put it in shelter under a rock, then I lay down in my bag alongside and soon drifted off into unconsciousness.

I woke with the first of the daylight, and decided to make a quick dash to the adjoining summit of Conical Hill. This consisted of a series of snowgrass ledges, some quite steep, but all easily linked up. Shortly before six, as the rising sun lit the summits of Christina and Tutoko, I was just moving onto the summit. And here indeed was one of the most delightful views that one can hope to see in the Southern Alps. Over thirty years had elapsed since last time I stood on top of Conical Hill in company with my father, and in the meantime I have seen many of the most famous mountain scenes of New Zealand; but in its way I think that this is one of the most magnificent outlooks that can be imagined. The great mass of mountains of the Darran Range, from Christina to Tutoko showed up close and clear beyond the mighty canyon of the Hollyford, and away in the distance the waves were breaking at Martins Bay. As I waited and looked, the sun crept steadily lower over the mountains and towards the depths of the valleys. At length I tore myself away, scrambled back to the saddle, had a little more to eat, and by seven was on the way to Lake McKenzie.



6.

The next part I took slowly because this is a great 'grandstand' route commanding the view of the Hollyford and its guardian peaks, and I wanted to enjoy it all. After a skirmish with the bush I was at the lake soon after ten, and stopped to boil up; then along the track to Howden, which I reached soon after three. This hut was likewise deserted, but I wanted to get further along the track that night, so I left about five-thirty. As darkness approached I lay down under the beech trees a mile or so beyond Lake McKellar.

After another good sleep I again woke at daybreak, and soon after six was on the march down the Greenstone. The river was really low after all the fine weather, and I splashed across it at will. Some distance below Shaw's Hut I met the sunshine and felt very thankful that I had covered most of the open country before the heat of the day. The bush track down the Greenstone Gorge was very pleasant and easy, and at one o'clock I landed at Elfin Bay - just a little over two days since I had left the Routeburn Bus. A very eventful, and really delightful two days they had certainly been.

W.S.G.

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PARTY : R. Rawlings (leader), G. McDonald, Ben Spekrayse, M. Robertson, Gladys Richards, Hilary Smith and Marie Jensen.

With a horse and dray to transport packs, boxes and the driver, and leaving the hospitality of Aspiring Homestead behind us, our party set off at a steady pace for Cascade Hut, some three or four hour's journey away. In spite of a few ruts, when the dray balanced acrobatically on one or other of its wheels, we were able to reach the precincts of Raspberry Hut without any mishaps. Cascade Hut was still a few miles away, but we made two trips to the Hut with the supplies arriving back with the last load in the early hours of the morning. We found next day that Prince, our trusty steed, had deserted us during the night, anticipating perhaps that he was to be used to transport a great pile of deerskins back to the homestead that day. Our driver's consternation was understandable so he set off down valley after breakfast and was not seen again until three days later.

In the meantime the rest of the party availed themselves of the fine, warm weather, resting in the sunshine on the first day, and the next day stretching their legs by climbing the Shotover Saddle. The view over the other side was not spectacular, but on the top of the Saddle there was a large deep tarn which proved to be a pleasant swimming pool for some members of the party. The following day we set off up a side valley to view Rob Roy and its hanging glacier. Here we were unexpectedly reunited with our leader who on his way up to Cascade Hut had side-tracked to stalk some meat for the pot. That night as we sat round a blazing fire devouring an appetising stew of fresh venison, plans were made for a three day trip over into the Dart Valley, via the "famous" Ernie Smith Route. The return trip was to take us down a new route below Plunket Dome. Three days' supplies of nutritious foods were assembled by the honorary dietitian, who, alas did not know that later these must be meticulously rationed to meet the requirements of a five day trip. (She takes no responsibility for the emaciated condition of

certain members of the party on their return to Base Camp. We left the next day, in the cool of the late afternoon. After a steep climb up through the beech we emerged from the bush on to the tussock covered slopes of the Ernie Smith route. From our campsite just above the bushline, we obtained some memorable views of Aspiring and surrounding peaks bathed pink in fading sunset. The only disadvantage of our camp was that the water supply was half an hour's walk away.

We left in the morning, climbing slowly up the Smith route and stopping frequently to rest and admire the panoramic view spread out before us. The rope was used once to help us negotiate a steep little bluff on which a fatal accident had occurred last year. Although the ascent of this presented no difficulty, we realised that great care would need to be taken when descending, as the bluffs are well concealed when viewed from above. Eventually we reached the cairn at the top of the route and crossed over a stretch of snow towards Mt. Tyndall. A short climb brought us up onto the summit from where we obtained a fine view of many surrounding ranges and predominant peaks. Descending again to the snow we roped up in two parties and set off across the Isobel Glacier, crossing over a rib of rock on the west side of Mt. Tyndall which took us down ~~en~~ to the Snowy Glacier. We moved quickly, reaching the terminal moraine just as dusk fell.

A camp site was levelled out amongst the scree and a four-man tent, which was to hold seven people, was erected. After a moderate meal we turned gladly into our sleeping bags and slept soundly that night. Next day we found there was no sign of vegetation but someone found a large weta crawling about among the rocks. An easy plod down valley brought us to the natural rock bridge over the Snowy Creek. We lunched in the bright sunshine before crossing, then followed the usual route above the main bluffs to reach Dart Hut about 7 p.m. Here we found Ken Begg and party in residence. Before leaving the next day two Hutt Valley trampers presented us with a packet of Ryvita biscuits which helped to augment our depleted food supplies. We pushed on to Cascade Saddle, traversing the terminal part of the Dart Glacier which, some of us noticed, had receded considerably over the past



two or three years. Later, to avoid jumping across the crevasses we climbed up on the lower slopes of Ansted, which involved a long, monotonous slog to keep us above seemingly countless tiers of bluffs and deep rock guts. Once the saddle was reached we stretched ourselves out on the warm turf for a welcome rest and consumed copious amounts of delicious, milkless tea prepared by the advance party. After a good spell in the warm sunshine we donned extra clothing and set off up the lower slopes of Plunket Dome. On the way up we passed many bright yellow buttercups growing in isolated patches on the grey scree. We passed round the north side of Plunket Dome over rather soft snow, then descended to a tract of snow below a low rock bluff which we believe is called the Baby Plunket Glacier. The grade was fairly steep at first and we went down backwards, getting plenty of exhilarating exercise with the axes as we plunged the shafts well down into the snow before taking each step. New Year's Eve was spent camping on a tussocky plateau well up on the mountain side, and to welcome the New Year in, we shook hands all round and thought wistfully of the supplies down in Cascade Hut.

Next day we continued on down steep snowgrass slopes until the way became barred by steep crumbling scree and tussock slopes running into a rocky creek bed. By way of descent the latter was thought to be the lesser of two evils and so we climbed down the rocks until we were halted by a steep drop of ten feet or so. Packs were removed and except for one which independently made its own way down, the rope was used to lower the rest down to the next shelf. We in turn were belayed down. Lower down, the creek bed dropped away too steeply for us to descend by it, but by climbing out of the gut we were able to push through a stretch of tangled subalpine scrub, until we eventually reached the Chris Johnson track. Although presenting a broad highway at first, this track petered out later on involving us in annoying bush scrambles for the last few hundred feet above the valley floor.

