

HERETAUNGA TRAMPING CLUB (INC.)

" P O H O K U R A "

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PRIVATE TRIPS.

TASMAN TRAVERSE.

Dec. 31st.

A primus purred and a sleeper snored. They definitely did not harmonise, so I awoke the sleeper, gave brew-making over to him and went to sleep myself.

We had left from our snowcave that morning, 30th Dec. '53, for Syme Ridge and Tasmanbut had been turned back by high winds. However, as the weather appeared settled, we decided on making another start; "we" being Wynne Croll, Patrick Sheehan, Trevor McCann and myself.

I awoke at 11.30 p.m. with a fuzzy mouth and a cold nose, nipped outside for a weather report and smartly nipped back to the sack. A bright starry sky verified the frosty feeling and, amidst much opening and closing of eyes, we cooked breakfast, filled our climbing packs and fought with frozen crampon straps until 1.30 a.m. when, having exhausted all excuses for delay, we roped and moved off. From our torches flowed a soft yellow light, crampons found hold with a pleasant metallic squeal and a cold sharp air dilated the nostrils, driving away the few remaining cobwebs.

With Pat and Wynne on one rope leading the way, we moved at an easy pace around Glacier Dome, 8047', dodged a crevasse or two and descended to Grand Plateau. Now the work really began.

(2)

as we made our way up the "Mad Mile". a very large extent of avalanche debris, until a compulsory halt was called beneath a large bergschrund over which, the previous day, we had jumped without much trouble. Now, however, it lay quite open. A period of "muckin' about" as someone put it, took us above this 'schrund and with the first light of dawn silhouetting Malte Brun Range we gained Syme Ridge. Time approximately 5 a.m. and time also for a short spell.

Far out on Silberhorn Ridge two antlike objects moved steadily upwards; Patrick Barcham and Graham McCallum from Haast Hut. We shouted. The cry, rebounding from ice cliff to snow wall, made its way to them in this clear atmosphere and in reply a truly crystal clear call found its echoing way back to us. My eyes lowered to scan the "Mad Mile" and utter chaos of avalanche blocks through which there seemed no return, then roved back to Silberhorn and that ever dominating mass of Mt. Cook (12349'). At our backs the delicate snow arete of Syme Ridge curved and twisted, a catwalk to Tasman. Having scanned our route for a few minutes from an uncomfortable position involving a one and a half neck twist, we decided it might be easier to stand and face in the general direction and when this was accomplished it was time to move on.

Trevor and I were now leading and as we followed through on a narrow ridge, one side of which held a crampon quite well, the other necessitating a kicked step, life felt rather good. In a pleasantly warm sun, with more than sufficient exposure to need a good deal of concentration we were enjoying the climb. Each little rise on the ridge brought us a view of yet another little rise, a seemingly never-ending succession of bumps. However, at our breakfast halt (8.30 a.m.) we appeared to have traversed most of them and on moving off again this proved so. Syme Ridge does not lead directly on to Tasman but to a shoulder north along the Main Divide. As we cut steps around the face below this shoulder Barcham and McCallum were descending from Tasman to Lendenfeld and Pioneer Hut. Their voices carried quite clearly to us although we were to take some three hours to reach the same position. Hard bubble ice delayed us a little and it was not until 1.30 p.m. that Tasman's (11,475') restricted summit was ours. We all managed to find somewhere to sit, but I do not think Trev. was very keen when asked to move back for a photograph. With a thousand feet or so of nothing below he could hardly be blamed! Although an inevitable West Coast mist lay over Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers, the Divide was uncovered, giving us a view directly north along the backbone of the South Island. How difficult it was to identify peaks beyond Elie de Beaumont! Valleys seemed non-existent and with little imagination one could pick out a route home using these snowclad stepping stones. Southwards, even at this height Mt. Cook dominated the view, an immovable block of rock, ice and snow.

"About time we ambled on?" Someone enquired as we grew progressively colder. Amble is not quite the correct word, but move we did, down steep bubble ice, past huge cornices and a spectacular ice cliff to reach Silberhorn (10,757') at 3 p.m. Our route lay down Silberhorn Ridge to the Grand Plateau and so to our cave. For about 500' of the descent, the sun had done its work, leaving a surface of hard ice beneath six inches or so of soft slush, making belays impossible. This made for very slow, sure movement and I am certain we all inwardly cursed one another for taking an unnecessarily long time. Several hours of close concentration makes one a little touchy, as is to be expected, but the true test lies in suppressing this feeling.

