

OUTDOORS



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OTAGO TRAMPING CLUB

(Incorporated)



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Always about this time, when Christmas is approaching, I feel somewhat exhilarated. With another Christmas coming on - another adventure in the back country and among friends.

How successful a big trip in the alpine valleys is, depends of course, on yourself.

The main thing is, to do something worth - while every day.

The trip I remember more than others was one February. Two days fine out of twelve, in the valley. We had only one and a half rest days on that trip, yet it stands out perhaps as my most successful trip into the back country.

We have just finished the Leaders' Instruction Course. I felt there was plenty of enthusiasm and some high standard rope work.

2.

Let us hope that these techniques will be put to good use and prove beneficial to the club as a whole.

Our membership is now higher than it probably ever has been, and it is still growing. That in itself, is of course, a very satisfactory state of affairs. More important, is the number of members going on trips. On the last programme only one trip did not go. That also is an improvement.

I hope the coming year will see still more people out on the hills, if only on some of the more social trips, such as the picnic.

I wish all members a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year, and fine weather for those going out on trips.

G KAMPJES.

NOVEMBER, 1962.

President.

NIGHT TRAMPING.

As the noise of our transport disappeared into the distance, George and myself stared into the cold and unfriendly blackness of where the Burns track starts. I am not keen on Friday night trips to Green Hut, but George was one of these keen types, and only with some persuasion, I had decided to go with him.

Naturally, the night was dark, misty, cold and damp, with the only sound of comfort coming from the odd car passing over the motorway. The full moon which George had planned this trip by, was lying behind this nor' easterly mist and was not likely to show itself until we crossed Burns saddle.

So with the faint light of torches, we climbed through the gate and moved up the track very slowly with our very heavy week-end packs (30 lbs). Very soon we came to another Taranaki gate and I told George not to bother opening it, as 'you just had to climb an old pipe and jump over the fence'. Leading the way, I stepped up on to the pipe and immediately slipped, bashing my knees against the pipe, causing blood to flow freely. Not taking the defeatist attitude, I delicately climbed back onto the pipe, then with another cautious step, placed one foot on the barbed wire fence. A convenient tree branch above the fence made a good hand hold, so grabbing at it with both hands, I brought my other foot onto the fence; but the branch must have had a weakness somewhere, for there was a sharp crack, and I crashed heavily to the ground, leaving a small portion of flesh and shorts hanging on the fence. The darkness concealed George's expression, but he quietly opened the gate and stepped through it.

After walking along the wide track for about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, we decided we must have missed ^{the} turn-off. Double backing on our steps, we eventually came across it, and with grim determination, slopped our way up through mud and bush. George being in front was quite useless, as he was much shorter than I was and I still had to break through all the cobwebs.

Rain had fallen for most of the previous week and the track was in glorious condition. We came to the boggy patches and George, being very nimble on his feet, glided gracefully around the side, hanging onto branches and balancing his feet on patches of dry ground. I, being not so sure-footed, decided to plough through the centre, stepping on pieces of wood and stones. Flashing my torch around, I saw what looked like a good stepping stone, so promptly stepped on it. Looking around again, I figured out two more stepping places, which would bring me out of the bog. With one mighty leap, my foot stopped on the surface momentarily, then sank well up past my ankle with a delightful gurgling noise. Trying to pull my foot out, I overbalanced and fell on my knees, and with the weight of my pack, sank up to my thighs: extracting myself I floundered the rest of the way out of the bog with two chocolate coated legs.

Just beneath Burns Saddle we stopped for a rest as it was here we had found the track again - George sat on a clump of Spaniard Grass and I have never laughed so much in all my life.

The going from here was very uneventful, as the track is well marked and we arrived at Green Hut in record time. (6 hours)

B.

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STARGAZER.

Early one morning last April, at the Todd Hut near Mt Aspiring, a kea scratching amongst the rubbish beside the hut, screeched indignantly as it was disturbed. It flew off to a point further down the ridge, there to continue its abuse of the occupants of the hut. Two of the occupants stood outside gazing at the moonlit mountains thrusting into a starry sky.

"The snow's hard ", one said.

"Can't see properly, but I think there is some cloud out to sea - should be all right though ", returned the other.

"What's it like ?" mumbled a sleepy voice from within the hut.

" I think she'll be right, Gerry".

"Good, then SHE'S CN! and I think we could have an extra slice of bacon for breakfast".

The decision had been made the night before to attempt Stargazer, the highest peak in the Haast Range, a fine looking mountain, which had caught our eyes during climbs on Mt Aspiring. Two days previously, when we had been occupied elsewhere, a C.M.C. party had successfully ascended Stargazer using a route, which lay along the Iso Glacier on the Western side of the Haast Range to the col between Skyscraper and Main Royal. After crossing the range to the Therma Glacier, they had passed under Skyscraper to ascend the glaciated slopes of Stargazer. Though we did not altogether approve of using another party's tracks on a climb such as this one, we did not allow this to put us off.

Shortly before 7.a.m. at first light, we moved away from the hut, pausing on the edge of the Iso Glacier to strap on crampons, before crunching off over the undulating snowfields in the direction of our peak. The snow was in perfect crampon condition, so that good time was made. Picking a way through the crevassed areas, we passed under

Rolling Pin to reach a rock rib thrown down by this peak. Shortly, the golden light of the rising sun picked out the eastern slopes of the surrounding peaks. Beyond this, we gained a little height, passing under Main Royal, then turned and climbed up steepening slopes towards the Skyscraper- Main Royal col. As we approached the col, it became obvious why Skyscraper was thus named. The Haast range peaks are quite narrow, and from the col, the southern aspect of the peak leaps upwards for about 700 ft. in a sweep, which is almost vertical, and resembles the bow of a destroyer approaching one.

We burst into the morning sunlight on reaching the col. The sudden change in scene made by the Therma neve below us, and the Main Divide peaks to the east and north of us, being quite breathtaking. Below us, though unseen, a large block of ice broke away from the Therma neve, to avalanche into the Waitoto Valley with a reverberating roar, which seemed to shake the rock on which we stood, sending a thrill tingling through us.

On the crest of the range it was cold, so little time was lost in examining the situation. The Therma neve was about 100ft below us at its nearest point, possibly owing to the lateness of the season. A rock tower astride the range at this point divided alternate routes. We chose one immediately south of the tower, down and across sloping slabs, as it looked the easiest. Removing crampons and roping up, we prepared to start.

I hastened to assure Archie that he was the best rock climber of the party, and though the pitch looked easy, he could come down last. I moved down a few feet and then hesitated, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other and searching for handholds, which seemed non-existent. Just for variety, a few patches of snow with their melt streams, sprinkled the smooth slabs which we had to cross. After pondering the situation for a short time, I climbed carefully round to a rock roofed ledge, in which it was possible to sit.