After the usual welcome cup of tea from the Kershaws at Aspiring Hut we continued on to our Base Camp where a royal repast was prepared and we ate late into the night.

M.C.J.

The excuse that photography was an art requiring frequent tarrying seemed an admirable one for many delightful stops in the Eglinton Valley to feast our eyes on peaks and valleys of old acquaintance, and bask in the ever increasing warmth of the sun as the weather cleared.

Thoughts of the morrow were far distant until the Homer locality came into view with that extreme suddenness peculiar to those parts. A perfunctory reconnaissance from Cirque Camp showed that Mt. McPherson appeared to present few problems and from it a clearer picture of the route across to Mt. Talbot, which was still somewhat shrouded in mystery, would be obtained. Perhaps Talbot looking so majestic and aloof, could be tackled later if conditions were in our favour.

Thanks to a brilliant moon the following morning Homer Saddle seemed to beckon us on and the usual weary grind went unnoticed. The first streaks of dawn found us on Talbot's Ladder, fascinating with its sheer drops on either side. An extensive area of clean whitish rock gave easy access to the glacier under Mt. McPherson. It would appear that recently this glacier was much more extensive and that the bleached miniature terraces, bare of loose stones and even moss, were not long ago covered with glacial neve. We were almost below the saddle between Mts. McPherson and Talbot before it was necessary to don crampons and rope up to negotiate this stretch of the climb. From here it would appear that we would have a fair chance of ascending Talbot, or if something unseen should block our route that at least we would have an interesting day's scramble.

Abandoning thoughts of climbing McPherson now that Talbot seemed reasonably accessible we set off across the very broken ice of the glacier towards the rocky ridge leading up on to Mt. Talbot. A silent prayer gave thanks that a thin crust covered the ice and only a few steps would have to be cut to steer us up through the maze of deep crevasses.

An hour later, having reached the rocky ridge of our goal by scaling a vertical slab at the edge of the glacier, we found time to drink in the early morning scenery. Clouds rolling in from the sea filled all the valleys as far as the eye could see, leaving only isolated peaks like Tutoko



Madeline, Sheerdown, Llawrenny Peaks, Elliot, Grave and Earnslaw all standing out in solitary splendour. Fingers of mist reached towards us as though inviting us to step out from our rocky recess into their soft embraces. It seemed more discreet to decline this tempting offer and make our way round over the jumble of rocky slabs that now formed our path to the summit.

From our viewpoint we could see in the ridge one or two steps about which we were a little dubious. Failure to pass these would mean the end to all our hopes. Again Dame Fortune was with us and each step gave some sort of access to the rocks above. Dodging, sometimes round to the Hollyford side of the ridge, sometimes over to the Homer side, sometimes up on the ridge proper gave us ever changing scenery - there were no complaints about boredom!

At last the mountain grew tired of this frolicsome perversity and left us to make our way to the summit, but just to show that it hadn't quite finished its tricks Talbot presented us with a choice of summits differing so little in their respective heights that each had to feel the climber's boot.

At ten thirty we settled down on the warm summit rocks to enjoy some less exacting pursuits. With plenty of time in hand we could afford to be leisurely in our eating, sunbathing, photography, and sympathetic thoughts for those folk spending a miserable day below. Tourist buses could be heard grinding their way up to the tunnel only to pass through from one cloud-filled valley to another. How snug we felt perched high above, enjoying glorious sunshine and peaceful calm.

As the cloud was obviously thickening and in some places sweeping down over the route we were to follow on the descent, we decided to leave at midday. Our descent was made with very reluctant steps as we felt that we had made yet another mountain friend whose hospitality had been truly bountiful.

C.N.A.

KEN BLACKWOOD LOOKS AROUND

Extracts from a letter received recently from Ken Blackwood, at present in Great Britain.

.....Last Saturday I bought a push-bike, very cheap £6, a lightweight model and it's in first-class order. Yesterday, Sunday, I went for a run to Stirling where a friend took me around the Castle and then round Stirling. ...Yes, I've been to Norway - a lovely country that reminds me, after Scotland, of New Zealand. There we (Tony White, a Birmingham friend and I) climbed and travelled quite extensively and here follows a short account -

We left Newcastle on the 13th June for Bergen. Arrived and left for Harstad (in the Lofoten Islands) on the 14th. The trip up was beautiful in scenery but the weather could have been better. We reached Svolvær where we were strongly advised to stop instead of Harstad. I did so. Three days later the police contacted Tony and he came back with all the gear to Svolvær. (Date 22nd.) Next day on a milk boat to Lompstaed at the head of the Ostnes Fjord. We spent a week and climbed Hignaftaturd, Drangin, Leylandsting (very dangerous), attempted to gain the Bliskal Glacier (just like Olivine Ice Plateau) and then tramped from 4 p.m. to 7 a.m. in broad daylight (Midnatsol), back to Svolvær. There we climbed the Svolværgeita; very nice. Next thing we caught the midnight boat to Narvik. On the way we got pictures of the 12.10 sun. Two days at Narvik and then off to Lyngsaide. Here Tony this time got some gear and we caught the bus to Svensby, then the ferry to Gjøvik. Gjøvik we climbed Jekkervarre, 18 hours-5,000 feet from sea level and about 32km; Fornestad, entirely a rock climb, ('Jek' was snow) and lastly Durmakslind, height unknown but second highest in district. Jek. is highest in Arctic Norway.

After this it was back to Lyngsaide. From here we climbed Kjosdentinder going farther along the ridge than anyone to date, we believe. From here I went back to Narvik. In Narvik tried to work my passage, but no ships. Tony coming later via Tromsø succeeded. I tried hitching to Oslo-wasn't very successful. Arrived at Oslo by train on Fri. Jul 27, got last berth on 'Braemar' on Sat. (pawned my camera for the money) and reached Newcastle on Mon...



### EARLY WINTER JOURNEY

Arriving at Queenstown via a comfortable little 'Dominie' of Southern Scenic Airways, which took 55 minutes from Taieri, we did some shopping then found a camping site. The four of us, Bruce, Lyall, Roy and myself decided next day to go up Ben Lomond next day and following a well graded track soon emerged into warm sunlight and in three hours reached the summit to get the benefit of the extensive view. The descent was done in one and a half hours. It was hard leaving the sleeping bags next morning as there was eleven degrees of frost but we did reach the boat with time to spare and were able to watch others barely reach it in time. By this time our party had reached its full strength of six by the addition of Bill and Tony.

It was a cold journey up the lake but by the time we reached Glenorchy the sun was through and when the bus left us at Paradise the conditions were pleasantly warm. However, distant signs of westerly weather seen from the summit of Ben Lomond were becoming more evident with plenty of cigar and hog-back shaped clouds sneaking in.