Our progress continued carefully, for snow conditions were quite soft right down the ridge, but finally the Grand Plateau was ours once again, as hot as ever despite a lack of sunshine. On we plodded around Glacier Dome to be brought up short at our last crevasse which had opened during the day. We sat for a while discussing metal ladders and other such Himalayan aids, then tucked up our skirts and jumped the jolly thing. Off came crampon and rope, we sat on the ragged nether end of climbing trousers, had one glorious glissade to the mouth of our cave, inside, on with a brew and into the sack. Time 8.40 p.m.

Once again a primus purrs and a sleeper snores, but this time they provide a harmonious background to my thoughts. And they are indeed pleasant ones.

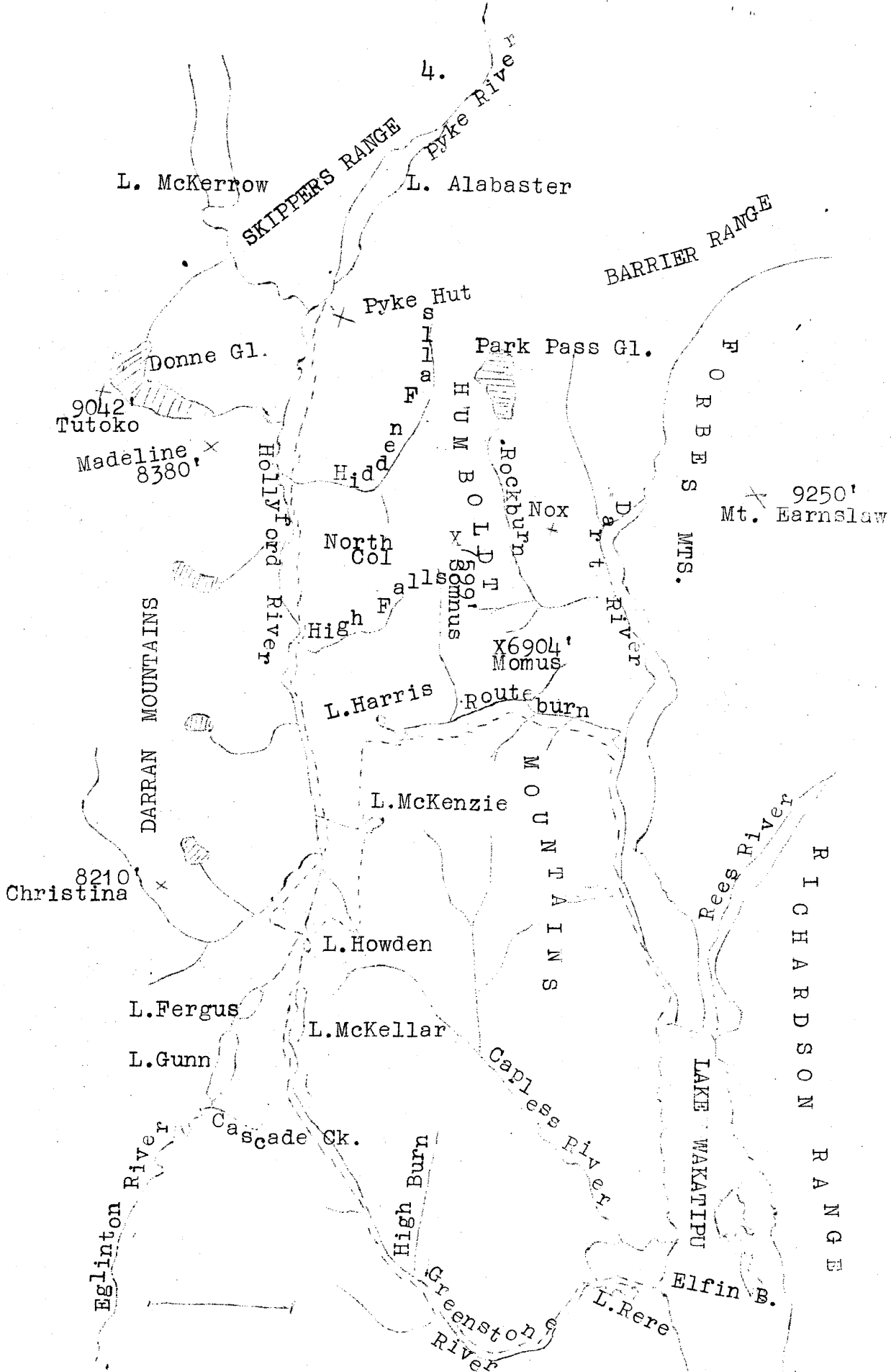
W. Romanes.