This was reached with the full length of the rope out. Here, being sheltered from the wind, it was warm and sunny, and I was able to admire the view in comparative comfort. This surely must be one of the best view points for the Volta Glacier, which sweeps in one graceful turn down into the Waitoto Valley from its beautiful snow lake neve. The soft colourful lighting which occurs at this time of the year, made the numerous crevasses in the Therna neve stand out - the entire scene being a colour photographer's dream. In due course, Gerry arrived, to be followed some time later by Archie, the whole manoeuvre, taking an hour to complete. The ledge led down to the snow and here we put on crampons again.

The snow, though softening, was still in condition for fast travel, and after crossing a large crevasse by a convenient snow-bridge, we journeyed round under Skyscraper towards the crevassed face of Stargazer. The snow was in perfect condition for step-kicking, yet we were spared even this by the efforts of the previous party. To me this felt like cheating, but as Gerry and Archie pointed out, there was little to be gained by kicking another line beside the first. We found that by climbing up the face, then crossing back towards the cliffs of Skyscraper, then continuing upwards hard against the mountain, we were able to avoid the steepest portion, by climbing up the bergschrund (which was partly filled by fresh snow) between the ice and rock. Soon we were on the broad summit snow-ridge of Stargazer, and after following it for 200 yds or so, we reached the highest point. The wind had ceased, so we moved onto some rocks overlooking the Waipara Valley, there to take stock of our surroundings and eat.

Below, and to the north of us, lay Cloudmaker Lake, nestling between the peaks of Moonraker and Helen, its emerald waters rippled by a breeze. A thin layer of cloud lay over the sea-shore like burnished gold in the mid-day sun, contrasting with the grassy flats of the Waipara. Northward

a sea of mountains stretched to the Cook area. Near at hand, Aspiring dominated the scene, as she watched over her charges below. South of us afternoon cloud rolled towards us over the Olivines. A sardine tin was sent clattering down the rock towards the Waipara, and it was time for us to leave.

We headed along the summit ridge towards Skyscraper "Just for a lark". Any designs we might have had on this fine peak were thwarted by the discovery, that nature had raised the proverbial draw-bridge, by taking a slice out of the ridge between us and Skyscraper. Alternate routes could only be reached from our position, by several hundred feet of double roping. It was not considered practicable to attempt this with only 100 ft. of rope.

While retracing our steps across the Therma neve to the col, we were suddenly surrounded by mist. An examination of the col showed that an easier crossing point existed between Skyscraper and the tower immediately south of it. We found the previous party had used this also. A short steep climb of about 70 ft. took us back onto the crest of the range.

From here we plunged into the mist in search of Main Royal. Soon we were at the base of what we hoped, were the summit slopes. Three very different routes on very loose rock converged at a point on the rather airy summit ridge, where to our delight, we saw a cairn about 20 yds to the north of us. Having carefully gardened the way across to it, we climbed back down to the snow.

Now it was time to return to the hut, and as we did so, the mist slowly began to disperse. As we travelled back across the snowfields, the sun began to near the horizon, and as it did so, the mist dispersed into layers to reveal the Arawata and Olivine peaks. A scene of rare beauty began to unfold about us. Layers of mist lay in the Waipara Valley, some above us some opposite, others below. More layers in the Arawata, together with the surrounding peaks and snowfields were caught by

the apricot coloured light of the sunset, as it slowly faded to pink, then rose, finally to be banished from the scene by the stars welling up from the east

Darkness fell as we reached the Shipowner ridge and paddled across the rocks to the hut. Behind us the familiar shapes of Skyscraper and Stargazer probed into a starry sky.

B.M.C.

Party. Gerald Knapjes, Archie Simpson, Brian Cleugh.

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I once saw a botanist most tenderly replace a plant inadvertently uprooted, though we were on a bleak hillside in Tibet, where no human being was likely to see the flower again.

Sir Francis
Younghusband.

JUST A SUNDAY TRIP.

From Kaikprai, private transport was used to take David (motor-cycle) and Margaret and John, (Scott Gilkison's car) to Whare. Flat turn-off. Here the three wonders left Scott and headed along the top road along Brockville to the old Wingatui track. As it was drizzling steadily, parkas were soon put on.

After sliding down the muddy cow track, they branched off through a gate-way near a red shed. A small hill was crossed and a bee-line for the water-race was proposed. But on finding mushrooms in great quantities, a stop was made to fill plastic bags and billies. Around the water-race, the gorse and broom were thick, as the race is now derelict owing to a new pipe-line across the gully. A sickle was not much use, so pushing through, the Three Mile Hill Road was soon reached. Here, some harriers were met who had just come around the race. They looked 'done in', but chatted for a minute or so.

From here, a well-kept track led the party around the water-race to Apple Tree Hut, where a locked hut keeps all in good order. Later, a council worker and his wheelbarrow(not motorised) caught up on the trip. He was going to repair a leak with a special clay called 'pug' which is found in the race in many places. After an interesting talk and a demonstration on plugging with pug, a move was made to continue around the track.

Owing to wet weather, a hut was used for a lunch shelter. Here the new pipe-line, which crossed Three Mile Hill Road, joined the race, and gurgled like a well-filled drunk, as the water disappeared down the hole. A water fight was started, but having read the Health Dept. report, ginger was used to flavour the stuff by one member of the group.

A new track to Ridge Road was taken, and the climb up the hill began.

An abundance of toadstools made good ammunition, as Margaret found out to her advantage. Soon John and David were kept busy defending themselves, as Dead Eyes hurled mushy toadstools in exchange for abuse. Afternoon tea was consumed, after a stop at the surge tower, which was very low at the time. From here, Laings Track took the happy trio to the 'Bantam' and the slick, speedy, chick delivery service went into motion. John being first passenger, went to his brother's place down the valley, while Margaret started to walk down the hill. On the return trip, a joy ride around the back streets of Brockville was taken. On meeting a dozen or so pigs(real) and failing to impress them, a retreat was made to the next purveyors, where bacon and egg pie ended a pleasant day.

Chook.

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ON TRACKS, LOCALITIES AND PLACE NAMES (cont.)

Again we have been requested to write an article on 'tracks, place names and localities' familiar to the O.T.C. members of earlier days. So here it is ...