From the bus we set off at a fast gait, but as soon as we were out of sight of the tourists in the bus we dumped the packs and sat down for lunch. It was then a pleasant afternoon's tramp through beech and open clearings until just on darkness we arrived at the bottom end of Dan's Padlock near the mouth of the Beansburn. Camp was made under mild conditions, but after we had settled into the sleeping bags, we were awakened by heavy rain. Both tents leaked and the one with the waterproof floor held the rain very nicely near the doorway. However by moving into waterproof covers we eased the situation and in the morning it was fine once more; although bad weather was evidently piling up in the north-west. We got away to a leisurely start - about 9.30 a.m. and as the Dart was very low we had no trouble getting round Chinaman's, Big and Sandy Bluffs. For interests sake, Bruce and Bill forded the Dart River quite easily. During lunch we were able to dry out most of the gear that had been wet from the previous night. After more open flats

and finally a piece of beech forest we arrived at the Dredge Hut at 4.30 p.m. This is a large two-roomed hut and is fairly comfortable, but has the disadvantage of smelling very highly of mice.

We had settled in and had a good fire going when a Varsity party of two men and three girls arrived from the Dart Hut, having come from the Rees previous to that. There was plenty of room for all and as it began to rain heavily and steadily we were all glad to be in adequate shelter. The rain continued steadily all night and the next day both parties decided to stay on for an extra day. We put in some time in the morning replenishing the wood supply and one amusing sidelight of this was the fact that although we cut through one tree three times, it still did not fall as it had its upper foliage well entangled with other trees nearby, so that even when we cut through one of these other trees it also remained standing. It was decided that evening that we would press on regardless of the weather next morning.

This time we were away at eight o'clock, the time full daylight arrived at this time of the year. It was still raining heavily and the track seemed to be a continuous stream. The Dart was by this time high and flowing sullen and swift with the look of dirty aluminium paint. There were many side streams to cross and it seemed as though the whole world was liquid. This gradually changed as we gained height for it became colder and snow was seen on the foliage of the beech trees. When we reached Cattle Flat everything was white and when we reached a large boulder we had a quick lunch as it was too cold to stay still for long. While we were so engaged, a party of three deer shooters were met on their way down from Dart Hut. After a few words with them we plodded on over the snow-covered flat which seemed to be endless. The snow and the icy breeze did, however, cease and the outlook took a more cheerful turn. After the flat it was a long upward grind, through beech forest and we were certainly glad to come on the Dart Hut where it was situated just outside the beech below the track, and above the junction of the Dart River and Snowy Creek. It was 6 p.m. and almost dark so we had timed it very nicely.



The Dart Hut is a comfortable and very well equipped Alpine Club Hut marred by the fact that it has a smoky fireplace that kept us gasping with running eyes and noses. We found some scales and on weighing the packs found that the weights ranged from 45 to 70 pounds, some of the weight being a considerable amount of moisture absorbed en route. It snowed all night, but gradually cleared all the next day until by evening it was evident that the nor'wester was finished. The snow certainly gave great beauty to the surroundings and the towering peaks were magnificent. During the afternoon the majority of the party made a reconnaissance trip to have a look at the way up to Snowy Saddle and they returned to report favourably on the prospects of an attempt the next day.

Frosty conditions in the morning sent us away to a good start at daylight and steady progress was made upwards after a crossing of the shaky Snowy Creek bridge. The snow was about nine inches deep but good time was made over the tracks of the recce party and within an hour we were in brilliant sunshine photographing the snow-clad peaks framed against a cloudless sky. All morning we climbed steadily and made an easy crossing of Snowy Creek which was very low.

The fresh snow in this area was about 18 inches deep. We had lunch at 12.30 p.m. on Snowy Saddle. We had been lucky enough to find fresh deer trails through the snow that saved us from having to force a way through it at knee depth. On the Rees side of the saddle there was at first a short sharp descent, and then a gradual drop down the valley over snow-covered tussock. By three o'clock the sun was blocked out by the wall of mountain on the right and the temperature dropped to below freezing point immediately. Even the finest glacial silt on the side of the river was set hard as concrete. (Even back in Dart Hut that morning there had been ice inside and one pair of boots were nearly frozen.)

By about five o'clock we were at the small Shelter Rock Hut and although there was plenty of fuel nearby we had again to put up with a smoky fireplace. It was quite a work of art cooking in the confined space between the fire and the sleeping platform and even a greater

squeeze that night fitting into the sleeping platform. We were all quite warm in spite of what must have been a good frost as all the boots that had been left around the fire were frozen solid. We did not get away until about 10.30 in the morning and in brilliant sunshine again descended rapidly into the beech and tussocky clearings and were away from the snow. The view down the valley was magnificent, especially where the snow-plastered Earnslaw group contrasted with the green beech and tussock flats. We had lunch on the terrace past the junction of the Hunter and Rees Rivers, then at a good pace carried on down valley making two more crossings of the Rees and reaching the Arthur Creek Hut one and a half hours later.

As there were no musterers in occupation we settled in to this warm and comfortable hut with its stacks of wood chips, the results of new cattle yards being built. In this part of the valley a road had been cut over all the small bluffs so that a powerful vehicle could easily be driven to at least as far as 25 Mile Hut. In the morning we made a quick two-hour tramp down to the Rees Bridge and after a boil-up at the side of the road and a rest in the sun along came a truck and the offer of a lift to Glenorchy which was readily accepted.

Next came the usual and looked-forward-to climax to trips at this end of the lake - fresh bread and scones on the good ship "Earnslaw."

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## YOGA IN THE YOGI COUNTRY

We have always admired the feats of sheer will-power that have been reported by travellers returned from "The Roof of the World" - from far Tibet. There seemed to be no doubt that if this power could be mastered it could be put to practical use by trampers. When we were younger and more enthusiastic, sleeping on shingle was a commonplace - now it's air cushions, lilos and the like. When a gorge cut across our route we did not stand waiting for a miracle of nature to fill it in. No! we leapt in and struggled up the other side feeling how good it was that these obstacles were there to be overcome.

Now it's a different story. At the same time that the hills grow rougher and steeper and the valleys deeper and tougher we have to carry all that extra weight in the shape of pneumatic cushions, hot water bottles and extra clothes; while stimulants for "that sinking feeling" on first hearing a river far below add to the burden.

So we've bought a book on yoga to see if some concentrated study can help in a practical way to make tramping a happier pastime for both young AND old. The back valley boys in Tibet think nothing of sitting out in the alto-gether when the temperature's well below the zero, and for a few days at a time, just to show how easy it is. By their levitation process such obstacles as deep gorges and rocky ridges are by-passed with ease. It's "all in the state of mind" and it seems that the motives behind the actions must be of the highest if the act is to succeed. And that's what we're working on now - to think up the right and highest motives for an occasional move through space to avoid Chinaman's Bluff in the Dart, to cross the Routeburn in high flood, or to dodge the everlasting fumbling and stumbling that goes on when we try negotiating Sleepy Hollow at night with a fading torch.

And if we can't rise to these feats, we only ask for six inches of levitation above ground level when it's too frozen for a comfortable night's sleep or the rocks underneath are too hard for the now sensitive hips.

Who is going to be first on Cook by levitation ?

"KANCHENJUNGA"



THE GHOST TOWN IN THE VALLEY

In autumn, if you leave Arrowtown and walk up the Arrow River far enough (12 miles) you come upon a lovely scene - a peak in the background and tall poplars and firs in a blaze of bright colours.