ROUTEburn - HOLLYFORD - GREENSTONE.

Dec. 23rd. - Jan. 11th.

After three months' preparation, our party of five finally arrived in Queenstown on Xmas night. On Sunday 27th, with several hundred other passengers we embarked on the "Earnslaw", a steamer run by the N.Z.R. to Kinloch at the head of the lake. This steamer is the only form of transport for sheep stations bordering on Lake Wakatipu. Early afternoon saw us enjoying lunch provided by Mr. Bryant, proprietor of the bus which runs from Kinloch to the Routeburn swing bridge.

Two hours of steady climbing along a well graded track which follows the course of the Routeburn brought us to the Huts situated at a bend in the river at the end of a broad tussocked river flat. This hut afforded views of Somnus 7,599', Momus 6,004' and the turret peak 7,800' of Mt. Earnslaw 9,250'. Away



at 6 in the morning with three hours of river work in sandshoes up the snow-fed right branch of the Routeburn. Bob was extremely trigger fingered after counting the thirty-first Red deer as we worked our way to the head of an enclosed basin. We climbed some rock on the right, then worked our way up a long snow couloir to the east of the North Col. Eventually, at mid-day from a point near Nereus, we were able to survey a wonderful panorama from Earnslaw in the far East, round over the Barrier Range, all 7,000' to 8,000', then Poseidon 7,400', Park Pass, a large glacier, a frozen Lake Nerine and occasionally the Hollyford through the mist.

Somnus looked very tempting but after 2½ hours of belaying one another up a steep, snow couloir, then finding sheer slab rock ahead of us, and murk rapidly descending, we decided we had had our chips so turned tail and in very short time we reached the valley floor again after some beautiful long glissades.

6 p.m. and we were eagerly awaiting a mighty stew the girls were preparing. That night the murk up above dropped and rained steadily, but with no serious consequences. We were able to keep to schedule and leave for Lake McKenzie late in the morning, with blue sky breaking.

In the early afternoon, we beheld some terrific scenery from the Harris Saddle and precincts; the view extended the length, and breadth of the Hollyford Valley 4,000' below us and was banked by the majestic Darran Range which contains among others, Tutoko 9,042' and Madeline 8,280'. All these peaks were encircled by thick cumulus which enhanced their beauty. In the late afternoon, we clambered over bush-covered moraine to beautiful Lake McKenzie, with keas crying and circling overhead. We established a fly camp near a veronica-covered clearing at the western end of the Lake. Came morning and we were away to Cascade Creek in perfect weather and arrived there at nightfall in time to collect some food which we had sent round via Te Anau from Queenstown; we met an interesting type in the form of N.S. Seaward who has written travel books of the region. He put us wise to things we would encounter in the Hollyford.

We split up our food the following morning and awaited a bus to take us to Marian Camp. Time soon slipped by as we watched flocks of kakas, paroquets, bush canaries. A bush robin was so tame that it sat on Bob's head. Hollyford camp owned by Dave Gunn five miles down the valley was our camp site for the night; but boy! did those blasted sandflies descend on you, especially if you were wearing dark colours! Dimp is the recognised repellent but the further we went the more immunisation dwindled - from 4 hours to 10 minutes or less, depending on the amount of virgin blood you had left in your limbs.

There is a formed road for about two miles past Dave Gunn's camp, then a pack track right through to Martin's Bay and Big Bay, a total of 56 miles, all kept in condition by Dave Gunn

for his tourist ten day chartered trips.

We spent five days in the valley going as far north as Pyke Hut and back, enjoying ourselves on a cage over the Pyke, (Darcy reckoned it was worth coming all the way to experience that alone) and seeing the Hollyford river in full flood with waterfalls 2,000' to 3,000' high cascading off the mighty Darrans which rise a sheer 7,000' up from the valley floor. But one could go on writing for ever so we say "See it all for yourself if you can manage it. Hear such things as the wonderful sound of two bellbirds whistling in perfect harmony, watch a mighty waterfall trying to dislodge a rock the size of a small hut perched crazily halfway up it as in the Hidden Falls Creek or the amusing efforts of one of your cobbers panning for gold."