McAra's Track. This track was named after friends of the writers, the McAra family, dairy farmers of Pine Hill, of several years ago. Just past the last farm in Campbell Road, which at that time was the only road leading off to the right of Pine Hill Road, a zig-zagged former sledge track made by Mr. McAra Senior, led up the eastern slopes of the hill. It overlooked Bethunes Gully, passed under the high tension wires, led onto a newly cut bush track, and eventually came out into the open paddocks, when a fence was followed to the top end of the paddocks and the old sledge road to Mt. Cargill was crossed. A boil-up place was situated near a clump of bush in a swampy area near the foot of Mt. Cargill proper. The summit of Mt. Cargill could be reached in approximately 20 minutes from here. This area of virgin bush was ravaged by a big bush fire about 50 years ago. The trunks of Miro, Black Pine and Totara etc, are still standing as evidence of the big conflagration in the Pigeon Flat and Mt. Cargill areas. The return trip was made by Pine Hill, Organ Pipes, Pigeon Flat and Leith Valley down to Sullivan's Dam.

Bethunes Gully This was another favourite route to Cargill and could be made either direct or via the southern Silver Beech forest. One very special occasion, when Mt. Cargill was visited by a large muster of members, was the Coronation of the late King George and Queen Elizabeth, in May, 1937. Firewood was collected from early afternoon till after dark, when to wards midnight a bonfire was kindled at the trig on Mt. Cargill summit. Members celebrated the occasion with billy boils, sing songs and cornet solos by P.L.M. which were heard as far away as N.E. Valley. Some of the comments of the valley residents we will leave you to guess. Several other fires

were lit in vantage points, but of course, the O.T.C was the biggest and could be seen from most parts of the city. Before leaving Mt.Cargill, we would like to quote a letter concerning Mt.Cargill, which appeared in a local paper many years ago, and may be of great interest to some of the members.

VOLCANIC ACTIVITY

To the Editor,

Dear Sir,

It may interest your readers to know that there is a very deep, open, volcanic crater, quite close to our city, on the town side of Mt.Cargill. I think I am the only to have seen it, as I did on one occasion, when I very narrowly escaped making a personal acquaintance with its depths, and I would suggest that the Tramping Club should make a point of definitely locating it and having the scrub and undergrowth cleared from around the rim of the steeply funnel-shaped mouth. The pipe itself is a clean circular rocky wall of about 20 feet - 30 feet in diameter, going plumb down to an immense depth, to a surface of water, which appeared like a tiny star in the darkness. Perhaps, if I show how I came across it, it may explain my suggestions that someone should definitely locate it, as I consider it a very dangerous spot for anyone coming on it unawares, as I did.

Some years ago, my late father and I took a ramble over Mt.Cargill, partly for the sake of the view and partly to look for a particular specimen of a fern. After leaving the top of the mountain, we decided to come down by way of Bethune's Gully, as the head of the gully seemed to be quite near at hand.

After we got down the rocky face at the top, we came to a stretch of ground, descending at an easy slope for some distance. It gradually became more difficult to get through this, owing to the dense undergrowth, which had come up when the big bush fires of 1880 had cleared the bush. When finding it very difficult, we saw just ahead what looked like a clearing, we persevered

getting through. As I was in the lead, and forging my way partly over and partly through the undergrowth, which was mostly young Hina, I suddenly found myself in the open clearing, but instead of it being flat ground, I was sliding down a smooth grassy slope, and came to rest with my legs astride a short bunch of Manuka scrub about a foot long, with my feet hanging down the pipe well and my eyes trying to pierce the depths. Needless to say, I was not so much interested in studying details, as I was to get out of such an ugly position. My father who was just at my back, could not help me until I had managed to work my way backwards, by digging my heels into the grass and gripping the short grass with my hands. I kept my eye on the short stumps in case I slipped again, until I got far enough for him to grip me by the collar of my coat and help me to a safer footing again. If anyone is interested enough to explore further, I shall gladly give all the particulars I can, my name and address being in your possession.

I am etc,

Interested.

After contacting 'Interested' and getting further information, about $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen members of the O.T.C. including the writers, arranged an expedition to search for the 'pipe'. The party was well equipped with slashers, torches, maps, compasses, medical supplies, and a plentiful supply of provisions. The bush in that locality in which this 'pipe' was supposed to exist was thoroughly combed. Every crack, cranny and rabbit hole was minutely searched with negative results. After the search was abandoned, a roll call was taken, to reveal that one member was missing, but was located some time later tangled up in a mass of bush lawyer, in the centre of a clump of dense bush.

Up to this date, we do not know if any further expeditions by the O.T.C. have been made to this particular spot. We suggest that it might be an idea for a party to organize a second expedition, including in their provisions, several bottles of whiskey, or similar explosives, which may assist them in finding something, much more exciting, such as green elephants, or snakes wearing straw hats.

MOON TRACK. This track may, or may not, be known to O.T.C. members. It commences a few chains past the Nicols Creek bridge on the Leith Valley road. Some time may be used up in locating the entrance, which is on the left hand side of the road, but after it is found, a well worn sledge track leads up very steeply to where a stand of blue gums were located (most of them have been cut down recently) on a ridge immediately to the north of Nicols Creek falls. After getting through a gate and passing the remains of the blue gum trees, the track veers to the left on the south side of a knobby hill. The track is very distinct and leads to a fence line which is on the right. The fence is followed in fairly open country, and a good view of Flagstaff, Pineapple and parts of town may be seen. The fence joins up with the old fence running from the top of Pineapple towards Morrison's Saddle, in the Mountain Track. This route is a pleasant change when heading for the Green Peak Hut, or further afield, and makes the remainder of the trip a leisurely one.

The Moon Track was a familiar name to the older residents of Leith Valley, but so far, we have not been able to discern why this name was given. Try it and let us know what you think.

You will probably hear from us again next year, providing we are not swallowed up by the 'Pipe' on Mt. Cargill.

E.M. & P.L. Moore.

Are you a 'whodunit' fan? If you are, you will enjoy reading Glyn Carr's books.

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Unfortunately, the Public Library seems to have only three, or four of the following books.

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ROUND THE BEND.

With only nine tenths of the original party present, the rail-car pulled out from Dunedin and headed for Central Otago. It was Friday 7th. September, not the 13th, but one member was left behind with three reserved seat tickets in his hand.

"Not to worry!" was the cry, as the remainder settled down in their various compartments (non-smokers, etc) to read the evening paper and other trash.

Entertainment was provided by a gent in the cheerful state of intoxication. He pointed out the scenery as it passed, examined wearing apparel of trampers, and threatened to break the leader's neck with a 'rabbit killer'.

At last the mob arrived at Hindon. Packs were loaded and they set off down the track. No time was wasted in crossing the railway bridge and climbing the landrover track to the road. A hard slog up the hill was often interrupted for a rest, but an hour after leaving Hindon, they arrived at Lamb Hill homestead. Here the kind offer of accommodation in the 'cottage' (with electric light and range laid on) was accepted. The gang moved in and began explorations. Beds and mattresses were found in sheds, bathrooms and sitting room. These were soon set up and a billy was put on the hot plate, while the gang settled down to read. After supper, various bods moved off and tried to go to bed. An hour later, after bed stealing, door locking, hat swopping etc. some members actually got to bed.