This is the entrance to Macetown, once a thriving gold miners' town in the late '80's. This old town was named after a publican called Mason Melody. Its early name of Mason's Town had gradually been shortened to Mace's Town and finally to Macetown. There were about two thousand men working between the Eight Mile and Macetown, four miles further upriver. Gold was plentiful and easy to get but food was extremely dear. All commodities were packed in on horses. The first pack track did not follow the river but went up Bush Creek towards Coronet Peak, then turning right behind German Hill and Haye's Hill dropped over the divide. In the late sixties after the Big Rush, the Chinese worked the creeks and river beds. But then the great 1878 flood came and put an end to a lot of the alluvial miners. The discovery of gold-bearing reefs later brought prosperity to Macetown and another boom was on. Some of the mines working these reefs were The Premier (one of the biggest), the Homeward Bound, The Tipperary, The Lady Fayre (once managed by a man named James Edwards), The Gladstone, Garabaldi and Defiance. At the last (reef-mining) stage there were four stores, four hotels and a population of 500. The school came under the Otago Education Board in 1870 and the teacher was a Mr. Scott. The first chairman of Macetown was a Mr. Luke Preston, a storekeeper. The late Mr. Preston's wife lives in Dunedin at present. Some 'characters' were to be found there too. The Twelve Apostles used to mine for about six months and then soak up liquor for the next six. Eventually they all died, one by one, in the Arrow Hospital. Another was August Concord a Swede, known as "Big August." This man was said to have carried two sacks of flour roped together up as far as Cooper's Terrace from Fox's (now Arrowtown). This was done for a bet, sacks then being the size of coal sacks. The wager was for £5 - a worthwhile sum in those days. Gradually people with their families left Macetown



The last person to leave came out about five months ago and died in hospital in Southland.

The baker's shop and store have just been dismantled - during the past couple of years. There are many old Macetown inhabitants still living in the Arrow district and if you ask them about it they will all look to the hills and say, "Yes, those were the days !" and other old men scratch their chins and say "There's gold in them thar hills." But nowadays there are chimneys still standing and an abundance of orchards still bearing lovely fruit.

On walking down the main street quietly in the direction of Advance Peak you will see more rabbits than anywhere else in Central and sometimes a herd of wild goats grazing. There are old coaches down banks, old railways and other signs of a scene of activity that is now a part of history.

Colin J.

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KYEBURN BUS TRIP  
FEBRUARY '56

There's something vaguely exciting about setting off by bus on a Friday night to arrive in the small hours of next morning at a place one has never seen before. And half asleep into the bargain. And so it was as we assembled for the half past nine start that we all knew would not be before a quarter to ten at the earliest. The weather was vaguely unsettled but the trace of drizzle in the air worried no one as our destination was "Sunny Central."

The long pulls over Cargill and The Kilmog had to be repeated several times when we came to the Pigroot, but at last the open going in the Kyeburn Valley was reached and in another hour we came to a halt outside the picturesque Pass Hotel. At one in the morning it wasn't easy finding a place to bed down, but someone in the party had been there before after all and we played follow the leader along the road, over a bridge and down to the ford at the Kyeburn River. Some called the tramping off at this stage but others crossed and disappeared into the scattered macrocarpas and old orchard trees of an abandoned homestead. The case of peaches brought along from town by one member of the party vied with local pears as a source of dessert during the weekend.

Daybreak brought no clear skies, but after a leisurely breakfast people set off in several parties and in several directions to explore the hills and valleys in the direction of Mt. Kyeburn and Dansey's Pass. For some the objective was the summit of Mt. Kyeburn itself, while others had received instructions from an 'old hand' on how to reach 'The Cone', further to the north.

The climb to the summit of Mt. Kyeburn is one that requires some effort if the day is a typical summer's day in that part of Central. In fact, it can be exhausting in the extreme, as many have found on past club trips. But the low cloud hanging about the hills, though it spoiled the view on the way up, did at least keep the air cool. After a pleasant lunch beside a stream which issued from the summit scree our party crossed the south east face of the mountain and, leaving packs on the east ridge, went up to the top.

The cloud had now lifted and the view was excellent. Away to the east was the Pass with a narrow road winding up and the pylons to take the Roxburgh power north close to it. Northwards lay the Cone and Mt. Domett, with the Awakino Peaks further off. Mt. Buster which has the highest gold workings in Otago continued on to Mt. Ida behind Naseby and then there was the wide expanse of the Maniototo Plain and the long ridges of Blackstone Hill, Rough Ridge and Rock and Pillar. An excellent spot for a geography lesson. Others had been on top earlier in the day but had to return to the road, having come up without packs.

Our camp that night was in a sheltered gully where there was sufficient wood for a good fire and a clear stream of water. The cloud came down again to threaten a slight drizzle, but a change of wind from north-east to north-west called this off and next morning proved hot and clear. In fact, the walk down the main valley to the waiting bus was too hot to be really pleasant.

B.W.C.

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WORKING PARTIES

Winter's the best time for a working party and the Committee have been on the job this year organising some special efforts at Green Peak and Jubilee. The effort expended in getting to the huts with extra loads of tools and materials is soon forgotten in the cooler weather, and after a good brew-up and a meal people do feel ready for a bit of work. In summer the effect is quite the reverse. It is all too pleasant to lie in the sun and think about the job in hand.

Snow on the track was a feature of Friday night tramps to Green Peak last winter but when the moon is full I can think of no more delightful ways of spending an evening. Night tramping without having to use a torch is most enjoyable and easier on the nerves than having to grope one's way through tussock, flax and scrub, or through the rocks at Sleepy Hollow with a torch that is starting to fade out and the Hut still an hour's journey away. Truly there is a gap in the tramping experience of those people who have not done a night trip to the Peaks. It is always possible that the experience of having tramped at night will stand one in good stead when the urgency of the occasion demands safe speedy night travel.

Bush carpentry in the bush is more satisfactory than the same standard of workmanship would appear in the best room at home. It blends with its surroundings much better, especially if the walls and roof are made of such local materials as manuka scrub and snowgrass.

Painting indoors and out can be done in far less time when the presence of a few brush marks is not going to be noticed by one's guests the next time they call. And who cares if it's showery when outside work is in progress? It just has to be done, rain or shine, because it may be weeks before we are out that way again in the mood for painting.

So there is an extra eagerness to take on jobs which would be left for the experts in town. Concrete work, shaft-digging, track cutting, painting and carpentry have all featured in our recent working parties and the Club's huts are brighter, more comfortable places as a result.

Thank you! to all those who have helped.

"Committee Member."

# MY CHRISTMAS PARTY

I left home at 5.30 on the Sunday morning. I knew I would be too late for the main function, but hoped I might be able to play my part at least in awakening the slumbering remnants.