For various reasons our intentions to go up the Olivine River over Park Pass and down the Pockburn were foiled, so we picked up our remaining food at Cascade and set off down the Greestone Valley via Lake Howden in pouring rain to arrive eventually in an exhausted condition at Shaw's musterers' hut halfway down the valley. This small hut contains one $\frac{3}{4}$ bed, and finally slept five of us and two others who arrived late in the rain.

The trip to Elfin Bay the following day included two nice duckings for most members of the party in the flooded Greenstone River and High Burn which were both crossed by rope method. Our trip closed with the party reaching Elfin Bay at dusk on the 7th January after 12 days and 120 miles of tramping. The following afternoon, the steamer took us back to Queenstown.

In conclusion our party recommends this area as the place for Xmas trips. To anyone who has the gear we say, "Purchase a good map from the Otago Alpine Club, a copy of Moir's Guide Book of 'Tramping Tracks and Routes of the Southern Lakes' from any newsagent, 'Limp' from the chemist, dehydrated food from Small's in Wellington and away you go into an area that will offer you the best tramping in New Zealand."

Those in party :-
Audrey Coburn, Marie Valler, Darcy Williams, Bob Woon.

Leader - Dereck Conway.

MINARETS AND MALTE BRUN.

Jan., 1954.

After listening to reports of Hermitage weather and remembering last year, I grimly put into my pack enough reading to last me the entire ten days. However, when I arrived the glass was high and the chief problem seemed to be that the huts were out of water; which shows that climbers are hard to please.

After some polite discussion, my guide, Snow Mace, un-

folded our plans. Fortunately I was in complete agreement, so we set out to conquer the Minarets, Malte Brun and the Footstool, in that order.

First day, the usual hot plod up the glacier to de la Beche hut. Hughie pretended to rain and when we had dragged out our parkas; he laughed and went away. In the hut were two boys on their first visit to this area, and keen to climb something, so we happily joined forces. Next morning we got up at 2.30, inspected the weather, had breakfast, inspected the weather - hogsbacks and haze - and went back to bed. When we next woke, it was a lovely clear sunny day. Hughie was obviously out for some fun. I got myself very sunburned writing letters on the top of a huge boulder. Next morning, same performance, back to bed about 5 a.m. But this time Snow stayed awake, and noticed Hughie depart; and we set out in a great rush about 6 a.m.

Steadily up the rocky ridge behind the hut, we climbed for an hour and a half. Then we reached snowfields, and put on rope and crampons. Below the crest of the ridge, but always up, we plodded slowly, winding to avoid breaks or find a bridge over a crevasse. (Question: "Snow, do you make any distinction between crevasses and schrunds?" Answer: "No, we call them all slots.") Near the top we had to go up a gully filled with avalanche debris from some interesting ice-cliffs above. Encouraged by Snow's urgings we ran up the broken mass, climbed the groove, and emerged into safety in a state of breathlessness equalled only by the Everest team above the South Col. For the next half hour, Snow practically towed me and not until I had had a lengthy breather and lots to eat was I able to go on. The Minarets were now just above us, two beautiful spires of snow, 10,058' and 10,028'; we split up and one rope climbed each spire and then changed over. We stayed on top long enough to admire the magnificent view, and to take some photos, then descended.

Snow now cast his eye towards de la Beche, the peak next along the ridge. He consulted his watch and we started. (He later discovered that his watch was an hour slow!) However, we found a bridge over the schrund, and Snow cut a line of steps up a steep knife-edge. The top gave a wonderful view down on to Graham's Saddle and the Franz neve.

Going home meant retracing our steps all the way; another hasty dash down the avalanche gully - nothing came down - and so back to the hut at 6 p.m.

Next day we went across to Malte Brun hut. The weather was perfect when we got up the following day; the usual 2.30 a.m. We left about 4.30, climbed steadily until we reached the glacier which gives access to the west ridge of Malte Brun and stopped for crampons and rope. The glacier is steep and two schrunds were difficult; the only bridges Snow at first rejected, but decided they were not so bad when he found there was nothing else. "Anyway," he added, "we can always come home down the rocks. Mick says they're all right."