Morning proved cold and windy at 10.a.m. when the party moved off for Three o'clock Stream, so jerseys were donned.

A short climb up the hill led to a side ridge that dropped slowly for some time, before dropping steeply into the valley at Three o'clock Stream.

Here two of the girls disappeared upstream and returned 10 minutes later looking very wet and cheerful.

The estimated journey to the ruined building took much longer than anticipated, but lunch was cooked up at this spot during the afternoon. Only $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour brought everyone to Orbell's Cave, where $4\frac{1}{2}$ minutes were spent in looking around. A landrover track was followed up hill and down valley for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours until the last climb brought the mob from Bantam Creek to Ben Doran.

Firewood was collected, the stove lit, cookers started and beds made, so one hour after arrival, the first pair had eaten their meal. Reading and poker helped to fill in the time, while 'old faithful' was tuned into the 'Mad House Brawl'. At 3.15 a.m. someone wanted a drink of water, someone else went and got it, which proves that someone is crazy.

Following some remarkable horse riding feats, including getting on, sitting on and getting off, the happy family (including kids) moved off down a ridge into Mystery Creek.

On being confronted by a large steep hill, a 15 minutes's silence was followed by a rush at the first slopes. And why not, for goodness sake. (joke) It was hot climbing, but the wind was colder and getting stronger, so that as the ridge was reached, the wind became quite gusty. Dropping into the Waikouaiti River did not take long and lunch was eaten $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours from Ben Doran. A musterer stopped for a minute before taking his dog up valley to continue work. As it had got much colder, packing commenced and top gear was engaged.

Feet were quite wet after crossing the river, but this was soon forgotten during the climb to Omimi woolshed.

A few cattle approached rapidly as the trampers crossed the paddocks of the North Evansdale, but as they were only going for water and not for trampers' fancy hats, the party moved on unmolested. A slog up the road through the hail and sleet found the motley mob on

the Kilmog and the hard walk to Evansdale. On the way down the hill, nosey motorists were given the 'treatment' by being watched through field glasses as they went on their way. At the shop, tea and scones went down well with cream on pikelets.

As it was still early, a long wait was needed before the South bound railcar hauled to a stop and the gang relaxed in comfort. At first it appeared that the guard had put one over the leader, but the situation was soon rectified and the trip to town was very peaceful.

Crazy Mad Fellow.

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Thinking of going overseas? Then why not go overland from Colombo to London? It's far more expensive, of course, than 'off season' rates on a ship going direct to England, but much more interesting. Here are some of the places that you will see if you make this trip the Taj Mahal, the mosques of India, Maharajah's palaces, game reserves, camel trains in the desert, Persian carpets (see them being made), the Golden Horn, the Walls of Jerico (what's left of them), the Dead Sea (it's fun to swim in it), Istanbul, Poona, Delhi, Lahore, Teheran, Damascus, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Moslems, Persians, Turks, Arabs, Greeks, Jugoslavs etc.

I had considered several ways of making this trip by scooter, car, public transport, but finally decided to go by one of the buses that make this overland trip three times a year. Having since met people who went by car, it seems that travelling by bus is the better proposition. On a journey like this, all sorts of things can happen, and this can be rather a worry and expense, if you are the owner of a car. In Zahedan, near the Persian - Pakistan border, we met a family who had been waiting for over a week for a new set of tyres to be flown out to them. Planes come here only once a week, and the next plane was due in four days time.

In a car, too, people travelling together for a while, often disagree. On the ship from Colombo to Australia, were four Irishmen, who, after three months of each others company, decided to get off at different ports to make sure they would never see one another again! On a bus, if you disagree with one person, there is always somebody else to talk to.

And so, in September of last year, in Salzburg, Austria, where I had been studying, I met my fellow companions for the next $2\frac{1}{2}$ months. The bus (Penn Overland) had left London 5 days previously, and was travelling fairly quickly until we got to Greece, which was new territory to all of us. From there on, we were able to spend 2 or 3 days in the more interesting places, and this we thoroughly appreciated.

On such a long trip, it is not advisable, or necessary, to arrange accomodation in advance and we had quite a lot of fun, wondering what kind of place we would be sleeping in that night. In the earlier parts of the journey, we camped out several times (Penn Overland provide tents and stretchers), but after leaving Turkey, conditions were not very suitable for this, and we stayed in the hotels (good and bad), rest-houses, railway stations, Y.M.C.A.'s and Y.W.C.A.'s, Youth Hostels, and in Bombay, a Salvation Army Hostel. Conditions certainly varied! In larger towns, there was naturally more accomodation, but in smaller towns there were often only one or two places to stay in, and these were sometimes quite good, but often not so good, with smells of all sorts, washing facilities perhaps only a tap out in the 'garden', bed linen not always the cleanest - but after all, we were only paying 3 or 4 shilling a night - we could hardly expect luxury!

Sometimes we had bed and breakfast accomodation, but usually we made our own breakfast with the help of spirit stoves or primuses, then bought provisions on the way for picnic lunches, and in the evening had a good meal in a hotel or restaurant, or cooked one ourselves. Turkey was easily the best country for good food. As we couldn't understand the menus, we were always invited into the kitchen to have a look at what was cooking, and then we could order "some of this, and this, and that",..... a very good arrangement.

Many people have asked me what kind of reception we got in the various countries we passed through. Most people were very curious about us..... I think we were as strange looking to them as they were to us. In the smaller villages and towns, our arrival often meant 'Stop work', and we would soon be surrounded by the inhabitants, all anxious to know who and what we were and where we were going. Quite often children who were learning English at school would suddenly find themselves thrust into the role of interpreter. For quite a few the strain was too great, but some coped quite well with the situation.

On the whole, people were very friendly and helpful, the exception being in Northern Iran, where we women were constantly jostled and shoved as we walked along the streets. In Qum (Iran's second 'Holy City') our driver had to get permission for us (women) to get out of the bus, and then were allowed only to cross the street and go into a restaurant. When we tried to have a look around the town, we were quickly escorted back to the bus by the local police. Persian women are not seen very much out of doors, and those who are, are usually enveloped in a long length of material covering face and figure, so we were probably offending the Persian men's sense of propriety. Children, however, were always friendly, and very keen to show us their school books. A surprising number of them were learning English.

Scenically, Turkey was the most beautiful of the countries we passed through, and several parts reminded me of Central Otago. There were several high passes to cross, and early snow was covering the tops of the mountains. In Syria, Jordan, Iran and Baluchistan, we were lucky enough not to run into any sandstorms. However, on this trip, I found people and their way of life more interesting than scenery. In some places e.g. Samaria, conditions seemed to be very little different from what one imagines them to have been in the time of Christ. Women, with earthenware jars on heads are still going down to collect water from the village well, and donkeys are still being used for transport and as beasts of burden.