Shortly before 6 I left the car at Rollinsons, and had myself organised into a pack and a pair of boots. The journey round the Swampy Shoulder went easily and quietly, particularly in the pleasant cool of the early morning; and even when I strayed from the track and found myself in a maze of gorse and speargrass, my composure was not seriously affected. Soon I was on it again and moving along easily to the Saddle, which opened up a beautiful picture of all that lovely country to the North. Past the Tarn and on through the fence posts, and soon I was peering up at Green Peak looking for a sign of smoke. As I journeyed up the ridge it was plain that it was going to be a very sleepy reception, and so it was. I approached the hut, and two or three shapeless lumps stirred beside the track - further on, another couple of lumps, and a gently enquiring look. Only too clearly, I was first up! The inside of the hut was just as might be expected on the 'morning after' - but I was told there were more bodies camped down by the waterhole, and more still in a tent a little higher up, so I went to call on the former, and loosen the tent-stump of the latter. Up on to Green Peak (the Pulpit Rock looked too far away!) then back to the hut to join the first returning party. Back over the Swampy Shoulder I appreciated the real heat of the day - and was mighty glad I was not a few hours later!

W.S.G.

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FIRST SUCCESSFUL SNOW CAVING TRIP TO THE KAKANUIS

A few weekends after the official club snow-caving trip was deterred by inclement weather from achieving its primary object, four club members travelled by bus to the Shag River bridge on the Pigroot Road with the intention of climbing to the saddle to the east of Kakanui Peak and digging a snow cave or building an igloo, or both. Leaving the bus (or vice versa) on a frosty moonlight night the party shot off up the first valley they came to on the north side of the road. When the contours of the valley became unfamiliar to the guide he climbed on to the ridge to the east and hollered out the cheerful news that the correct valley was the next one. With much grunting and muttering the ridge was crossed and progress resumed. After two hours from the road this valley was also closing in without the promised stone-wall shelter having been sighted, so tents were pitched as at least one member of the crew preferred to sleep on a relatively horizontal surface. The air temperature was very low during the night and in the morning a billy of water carried in from the creek developed a quarter-inch layer of ice while waiting the two or three minutes for the primus to build up a 'head of steam.'

Two hours along the fence-line brought the party on the saddle, the last 500 feet being particularly trying due to the soft snow lying insecurely on the tussock. A site suitable for a snow cave was found on the north side of the saddle and the excavation was started with a rare assortment of hardware, viz. P.W.D. type shovel, coal shovel, and machete. Later a plate was pressed into service. The classical snow cave design had to be modified to allow for local snow conditions, which meant that although the party all lived in one cave, they slept on different levels. The cave proved to be very warm, and although the roof looked frighteningly fragile, experiments next morning proved it could support the weight of four trampers.

The igloo building proceeded no further than one block set up vertically, but another time !! Who knows?

"NANOCK"



BUILDING THE CAVE - 1955

The late morning of Saturday September 3rd found four O.T.C. members scratching around in the snow on the eastern slopes of Mount Kakanui. The snow was firm enough for a snow cave, but sufficient depth of snow was also needed. (We had no igloo experts with us.) However, it was not long before Frank found a suitable site.

The slope was fairly steep ( $45^{\circ}$ ) and although the snow was only six or seven feet deep, we considered this enough for the cave. Barry and Frank were soon at work digging out a platform while Gordon and I cooked lunch. After lunch the four of us directed our energies to the digging of the cave.

A horizontal tunnel was sunk into the snow for a distance of six feet and from the end the main cave was dug out. To begin with there was only room for one person to work, but soon two of us were digging out the snow while the two outside rolled the snow down hill. Unfortunately there were no shovels for those outside so the snow could not be rolled away as fast as it was being shovelled out. Further misfortune struck after about an hour when one of the shovels broke. It was an ordinary coal shovel and these are very weak at the junction of the handle and the blade. (Fortunately they are also inexpensive). The other shovel, a cut-down furnace shovel, was excellent. One side of the cave was dug out and while the other was being cleared sleeping benches were built up. Because of the shallowness of the snow it was necessary to raise one sleeping bench about eighteen inches above the other. The same arrangement was made on the other side. An enamel plate turned out to be ideal for smoothing out the roof of the cave. (Barry didn't think so - it was his plate.) A cooking bench was built up at the tunnel and our cave was complete. Its dimensions were as follows - length eighteen feet, width five feet, height three feet, tunnel two feet high and two feet wide. The top of the tunnel was about six inches below the level of the bottom sleeping benches thus ensuring that a minimum of cold air from outside could get in.

That night there was a very heavy frost outside, but inside the cave it was relatively warm. (At freezing point

26.

in fact.) The next morning we tested the strength of the roof which was only one foot thick. We found that it supported the weight of two of us and that a hefty kick was required to make a hole in the roof. We left the site at 10.30 a.m. after a very interesting and unusual weekend.

R.G.C.

### WHERE TO GO FOR A QUIET WEEKEND

Far away in the western Silver Peaks

There is a place that few have seen,  
Exalted are the few that have reached it,  
West of Jubilee, west of Green.

Now Avalon was a legend also,

Shangri La - it was sought too;  
And some in the Club have sought and found it,  
But they are few, so very few.

You must toil up the slopes of Lamb Hill,

Risk the fog on its Plateau top,  
Choose the right ridge when you go down,  
For once started you cannot stop.

This place of mystery and legend

Far to the west of Silver Peak,  
Is Orbell's Cave - the western limit;  
A tramp for the strong, and not the weak.

So if you must go to this haven,

Then take a jeep round Ben Doran,  
Follow up the creek you'll find there  
Because there's a graded road leading  
right up to the blasted place!!

B.A.W.

### GORSE

I see it from the window  
Of my cosy little room,  
A rolling sea of yellow  
Akin to summer broom.

The leaves and earth-brown  
twigs beneath  
Are just where elves would hide  
And o'er the petals of the flowers  
the dragonflies do glide.

## CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING

Christchurch trampers are both more and less fortunate than those in Dunedin. They have easy access by rail to some true high country valleys, the like of which we have to travel all night to reach. They have a quick (three hours) and cheap (£1) rail car service to Arthur Pass from where they can go up the Waimakariri and its tributaries, go climbing; or in winter go skiing. Those with cars or other private transport have a wide range of foothill tramping to choose from.

For purely local tramping country, however, Christchurch trampers are less fortunate. On a Sunday morning at 8 a.m. sharp the train leaves Christchurch for Lyttleton where the harbour launch may be caught to Diamond Harbour. From Diamond Harbour one may tramp up Mount Herbert or Mt. Herbert Peak - the highest point on the Peninsula - or up Mt. Evans. These all make a pleasant day's tramping, but over much more civilised country than Swampy or to the Peaks. The tussock is short and well cropped, and lacks the luxuriance and variety of Dunedin's local vegetation. The most noteworthy feature is the absence of bush in the all but the deepest gullies. Compared with Dunedin's local hills, Banks Peninsula offers very open and straightforward going. Not at all the country for a slasher devotee.

The surroundings of Lyttleton Harbour are not the only areas for tramping, however; although if one is depending on return transport they are the limit for a day's trip. With private transport one has a much wider field to choose from as the Peninsula is a very large place. The hills are however, very much alike.

There are many more trampers in Christchurch than there are in Dunedin. There are five clubs altogether - The Christchurch Tramping Club, The Wanderers, The Peninsula T.C., the Catholic T.C., and the University T.C. Many of these clubs have a membership equal to or greater than that of the O.T.C. You will see that the Youth Hostels Association, the central unifying body, fills a very real need in Christchurch.