I had a mental picture of Malte that looked a little like the more spectacular photos in Swiss Alpine books. I was therefore relieved to find that there was always quite a lot to hang on to, and usually something to stand on even if it was only by two bootnails; the exception was the famous "cheval" ridge, which has to be crossed in a sitting position as if it were a horse - only it is 150 feet long. As we got higher on the ridge, the great red slabs slid away smoothly below us on the face, and a few wisps of cloud crept along the glacier in the valley below. Up high, the wind was bitterly cold, even through jersey and parka, in spite of the bright sunshine. The top (10,421') is snow, and after a long look over into the Murchison valley, we retreated to a sheltered ledge for lunch. Then began the long, careful climb down, to Snow's repeated "Stand up and walk down", just when I thought I was walking down. But I obviously clung too lovingly to the rock, because a little spike reached out, and zipp! I had torn the seat out of my trousers in traditional Malte manner. When we reached the glacier, our bridges were too soft to cross, so we sought a way down the rocks. They were steep, but we were hardened to that, and an hour or so of scratching got us down. And so a knee-shattering descent to the hut, which we reached 15 hours after leaving it. I had a burned face, assorted bruises, and hands rubbed raw on the rock, but I wouldn't have changed places with the queen in her coronation gown.

We returned next day to the Hermitage, hoping to climb the Footstool from there. But Snow had pulled a muscle in his leg and it s elled badly, so I gave up the idea. There's always next year, and I had two ten-thousand footers. So I spent three perfect days doing nothing but gossiping, reading, lying in the sun and taking a snap or two. The greatest excitement was finding a weta in my bed at Sealey Cottage. However, it wasn't charged for in my bill, so I left for home feeling very satisfied with Hermitage 1954; and I'll write anyone a reference for Hughie.

Helen Hill.

TUNURANGI.

26TH DEC. - 1 ST. JAN.

Doug Callow suggested, just before he left the Bay, that the Club ought to have a go at Tunurangi, a trig on one of the highest points of the Ahimanawa. Heather Baird ran a sporting trip in from Tarawera at Easter 1946, but the weather cramped their style. Since then club parties have been up the Repia and over Te Matai, while John Mac. led a reconnaissance party over the "Pariax" (Parihaka) on the Tacon search, but no-one tackled the central block. A series of reconnaissances during 1953 showed that the structure of the country was something like a starfish, eight approach ridges converging on a peak about a mile north of the trig. The difficulty was to select the best ridge.

As a Christmas camp had been suggested this year combined

with exploration, we decided on a south eastern approach, in order to have a base near the Taupo Road. (In the event all the camping candidates dropped out.) The fruit trees of an abandoned Maori settlement made a pleasant site for a base camp and there was a choice of leading ridges, each with a horse-track starting up it - Though neither continued far into the bush.

Our first choice was the Mitirangi ridge and off we went with day packs. The going was good at first, a narrow ridge with open red-beech, but at the upper end it swung west a long way before rising to the star pint and became scrubby and infested with lawyer. It was 4 p.m. when we stood on this first objective and there was mist about, but an old heavily-cut horse-track raised our hopes and tempted us on.

When it appeared to dive off down a side spur into the head of the Toropapa, we took a chance at the next ridge, knowing that a strong horse-track led on to it from our camp. No luck and after a good deal of scrub bashing we got down to the bush again to find ourselves heading on to a side spur, the main ridge making a wide swing to the west with a low saddle. It was out of the question to follow it at this late hour, so we cut down the spur hoping to reach the bush edge before nightfall.

Needless to say we didn't, but made ourselves reasonably comfortable on a little flat with a good fire and a sketchy supper and returned to camp next morning for a late breakfast and a lazy day.

The weather remained perfect and on Tuesday we were rearing to go. With 4 days' rations and 34 lb packs, we set off to unravel the ridge we had failed to descend. It was a blistering hot day, but pleasant enough in the bush. The horse track petered out at the bush edge, but there were good game tracks and a line of old survey pegs to the first prominent peak. From here the route was a series of traps for the unwary player with two concealed saddles, each at an unexpected angle to the main ridge, but with a bit of tree-climbing and fossicking about we hit both of them.

Our general intention had been to make camp at a large and gloomy waterhole where we had previously left the Tunurangi ridge, but on our way up the last climb we came to a double ridge with a tiny trickle running down the hollow between, making an ideal camp site, so we stopped to the loudly-expressed horror of a flock of resident kakas.