In India, one is soon conscious of its large population. No longer are the roads deserted. Now they are cluttered up with people on bicycles, flocks of sheep and goats, water buffalos, oxen carts, big trucks, while in the towns and villages one has all these, plus crowds of people everywhere, the women colourful in their saris, the men often wearing brightly coloured turbans, the 'sacred cow' (usually taking a rest in the middle of the footpath or road), trishaws, motor cycle taxis, and sitting by the side of the road will be found people selling fruit and vegetables, others with all their equipment around are mending shoes, the barber is cutting hair: the shopkeepers

sit in the entrance of their 'shops' surrounded by their wares and carry on a conversation with the shopkeeper next door.

We arrived in Colombo on the 9th. December looking forward to being back home again, but very sorry that our trip had ended. It's not a trip for those who want 1st class accommodation all the time, or for those who are not happy unless they know exactly where they are going each day and where they will be staying each night, but for those who are interested in seeing how other people live, have a sense of humour, are prepared to rough it a bit, taking everything as it comes, the good and the bad, it's a trip very well worth doing, and one I would love to do again.

Cost? Bus fare £105 - £125 (depending on time of year) London-Colombo. Also allow £1 for food and accommodation(daily) and then boat fare Colombo - N.Z. Penn Overland make the trip 3 times a year in each direction.

.N.

M O N E Y .

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MEN OF THE TREES. (N.Z.) INC.

This Society has co-operated with many organizations throughout Otago (including Otago Tramping Club) in tree planting projects.

Details of planting programmes are published to members from time to time, and plantings by private members, varying from small quantities to thousands are made each season

Some members are keeping careful records of experimental work and the Society is building a wealth of practical knowledge and experience of benefit to all who are interested in trees, and who are prepared to spend time in clothing the bare wastelands so evident in N.Z.

" He that planteth a tree is a servant of God. He provideth a kindness for many generations, and faces he has not seen shall bless him".

Van Dyke

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ON BIKE AND FOOT.

With the sun shining down from a clear sky, we turned south down Kaikorai Valley Road with the object of motor-cycling to Hindon.

The dusty road soon passed away beneath us and we arrived in the late morning at the railway line. We slowly progressed along the railway line as we manoeuvred the bike from one side of the track to the other. Having crossed two bridges and driven through one tunnel, we turned off at Christmas Creek siding, this being necessary owing to the road bridge being washed away in a flood.

It was lunch time when we arrived at Silver Peak Station. A brief chat with Mr. Radford and we were on our way, with one pack and a motor-cycle saddle bag. We stopped beneath Mt. John hut by the stream for a brief snack.

On reaching Jubilee Hut we found nobody there. After a few repair jobs were done, the rest of the party arrived from Green Hut. Rain began to fall heavily as cooking commenced. Following dinner, time was filled in by reading 'Mad' magazines and 'Popular Mechanics'. Although the candles were extinguished at an early hour, the evening was enlivened by the music from the Town Hall Dance.

The next morning dawned fine and clear, and parties slowly headed off in various directions. When we had tidied the hut, we donned our packs and moved on down to Christmas Creek Hut. Following a short spell, we called for lunch at Mt. John Hut. An hours walk from here took us back to Silver Peak Station. Owing to rain the previous night, the road was extremely slippery, making the going difficult. To save time, it was decided to use a landrover track which came out at the first bridge and from here, pushing was required up a grass track to the road, via a narrow, shaky footbridge. An uneventful trip home ended a pleasant week-end in the Silver Peaks area.

D.S. & S.R.

BUSH TREK TO A SAMOAN VOLCANO

My Samoan friend, Fasuanga and I fretted and fumed on the verandah of the tiny store in Safune village. For three whole days now, we had been cooped up here, listening to the unceasing monsoon rain hammering on the corrugated iron roof.

Unless the rain halted soon, we should have to abandon our proposed tramp through the island's hills to reach the massive crater of Matavanu volcano. If the rain continued, Fasuanga would have to return to duty at the agricultural depot without collecting the specimen plants we planned to bring back with us from the volcano.

However, luck was on our side. On the morning of the fourth day, the sky cleared a little, and the rain, for once, held off.

Fasuanga and I lost no time struggling into our rucksacks and set off through the native village of thatched huts and began our climb into the hills.

It was a stifling hot morning. It needed only the slightest effort to cause the sweat to pour off us in the humid atmosphere. All around a mist of steam rose eerily from the forest.

A short distance from the village, we passed a coconut plantation, where we met a group of laughing Samoans cutting copra. They presented us with two coconuts— a kindly gesture which was to prove a great necessity.

We climbed higher, leaving the tall coconut trees below, and found ourselves wandering through cocoa plantations. Surprisingly, the ground was reasonably firm after so much heavy rain, but Fasuanga told me that the soil was very porous due to the volcanic nature of the ground.

A sudden rainstorm caught us in the middle of a banana plantation, where we were forced to seek shelter as best as we could under the wide banana leaves. At first we were quite dry under these natural umbrellas from where we could enjoy watching the storm lashing over the hills. But gradually the force of the rain bent and cracked the banana leaves and we were soon soaked to the skin.

The storm passed and we pushed on, muttering oaths to ourselves as we sloshed through the wet undergrowth. We were in native bush now. From now on there would be no track - we would have to hack our way through, until we hit the lava flow that had poured down from the volcano when it blew up at the turn of the century. Then all we had to do was to hike over the lava crust up to the crater. But first we had to find the lava field.

Several hours later we were still struggling through the bush. Our rucksacks persistently became snagged in branches and bushes, and our arms ached and our hands blistered by forever hacking with our machetes at the barrier of creepers.

Then all at once we came to a large rock, and, scrambling over it, saw the petrified lava field stretching out for miles before us.

We celebrated the occasion with a much desired 'smoko'. We were parched. The porous ground gave us not even one tiny stream - not even enough water to brew a billy. But we had our coconuts!

We made the most of the break to dry our clothes over the black cinder lava rock.

It took another two hours of hard scrambling over the crumbling lava before we could at last look down into the huge crater-mouth of Matavanu. It was a breath-taking sight. Several hundred feet deep and over a mile in length. Some of the lava from this crater can be seen on the island's beaches many miles away, where, nearly sixty years ago, a hot river of molten lava slowly pushed its way down the hills to the sea, destroying all bush and villages in its path.

Fasuanga and I edged over to the brink of the crater to get a better view. At that moment a rattle of loose stones from below warned us just in time. We had barely leapt backwards, when our viewing ground disappeared before us, disintegrating and causing a small avalanche while it fell deep into the mouth of Matavanu. Even when the avalanche ceased, the rumbling echoed across the silent crater for some time. We did not venture close to the crater edge again.