This year I have been out with two Christchurch Clubs, the Wanderers and the Canterbury College (University) Tramping Club. The Wanderers is very similar to the O.T.C. in its size and its members. Just before Easter I



went on a weekend trip with the Wanderers to the foothills in the vicinity of Oxford, northeast of Christchurch. We set out on Friday night in the back of a large carrier's van, the property of the Club President, and it was after eleven when we finally dosed down at the side of the road. We were at the beginning of the Wharfedale Track, which, starting off as a grassy road and gradually degenerating until it becomes a deer trail, leads up to the head of a valley and over a low saddle into another. The upper reaches of both valleys are clothed with very lovely beech forest which brought to my mind memories of Easter trips in the Temple Valley, Lake Ohau.

It took all of Saturday to cross the saddle and reach below the bushline where open grassy flats made a camping spot. The next day we were to cross Mount Oxford which then lay between us and the road where we had left the truck. Therefore on Sunday, with great effort, for the slopes was steep and few of us were fit, we climbed a ridge which led up to Mount Oxford, half way up entering thick woolly mist which was hovering round the tops.

In the mist it was very difficult to find our way and we committed one of the most common mistakes of all - we didn't go far enough along the summit ridge. We went down too soon and after pushing through some thick bush we eventually arrived at the head of Cooper's Creek, a narrow valley parallel to the ridge we should have taken. As usual the valley provided the more difficult going. The main obstacles were two high waterfalls which we had to circumvent with much care. The second of these had exceptionally steep sides, and once the leaders had to help the remainder of the party. As owing to danger from dislodged rocks only one could descend at a time, and there were about twenty in the party, we wasted an hour over this waterfall.

The rest of the valley was solely boulder hopping, leaping down, down, down. The valley seemed to go on for ever, and even although at length dusk was falling, each bend of the river only showed us the next one. It wasn't until it was dark that we eventually arrived back at the road. After twelve hour's tramping we were all tired and all 'tenderfoots' and every one of us quite certain that we would stick to the ridges in future.

A second trip which I went on last Queen's Birthday Weekend was in the vicinity of Arthur Pass; this time with the University Tramping Club. We left on Friday night and arrived at the Pass about 10 p.m., staying the night in the Alpine Club Hut there. Leaving about nine next morning, we climbed up the slopes of Mt. Avalanche. Anyone who has been to Arthur Pass will realise that the slopes are very steep indeed and when one is burdened with a pack they seem much steeper. We lunched just above the bushline a hundred feet or so below the summit of Mount Avalanche, which at that time had only a few patches of old snow.

After lunch we carried on to the summit and then, moving westwards, we followed the ridge which leads from Mount Avalanche to Mount Rolleston and which separates Arthur Pass from the Crow Valley, a tributary of the Waimakariri. The slopes to the Crow were very steep and rocky and we had to go well along the ridge before we found the only scree slide down to the Crow. This scree went well and it wasn't long before we were in the valley.

That night we camped a little way down the Crow intending to explore the small but very beautiful Crow Icefall up valley the next day. However, it rained most of the night and the following morning found the air full of misty rain. Giving up gracefully, we wandered our way down the Crow, down the Waimakariri as far as the road and back up to the Pass settlement. We thus had an extra day left on our hands which was spent by those who felt fit in an attempt to climb Mount Rolleston. Owing to strong winds and cold conditions on the tops - it had snowed since we had crossed Avalanche - the attempt did not succeed but it was a lot of fun. All things considered we had a very enjoyable weekend with much better weather than Christchurch or Dunedin had experienced.

Yes! there are many opportunities here for good tramping if you don't mind a bit of travelling.

E.L.S.

All cannot fade that glorifies the hills,  
 Their strength remains, their aspect of command,  
 Their flush of colour when calm evening stills  
 Day's clamour, and the sea breeze cools the land.

Opening lines of "The Passing of the Forest."  
 Wm Pember Reeves.



Gordon McLaren, Bruce Moore, Bruce Campbell.

For Gordon it was the third time, but to the remainder of the party it was something new. Mount Glenmary, 8,524 ft in the Neumann Range is a long way from town any way you like to measure it so we left at 6 p.m. on Friday night and after an uneventful car trip were bedding down under the beeches beside Lake Ohau just after eleven.

Next morning broke cool and cloudy and we were soon away past Huxley Gorge Station and then more slowly to the limit of car transport about a mile short of the Cairn. The walk up the Hopkins riverbed was accomplished in good time and the crossing of the river itself presented no difficulties. By aiming at a point projecting into the river bed some miles upstream on the true left bank we were able to travel diagonally up the open bed and little ground was lost. The going from then on was good but with the tops still in the clouds the point of departure from the valley floor was difficult to find. A mile or so past the Red Hut the land rose gradually up a huge fan issuing from a rocky gorge and it was up this fan that Gordon, from his travels in the valley on previous occasions, decided to proceed and then climb the steep valley wall itself. Having crossed the stream at the mouth of the gorge we were soon climbing through the beech forest up the steep slopes to the north of the gorge. It was hard work and when we reached bushline lunch was due and we were ready for it. By now the sun had broken through and across the valley we could see the Huxley Valley with its name peak far to the left at the head of the South Branch. The closer peaks between the North Huxley and the main valley were almost bare of snow but none the less attractive in their setting of rock, bush and tussock. From this level the Rabbiter's Peak between the head of the North Temple and the Huxley Junction appeared to be well back from the Hopkins and probably not visible from the main valley (or at least not from its lower reaches.) The river itself spread in many streams across the valley floor.

The going continued steep for some hours until the vegetation thinned out and we were traversing a narrow rocky ridge, with the scree filled basin feeding the gorge on our right, the Dasler Pinnacles and Mount Glencairn to our left and left front respectively. Our object-



ive, was now visible to the right front and we began searching for practical routes on its upper levels. At places the ridge we were on narrowed or stepped abruptly and travelling with weekend packs was slow.

As the shadows began to lengthen a campsite took on more and more importance in our thoughts, but no likely place was to be seen. Water was absent and so was snow. Finally we had to lose about 800 feet in a steep, scree-sliding drop to the upper part of the basin where a patch of dirty snow promised water, and a level area a campsite. As the sun set we prepared our meal to be cooked with water coloured grey with rock dust. The setting for the camp was satisfying. in the extreme - magnificent views in all directions and only 2,000 feet or so to the summit of our peak.

In the morning we were away at first light carrying day packs. A light frost promised fine weather. Progress was slow, the rope was needed often to surmount the steeper pitches and it was 11 a.m. before we stood on the summit. The view was not all it might have been, thick clouding up from the Dobson Valley to the north blocked our views of the great peaks of the Mount Cook district. On the way up we had been fortunate to see Mounts Deccan and Hooker beyond the Landsborough, but these too were now obscured for most of the time. We added our record of the ascent to those already there (including that of the Scott Gilkison party who made the first ascent by the south-east ridge in an eighteen hour day in the thirties.)

It took less time to go down by a route which took us further to the north side of the mountain and we were back at the camp by 2 p.m. A lunch and packing up were done at the same time and by three we were away down to the valley floor by a different route from the way up. This new route took us down the extensive screes at a really fast pace, across the stream at their base and up the other side to bush level. The half sliding, glissading descent through the bush will always remain in my memory but it was a rapid means of getting to the valley which we reached at 5 p.m. The tramp to the car took two hours more and after a light meal we were away. A tired driver did wonders to keep going through the long miles to Dunedin with rain and drizzle to contend with in the later stages. We were tired - tired for some days afterwards - but was it worth it? Some people do ask silly questions!

B.W.C.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 1956  
MOUNT SUTTON

At about 3.30 on Saturday morning we arrived at the more northerly of the two camping reserves on the shore of Lake Ohau after a comfortable, but for the most, sleepless journey from Dunedin by rental truck.

After a few hours' sleep we ejected ourselves from our sleeping bags, cooked breakfast and at the same time admired the marvellous view of Mount Cook in the early morning light through the saddle at the head of the Dobson Valley. Shortly after ten our party comprising Bob Cunningham, Ian Connor, Bruce Weatherall, Peter Barker and I shouldered our packs and commenced the steep climb towards Mount Sutton. We went up a ridge on the western side of the lake. Having climbed through about a thousand feet of fog we emerged into brilliant sunshine and were treated to a fine view of the snow-topped Ben Ohau Range on the opposite side of the lake, and of Glenmary the highest peak in the Neumann Range. Some time after noon we halted just below the snow line after a steady, invigorating climb over tussock and loose scree.

After an hour's lunch we proceeded over rough scree which was covered with perhaps 18 inches of firm snow until at half past three we reached the summit of the ridge between Lake Ohau and Maitland Creek at an approximate height of 6,000 feet. As it was rather cloudy we were unable to see the peaks of the Barrier Range, but we did see Lake Ohau, the South Temple and what we supposed to be the summit of Mount Sutton. As only two hours of daylight remained we were unable to try for the summit.

In two hours we quickly descended over snow and scree and then through beech forest, finally making camp at dusk on the banks of the Maitland Creek. As we pitched the tent rain began to fall and it continued to do so throughout the night, although this did not prevent us from eating, and sleeping, soundly.

On opening the tent flap next morning we were greeted with a drab sight. The combination of pouring rain, giant

beeches and dim light seemed to remind us of some prehistoric age and one or two dinosaurs would not have been out of place. As it was apparently more comfortable in our sleeping bags we remained there cooking, eating and resting.

Eventually the rain terminated and soon after two o'clock we set out to follow down the Maitland Creek towards Lake Ohau. Although we left late we did not expect a very difficulty or long journey, but we soon discovered how wrong we were! It took us five hours. Having forded the river a couple of times we decided to remain on the true right bank and to do this we were forced to climb up about a thousand feet through the dripping beech in order to avoid precipitous bluffs and enormous washouts. Later we once again descended to the valley floor and proceeded to cross and recross the swiftly flowing river, shorter party members being aided by a rope handrail on some occasions in the thigh-deep waters. After five o'clock the daylight rapidly diminished and, not wishing to continue down the narrow gorge in darkness we struck up the right bank through thick undergrowth and then sidled for perhaps a mile in complete darkness before dropping to the last substantial patch of beech to make a camp for the night. In our trip down the stream we had forded the Maitland eighteen times.

Monday dawned bright and clear, and having leisurely prepared breakfast, we travelled down to the road in about twenty minutes. Another hour or so brought us back to the pleasant camping reserve where we rejoined fellow members and enjoyed a healthy lunch.

About two o'clock we boarded the truck and set off for home after a most enjoyable and pleasant weekend.

J.C.

The speargrass may have crackled under the billy  
And overhead shone the winter sun -

But give me a pressure cooker instead of a billy  
And the job is much sooner done.



WANDERING ON BANKS PENINSULA

Anticipating some derisive laughter when readers enlarge on the appended initials, I have entitled this effort "Wandering..." not "Tramping..." on Banks Peninsula.'

Banks Peninsula is supplied with three Youth Hostels with one day's tramping between each, covering from Gebbies Pass to Akaroa and the usual sprinkling of assorted huts should one stray from the beaten track.

During the Christmas holidays, we left Christchurch by car at about 2 p.m. and went as far as Gebbies Pass Road where we branched and were left to our own devices and Shank's Pony. After a straightforward two hours' tramp starting through 3 Y.A. Radio Settlement, we reached the first Youth Hostel, "The Packhorse," a solid three-roomed stone building at the head of the Kaituna Valley. The next day, we struggled up Mt. Herbert (3,014 feet) in blazing sunshine and picked up the Summit Track at about 2,500 feet leading to the next hostel which is inland from Port Levy. (Should anyone be interested in doing this trip we can impart much information as to what not to do before picking up this track.) Panoramic views were obtainable from Mt. Herbert which almost made the climb worthwhile. Under perfect conditions we saw Lyttleton Harbour with Diamond Harbour nestling beneath us, and in the opposite direction, the Kaituna Valley stretching out to Lake Ellesmere on the coast. The third day takes you to a deserted school converted into a comfortable hostel just off the Pigeon Bay Road. From here there is road access to Akaroa where some time was pleasantly spent recuperating from our strenuous efforts! We saw much of that part of the Peninsula from anything that was available, from the back of a cream lorry to the comparative comfort of a mail bus which took us from Akaroa to Pigeon Bay, Stony Bay, Okains and Le Bons.

On our homeward journey, we decided we should like to see the northernmost coast of the Peninsula at closer quarters. We took a bus over the summit road to Pigeon Bay where we were faced with 16 miles of road to Diamond Harbour. (T.B. Traffic is negligible so that we did not set out expecting a lift.) Roads on the Peninsula were a constant source of amazement as they zig-zagged up almost vertical

faces to disappear over some saddle. The road out of Pigeon Bay was no exception and after lunch at Holme Bay we wound upward to 2,000 feet on to Wild Cattle Hill and then down to Port Levy. Another steep pull faced us now so we fortified ourselves with a meal and started out in the comparative coolness of the evening. Having covered another couple of miles, an unsuspecting motorist pulled up to enquire whether we liked walking or would like to ride. Before we knew what had happened to us we were in and accomplished the last six miles in luxury. (Beth, who left a few days before us, walked the whole distance.)

The next day we spent sunbathing, etc at Diamond Harbour. A launch took us to Lyttleton and then we were really homeward bound.

N. McC.

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LITTLE CANYON - DINGLE BURN  
EASTER '56

Some time before the trip we had decided, after a look at the maps, to attempt a crossing from Little Canyon Creek to the Dingle Burn, and thence back over to the Ahuriri. The resulting trip shook our confidence in the map makers.

We set off, eight of us, up the Ahuriri in bright sunshine, and after a fast tramp we reached Canyon Creek for lunch. Having finished this we upped packs and got going. We first tried to go straight up the creek, but bluffs and a waterfall thwarted us and it was necessary to retreat and climb up above to get round. However, this was no hardship and soon we reached the end of the bush. And how! The bush ended and so did the creek. Ahead and above was a vast valley basin of scree. With immense bluffs above and only a few forlorn straggling patches of snowgrass and subalpine scrub somehow surviving here and there amongst the dry expanse of waterless, inhospitable scree. We tried to find a campsite on the scree but the only water came from a trickle or two off the bluffs, water which immediately disappeared under the scree. We could see no decent campsite so we retreated back to the bush and the stream and set up camp.