Despite the crumbling edges of the crater, Matavanu was a beautiful spot, and we lingered on for as long as possible, taking photographs and collecting plant specimens. We were extremely reluctant to leave Matavanu, but it was not wise to stay too long if we wanted to return to Safune before nightfall.

On the descent of the lava field, we noticed a plantation a short distance through the bush. It would be Ologogo plantation - and from there Fasuanga knew a track that wound its way to the coast near Safune. We veered off and headed for the plantation.

The lava became rougher than we had reckoned. There were steep twisting ridges of loose lava and it took us all our time to keep on our feet.

Scrambling down a particularly steep slope, Fasuanga put his foot through a crack in the lava and pitched forward heavily. When I rushed forward and picked him up, I noticed that his leg had a nasty gash. Fortunately there were no bones broken, and after bandaging the wound we were able to move on, though much more slowly and carefully.

We reached Ologogo plantation - crossing the open grassy paddocks in record time, when we were surprised and chased by two half-wild bullocks! Fasuanga's keen eyes soon spotted the track that would lead us to the coast.

Night falls swiftly in tropical Samoa, and we had barely gone half-way when it grew dark. Those remaining miles will be forever remembered by two dog-tired volcanologists who lost count of the times they fell over ground roots; were prodded and scratched in the face by unseen branches; and who meandered off the track every few hundred yards.

The beautiful sound of surf crashing on the shore reef heralded the joyous end of that march and, as we stepped out onto the coastal road, we could see the hurricane lamps flickering in Safune village.

We were a bit late but we were home again.

D.Crighton.

FRUSTRATION.

One week only free for a tramping-mountaineering effort which depended on four fine days in a row to see it through!

The usual detailed preliminaries went ahead—food lists, party gear lists, equipment repairs, new boots broken in, (unfit muscles would have to wait for the first day or two in the back country), transport arranged, leave from work confirmed.

Came the day and we were away at 6 p.m. on a Thursday for Queenstown. The boat trip was enjoyable, the sky seemed settled and the views were of their usual excellence. Our objective—traverse of the main divide ridges between the head of the Beansburn Valley and the Dart above Cattle Flat.

Leaving the road near the lower Routeburn swing bridge we followed the rough track through some beech and scrub to the grassy flats running across to the lower Routeburn. We enjoyed lunch on the river bank in bright sunshine. Bruce M and I then pushed on over the bridge and along the dilapidated tramway through the beech forest toward the Dart while Euan W. went up to the end of the road for his crampons, left in the bus. This allowed us to make steady, but rather slow, progress without holding Euan back, for he was as fit as usual. The tramway runs out about three quarters of a mile from the Dart and we were soon walking up the stony bed, following the true right bank. Apart from one or two places where it was necessary to take to the steep banks, the going was straight forward to the Rockburn Junction where we halted for a meal. There was enough light (and energy) left to move on to the mouth of the Beansburn which was crossed in the dark before we laid out our sleeping bags under the tall red beeches on the upstream bank.

Next morning was clear, but as we moved slowly up the valley the sky became grey, the sun disappeared and low clouds came well down at the head of the valley. A strong wind got up—from the N.W. After lunch Euan got well ahead and when we reached the bivvy rock in the upper valley at 7 p.m. he was cooking a meal and had venison steaks ready for grilling.

over a good-sized fire. Our meal was finished off as a damp wind turned to drizzle and we retired to the fastnesses of the rock.

The next meal was 1.p.m. on Sunday and it rained on Monday and on Tuesday too. Never really heavy, but enough to keep us off the tops, although Euan was out with the rifle every day. By now we knew our efforts in reaching this far were to a great extent wasted, and we must leave early on Thursday morning to connect with the Friday boat to Queenstown.

Wednesday was fine and cold with new snow on the tops and an icy wind blew from the S.W. We got away and in an hour were at the real head of the valley with its steep rock walls not many years freed from the now shrinking Merkl Glacier. Striking up to the left we climbed steeply on to the rubble slopes, then went diagonally above the glacier to a pag on the main divide. Mt. Irvine and Mt. Mallery, which were included in the original plan, looked invitingly close, but slopes covered with ice and snow did not tempt us at the noon hour.

After lunch we worked our way across the gentle slabs and deep gullies above the Sunset Creek cirque to finish up at Fohn Lakes in the late afternoon sunshine. Excellent views of the Olivine Valley, Mts. Ark and Intervention, the Four Brothers' Pass, and Alabaster Pass, made the afternoon an enjoyable one. From Fohn Saddle, as we hurried through, we saw S.S. Earnslaw off Pigeon Island, then we were racing down the Beansburn slopes to the bivvy on the valley floor.

So near and yet so far we had been from our objective - hence the title of this article.

Return to the Routeburn was a pleasant one in sunny to cloudy weather. Ironical it seemed that the parka specially re-proofed for the occasion, had not been used once on a trip 'washed out' by the weather.

B.W.C.

WALKING IN THE RAIN.

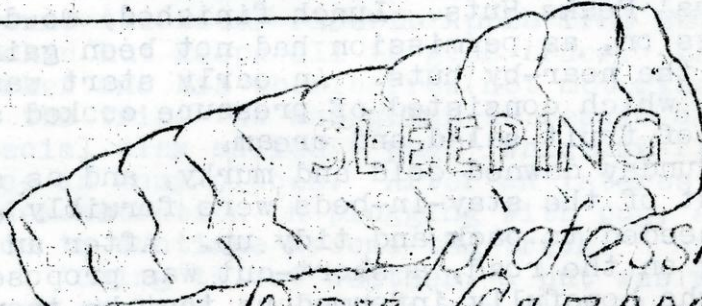
We spent time in Palmerston studying the scenery. Having completed our tour, we proceeded by taxi via the Pleasant Valley Road to Mt Trotter. We had a brief chat with the farmer at the hut, crossed the fence and headed south towards the Waikouaiti River. The sky was overcast as five petrified souls wended their way past rows of gleaming eyes. We had found ourselves amidst a herd of cattle. The descent into the valley was steep and arduous, making very awkward going. From the river we climbed a bulldozed track which led us to a very small plantation. We walked cautiously down the valley till the lights of El Dorado homestead pierced the darkness. On arrival we knocked for some time, but to no avail and as rain was now falling, we moved into the bunk-house.

After partaking a breakfast of pie, we set off through the mist to Scratchback Hill. Plodding for many hours through the rain we arrived at the Brothers' Peaks Huts. Lunch finished, we decided not to press on, as permission had not been gained to use any of the near-by huts. An early start was made on dinner, which consisted of pressure cooked stew, $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon of fruit salad and cream.