Next day we rose early, breakfasted, and set off up the scree towards the head of the valley. Lunch at a trickle of water from the bluffs and on again in the blazing sun. Progress was slow and the rope was needed at one stage but eventually we reached the saddle. In the saddle there was a tarn; on the other side it was not the Dingle, but the Hunter, a really majestic sight winding through pleasant flats far below us. We left our packs on the Saddle and set off round the ridge to try and find a saddle to lead us into the Dingle. The going was hard over rotten rock and loose scree but eventually we found a saddle, or rather a dividing ridge.

But not into the Dingle. Another tributary of the Hunter and by no means easy to get into. But on the other side was a definite saddle which would surely lead us into the Dingle. So we went back, got our packs and struggled back to the ridge. Out came the rope once more and, one by one we slid down a couloir to the bottom. It was getting late now and it was decided (by majority vote) to camp, instead of risking the saddle opposite in the dark.



We had a wonderful campsite that night. Water was supplied by a small patch of rather dirty snow and our sleeping place was a patch of damp levelness scraped out from the scree. Primuses and pressure cookers were invaluable, and after a meal we fitted ourselves, sardine style, onto our sand (and rock) patch. Next morning we woke before sunrise and as we were at about 6,000 feet, it is hardly surprising that some of us were very cold, although some others said that they had been quite warm all night although this could only be accounted for by some freakish aberration in their physiological makeup.

We had breakfast while watching the golden rays of the rising sun soften the hard, dusk-sharp, peaks to the west. Aspiring, Rob Roy and others, one after another, lightened, brightened and broke into the full warm glow of the new day.

Breakfast over, we placed our names and the date etc. in a defunct billy, carefully placed same in a cairn, and headed for the saddle which would lead us to the Dingle. The scree up to this saddle was steep and loose, and the going was hard. But we persevered and saw before us Lake Hawea, sapphire-blue in the far distance, stark bare ridges in the middle distance, and another tributary of the Hunter below us. Over to our left was another saddle. The Dingle? We fervently hoped so. Bob Cunningham decided to go alone and make sure if the saddle led into the Dingle, and while we others rested he went across. He reached the saddle and his signal fulfilled our hopes. A short but hard grind over more scree and we were on the saddle, two small tarns were below us, two precariously hanging pieces of ice on the cliffs above us to the left, and the scree-filled valley basin of the Dingle stretching out ahead. Joy unbounded! We dropped down to the tarns and lunched. Having eaten we set off down the valley; by now we were all thoroughly sick of scree and great were the contented sighs when we at last were walking over tussock by the creek, the first of both for over two days. The bush was soon reached and we made camp in the soft shade of the beech forest. Our troubles we thought, were over, as we lay in our sleeping bags on the soft springy forest floor. Sleep came easily that night.

The next day was cloudy, and leaving packs at the camp we went downstream to explore some of the Dingle tributary. We took it slowly, stopping now and then to bowl boulders and logs into the deep gorge of the tributary; and to admire the several verdure framed waterfalls, some of which were truly picturesque.

Having passed out of the bush, we were once more on scree and we headed for the saddle and peak at the head of the valley. Three set off to climb the peak, two stayed below, and the rest went back to camp. However, time was against the climbers and after slow progress up one or two faces they were forced to return.

Some of the party had gone up the ridge behind the camp to scout a way over into the Ahuriri. They reported an easy route up the ridge so after we (and the sandflies) had lunched, we set off. The ridge was steep in places but quite straightforward and we soon reached the dividing ridge and looked down on the Ahuriri.

Now the Guidebook said there was an easy pack track down into the Ahuriri from about where we were, but we decided to go back along the ridge to Canyon Creek where we would have water and beech for our campsite. So a fast tramp along the sheep track on the crest of the ridge and we started to descend. The descent into the valley was a nightmare. The bush covered ridges had, from the valley floor looked gentle and easy. But that beech concealed bluffs and guts with ridges which started gently and then dropped away vertically. After two frustrations we went back almost to the main ridge and started down what looked like a pretty good ridge. It was quite good for a start - steep, but with plenty of beech saplings to swing on. Then the ridge dropped right away. We started to work our way down into a rock filled gut when a shout and a blur flashed past us and crashed down on his back in the gut. One of the party had slipped on the beech leaves and crashed about 30 feet onto the rocks.

Miraculously (and I mean miraculously !) he was unhurt except for a bruised rib or two. But, just in case, his pack was lightened, and he was told to take it easy.

By now things were not looking too bright at all. It was getting dark, and rain was falling. There was no apparent way down. Bob went away to explore and we others roped down the gut and up the side of the ridge opposite. By now it was raining steadily and it was quite dark. Out came the torches and slowly, with infinite care we moved down the ridge with Bob and one other out scouting the way ahead. The ridge was not so bad, and although it was steep in places it was not impassable. The rain, instead of making the beech leaves slippery, seemed to consolidate them. So keeping together, and using our torches and ice axes very carefully, we descended. Then ahead we saw a lightening in the beech ahead. Oh, no! not another bluff! We were pretty well played out by now but wonderfully it was the valley floor, and were we thankful!

We made our way up to the creek in light rain and pitch darkness. We found another party there and set up camp, mustering most of our remaining food into one magnificent feast. Fed, we crept into our bags and slept the sleep of near exhaustion. Rain again next morning so we packed up right after breakfast and were off down the valley. The rain had ceased by the time we had reached the truck. And so ended what was a most memorable trip, the like of which none of us are likely to have for many Easters to come.

Bruce Weatherall.

### DENIAL

It is officially denied that Catchment Boards intend to carry out aerial dusting of cement onto scree country to prevent further erosion. "Not practicable - insufficient cement available" said a spokesman in Wellington recently.



## HIGHLIGHTS AT THE CLUBROOM

Since our last issue we have enjoyed quite a number of interesting evenings at the Clubroom. A few are listed below :

August 1955 Mr. F.L. Millar of the Catchment Board Staff illustrated with high-quality Kodachromes a talk on Soil Conservation. The Shotover and Skippers areas were dealt with in detail.

A holiday in the European Alps was the subject of Dave Stubbings' much appreciated talk late in September.

In November Peter Robinson, a Fulbright Scholar delighted all present with his slides and his descriptions of climbing and cross-country mountaineering in Western North America.

The last Club Night of the year was celebrated with a true Christmas spirit of good cheer and singing.

In March this year Gladys Richards told us of her travels in Mexico and the basketware and textiles she brought along to illustrate the talk were much admired.

Ian Jeffrey's high-quality colour slides gave the background to his talk on Christmas holiday activities in the Mount Earnslaw District.

The Federated Mountain Club's films on Bushcraft and Rock Climbing were shown to Club members and visitors in the Public Library Lecture Room during June. Although the film to instruct in "Snow and Ice Craft" failed to arrive, the quality of films presented augured well for the quality of the latter which it is hoped to show at a later date.

Barry Davidson took us with him on some steep bush and rock work in the Clinton Valley and on Mount Pembroke overlooking Milford Sound when he gave an illustrated talk on his Christmas trip with members of the N.Z. Alpine Club.

Our sincere thanks once again to all the above who gave their time to show us new country by word and illustration.

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