Sunday dawned cold and murky, and as soon as the last of the stay-in-beds were forgivably ejected, we proceeded to pack and tidy up. After an hour of walking on the road, a short-cut was proposed by some fool, who hopefully informed us that he thought this route was quicker. The fool placed a small bet, went the long way and paid out his money. Half an hour later with the rain beginning to persist, we arrived at Garden Bush. We hungrily consumed a hot drink and pie and went on our way leaving the only resident- a dead mouse! We dripped through the drizzle into the valley and began the climb to Kiatoa, which, as usual, proved to be strenuous. The river was high at Bucklands Crossing, but we did not stop to investigate the depth and we continued to the top of the hill before resting,

After the rest, we pushed onto Waikouaiti and Beach Street Station. The station soon took on an appearance of washday, as we scattered wet clothing about. Thankful for the warmth of the train, we settled down to poker and eating 'geedies' and biscuits. Also on the train was the official club trip, who gave the story of their week-end. Once again, Dunedin welcomed us with a heavy shower and the drowned rats parted on their various ways.

Chook & Shiru Shika.



SLEEPING BAGS

professionally

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64

PREENS

the
**DRY CLEANING
SPECIALISTS**

FREE AGAIN.

For three weeks I had been sweating over my books, greasing 'til after midnight, to prepare for my exams. The most horrible, most inevitable period in student life, when one waits for reality to catch up on innocence, and force one to realize that testing time has come.

But all the last minute hysteria of exams was over and for days I had been dreaming of this week-end in the Silver Peaks. It was two or three months since I had been there- so long, I can't remember when I visited them last. Euan, Lou. and myself set off up Rollinsons at 4.30.p.m. It was a beautifully fine November afternoon. Quarter of an hour later, or was it less? the two students were panting furiously, cursing their exams for their unfit state, while at the same time trying manfully to keep up a cheerful conversation with Euan - tolerant Euan.

We slogged on up the heavy metallised road, then off into the tussock, round the northern flank of Swampy. The sun was sinking over the Rock and Pillars, casting a golden light on my two companions. Below us, lay a graceful panorama; the sweep of Blueskin Bay, Mopenui, Mihiwaka, and typically there was cloud-capped Mt Cargill. Round on our left was the stark, spotlighted mass of Silver Peaks. This pause called for a toffee - then we slogged on.

The down-hill grade of Swampy was more to my favour, and it seemed to me that I was getting into some sort of tramping stride, when we had to climb round Hightop.

It was getting cooler now, and as we moved wearily (perhaps only applying to myself) along the ridge to Green Peak Hut, the sun sank slowly behind Long Ridge.

A faint flicker of candle light, the low murmur of voices, like conspirators, greeted us, as we marched steadfastly down the track to the hut in unbroken rank.

Inside, sitting in front of a cheerful blazing fire, were Polly and Ron. We surveyed the hut, noting, that, typically, there was the row of pink faces peering out from the recesses of the bank of bunks. The table, as usual, was cluttered with the innumerable necessities of the tramping host; primii, candles, dead matches, greasy plates, knives, spoons, billies, and of course, inescapably, the tins of baked beans and reduced cream.

Quickly and efficiently, Chef Louise organised her team and in a short time there was $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs of steak frying, and 1 lb. of rice, 1 lb peas and several tomatoes, all cooking merrily over the fire.

Steinecker aperitifs were poured out all round. Ice cold, bitter and beautiful, just brought from the spring.

In no time at all, the sumptuous spread was cooked and served by our capable chef. What a meal it was - rare, red-brown steak 'Simonese' rice, green peas and tomatoes, prepared to perfection. Ron and Polly, who had just eaten their comparatively plain meal of rucks and baked beans, salivated enviously. The boys in the bunks gasped at the sight, hoping some one of the trio would 'chicken out', so they could try it.

It was beautiful - but there was too much. I just had to donate the last third of my steak to the ravenous unbunked hordes - how Lou. managed to equal Euan's enormous capacity, I will never know.

But in the next course, I beat them. The peaches and cream with instant pudding defeated them half-way through the course - but I ploughed victoriously on to the end! What a meal! Replete, we lounged round the fire, slurping hot coffee, yawning, and swopping cheek with the ungrateful bunkers.

Free again! The exams seemed to be more than worth it, just to make that Saturday trek to Green Hut and have a feed, and to be amongst that rough lot called trampers again.

DART. CASCADE SADDLE.
WEST MATUKITUKI. EAST MATUKITUKI. WILKIN?

Dave Brown (Ltd) Lindsay Omies, Ali McMurrin and Ian McGregor left Queenstown on Christmas Day, 1961, with the best of intentions of completing the above trip. On board the 'Earnslaw' we met up with Mike Norder, Peter Goult, and Doug Brydone, who were doing the Rees Dart. These three and Dave each had rifles.

There was the usual bus trip from Glenorchy to the end of the road. Then came fields and alternate patches of bush and clearings, and in one place several acres of Matagouri and nothing else. Every now and then, mistletoe brightened a beech tree. On reaching the Dart, we had a swim and the sandflies a feed.

Then came Chinaman's Bluff with the river hard against it. We wandered up and down trying to find a place to cross, but it was too swift, and as two horsemen had trouble urging their horses across, we had a go at the bluff. This didn't look very pleasant so back to the river. Once again we changed our minds and went back to the bluff. This time Arawata Bill's bivvy (mentioned in Moir) was found and having dithered for 1½ hours, we found the track and passed the bluff.

Camp was made about 7.p.m. opposite Borer Flat. The shooters tried to get a deer on these flats, but could not cross the river.

Next morning we left about 8.a.m. and had to go round the face of the next bluff - Sandy Bluff. After this came a long boring trudge across Dredge Flats under a blazing sun. One person was very glad of sun-goggles. Dredge Hut was the furthest that a can of 'Leopard' got.

After a swim and lunch, it was pleasant going along the bush track

That night saw us part of the way up Cattle Flat with one deer for tucker.

In the morning liver (deer's) was on the menu. Crossing Cattle Flat, we had a good view of the ice-fall of the Curzon Glacier. Shade at the end of the flat was great, but unfortunately there were no apples on some apple trees there.

Once again, more bush. At one spot three of the party left the main track and went down to the junction of the Dart and Whitbourn Rivers and were well rewarded for their trouble.

Nearing Dart Hut, two goats were shot and a good view up the Dart and Mt Ansted obtained. Dart Hut was reached about 6.p.m.

The fourth day saw Mike, Peter and Doug. off for the Rees. Dave and Ali went part of the way up Headlong. The other two had a very energetic day, which included making a jelly.

After three perfect days cloud began to appear.

The fifth day we left the hut at 5.30.a.m. and went up the Dart into fascinating country. We could see Cascade Saddle and Plunket Dome, moraine lying on the valley floor, thick snow-capped tops, a deep and sombre glacial valley and then the glacier itself.

We were now climbing up towards the saddle. On a ridge two deer appeared. One stayed there. Still further up, we saw a mob of about eight deer but they were a long way off. As we watched, the herd trotted off, while the stag stood on guard watching us. All morning the cloud had thickened and it was now raining..

The route led into Cascade basin, a hanging basin, where we found several patches of snow. This is another fascinating place, tussocks, desolate, and as we saw it, bleak. Well worth coming here for a few days.

After crossing one creek in the basin, we were wondering if we were on the right route, when Ali spotted the pylon erected for people like us.

We crossed the Cascade Stream (only this one is mentioned in Moir) and climbed up the pylon. The wind, rain and mist swept across the top.

After building a stone wall around an overhanging rock slab close to the pylon, we had lunch. Leaving our packs behind we examined the first part of the route and then went back and collected the packs. Following Moir exactly, we gradually moved down.

Occasionally the mist parted and we looked down several thousand feet to the valley floor, with the West Matukituki River a winding silver ribbon and all else dark green.

Above the bush-line in the West Matukituki, there were a large number of alpine plants in flower, which was quite a contrast to the Dart side.

Cascade hut was reached about 6.p.m.

The next day, two loaves of bread were made in the camp oven, the first being buttered and eaten hot.

About 6.p.m. that day, we left Cascade Hut and tramped down the valley to Jerry Aspinall's hay barn at the end of the road up the Matukituki. On the way down, we saw cattle unsuccessfully trying to cross the river (which was in flood) in about the worst possible place. One or two appeared drowned.

Next day one boy was feeling sick, so he went out to Wanaka with a tourist, saw a Doctor, and came back the following day. He said some people thought he went out because it was New Year's Eve.

The party left the hay barn about mid-day with good weather once more and headed up the East Matukituki, after permission from Mr. Aspinall, the local runholder. Snowy Creek, which drains the Avalanche glaciers a mile away, was frigid.

Just before Bledisloe Gorge we left the main river and went up the true left hand side of the Hester Penny stream (or true left bank East Matuki) Unfortunately we did not cross this tributary at the bottom. This stream has cut about 50 ft. into the rock, with two sheer sides and numerous waterfalls and pools. After going about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile up the side, we managed to cross. In one spot a few feet of chimneying between a tree and a bank was necessary.

Shortly after this, the vegetation changed from beech to almost sub-alpine scrub (mainly of *Dracophyllum*). About 9.p.m., as the last redness disappeared from the sky, we found a campsite on the edge of the bushline.

We awoke to a glorious sight. Below us, and across the East Matukituki, was the short Kitchener Valley with the Aspiring flats at the head, then a cirque, Aeroplane and Pope's Nose peaks and behind these, Aspiring, just tipped with a little cloud.

Leaving about 8.a.m. we moved from the end of the spur, at the end of which, is the Bledisloe Gorge. From herewe looked back down the East Matukituki and forward up the remainder of the valley and the ridge that we would have to cross.

We moved around the side of the spur, shot one deer, and started to descend. At one spot, a discussion took place on whether to follow a stream or keep to the bush - we kept to the bush. After about 10 minutes, we ended up by letting the packs down a ten ft. bluff and sliding down the rope. Nearby was the stream, which we could now see came down in a smooth gentle grade. Eventually, the river was reached near the gorge, about mid-day. Another deer was shot here.

About 5 minutes after lunch (2 or 3 p.m.) an old deer culler's camp was found. Opposite, we could see a sheer 500 ft wall of Glacier Dome.

From here it was good going. Crossing and recrossing the river, we turned the corner in the valley and made camp about 8.p.m. We saw 8 - 10 deer here. The campsite was beside some bush-covered bumps in the valley floor. There had been a small bush fire here, providing handy firewood. (*Dracophyllum* again)

Dinner, (main course, venison stew) was over by 11.p.m. but the baker stayed until 12.a.m. making bread. He had breakfast (liver for one course) in bed to compensate for staying up.

Starting at 9.a.m., we moved up through some scrub and then up steep tussock slopes, which didn't agree with Moirs' easy tussock basin! During a

rest, we noticed that the end of the valley seemed further away, than had been thought the previous evening. That, as we found out later, was vital.

Coming up to a ridge, two chamois were shot. They really should have been able to smell us, as the ears from other animals, that we were carrying, were beginning to stink.

We were now about 5,00, 6,00 or 7,00 feet high (I think). Underfoot it was mainly scree and rotten rock with snow in the gullies.

From the pass itself, we had a great view, although clouds pouring through Pearson Saddle from the West Coast, prevented an even better one. Slightly over to our left, ice and a schrund sat on the side of a mountain, whose name we have not worked out. In the front distance appeared a valley system surrounded by snow covered peaks. At our feet, there was the end of a deep valley, with a herd of 30-50 deer, and to our right, Lake Wanaka. Lake Wanaka & Dave realized that if you look down the Wilkin, you can't see the lake.

Where were we ????

Out came maps and the compass. Possibly, we were at the head of the Albertburn. We decided to carry on down, and on getting to the mouth of whatever river we were at the head of, walk up the side of the lake to the Nottingly River.

No words can describe this area. No slides can show its scenery. It must be seen in the flesh. We had lunch and started going down about 2.p.m. The whole way down was a series of ledges and steep slopes. On one of the slopes, we sat down and slid, (under control) In one place, an hour was spent in lowering packs over a bluff and then belaying around the rock. Then came the sub-alpine scrub. This took only $\frac{3}{4}$ hour, but the language will last for a year. Several times, one decided to stop walking on branches and would try to get to the ground, only to find a 10 ft. deep gut underneath. Eventually, we reached the valley floor about 7.30.p.m. now accompanied by two keas which would come to within three feet of us. Evidently they had not met Mr. Aspinall.

On the eleventh day, (I think) we broke camp about 8 a.m. and left the river to avoid a gorge. About 10 or 11 a.m. we dropped back to the river, where it forks. After some pondering, we concluded that this was the junction of the two branches, (West and South) of the Albertburn.

Apparently we had not gone far enough up the East Matukituki, and the valley system surrounded by snow covered peaks was the Wilkin. At 2 p.m. we stopped for an hour in the one hut in the valley, and made camp about 7 p.m. at the mouth of Albertburn.

It was quite a change cooking while it was still light.

There is one omission on Macaroni packets. It does not say how much, per person. We discovered ^{that} ~~that~~ a packet is too much for four people.

On the last morning, we had a well graded three ft. wide track almost to the Nottingly River, where we met the O.T.C. party from the Wilkin. We then paid one quid for a miserable wet trip down the lake to Wanaka.

It was a good trip, well worth doing. The shooting added interest as well as fresh meat for the trip. Phew!!!

Mac.

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