Dawn was damp and misty, but soon cleared. We back-blazed thoroughly up to the waterhole, climbed the prominent cone above it and half-an-hour later were on Tunurangi among the ruins of Ross' Trig with a wide view all round, from the Ruahines to Edgecumbe and from Kahuranaki to Titiranpunga. As the next pint south was obviously higher we battled along and confirmed that the height of this point (N.W.) is wrongly shown. The scrub and stunted Dacrydium forest were not the best of travelling, even though

much bashed about by deer. After taking our fill of views, bearings and photographs, we toddled back to camp.

On Wednesday we set off with the general idea of following the old cut track and for returning to the base camp by the outer ridge, which runs above Tarawera. We did neither. We struck the track rather far along and decided against back-tracking to find out if it dropped into the Toropapa. Instead, we followed it east, which involved scrambling over some extensive windfalls and finally lost it on a sidling. We kept to the ridge and made slow progress over an interminable series of scrubby tops, pitching camp, when we had had enough of this in a saddle. So far we had been most fortunate in finding water handy whenever we had stopped to camp or boil up, but we picked a loser here, and water was a long way down on one side, and twice as far on the other.

Next morning we came on a mysterious well-cut pack track which appeared to sidle up out of the head basin of the Ohane. This ran for a bit then stopped at a blaze which ran steeply down a back, apparently back into the same basin. The day was yet young and we were feeling adventurous, so down we went and when the blazes faded out sidled downstream into the Ohane.

On arrival it looked as though we had got what we had asked for, a little trickle with steep mossy walls and blocked with log jams, but it soon opened out into nice little flats where we saw a number of hinds with fawns.

Apart from one waterfall into a gut where we had to make a sidling over loose rock the stream was evenly graded though lower down the flats were smothered in toitoi or thickets of nettles. The whole stream to the main confluence took only 4 hours travelling time, very pleasant on a scorching day and $\frac{3}{4}$ hour from the fork we came to the hot spring, a semicircular basin dammed by a log, but full of dead leaves and smelling slightly of rotten eggs.

At the confluence we discussed possibilities. The time was only 3 p.m. and though we had food for another couple of days, there was nothing much more we could carry out in that time, certainly not without shifting our base. On the other hand, Rex could attend a golden wedding if we got straight out, so we decided to pack up and go home. There was a frenzied rush to wash, then we toddled in, struck camp and were home by 8.30.

Number in party - 4 - Alan Berry, Rex Evans, Kath Elder, Norm Elder.

RIPIA

13 - 17th Jan., 1954.

There is a lot of bush country looking down from Tunurangi towards Pakaututu and somewhere in there the bush changes from Kaweka to Waikaremoana type. Some years ago, an Anzac Day party followed a good track leading up out of the Ripia into the bush, so Kath and I set out to find this. Not so easy as the old bridge has gone and the road follows another ridge; finally we went up to Pakaututu and consulted Frank Turfrey. He recommended crossing the Ripia opposite the homestead and going up to the bush on the main ridge.

After a lot of scrub bashing, we got into the bush all right but that night mist settled down and hung on. So did we, but at midday decided that the weather looked brighter in-country and that, sooner than bash our way back, we would push on and hope to get into the clear. We didn't - but got along some hours by compass till a sharp turn into a low saddle off Pukekiokio fooled us and we chose a blind spur into a Ripia tributary. As this would have taken us too far downstream, we climbed out on to the opposite ridge and camped, hoping the weather would clear. It didn't, so next morning we tried to pick a leading spur out to the Ripia, but had a two hour flounder down a dirty little creek before making it.

Our intention was now to make Big Ben Hut and return over Te Matai, so we started up-stream hoping to pick up a rumoured cross-track, but a real rock-gut forced a high sidle, from which the next mile of the river looked so uninviting that we decided to keep on up till we hit the Te Matai pack track, cutting out the hut. After a long scrubby climb we found that we and the map were in disagreement and that we were on a high isolated peak, not obviously connected with anything, though fortunately below the lifting mist, so that we could pick a number of last year's landmarks.

After some earnest thought, we dropped into the next valley and bashed our way up on to the track. By the time we were up in the mist on Te Matai we were prepared to call it a day. This was lucky as Sunday morning was perfect and we had a clear view from the trig of the country we had been boxing through blindfold.

The journey down was uneventful, except that we lost 1½ hours getting off a high knob into an obscure saddle. Oddly enough, we had no trouble where we had gone astray last year and from there onwards followed a well-blazed track along a curious low level ridge out on to farmland and were home at 9 p.m.

The bush is unusually full of pig. The few deer we saw were very tame and one gentleman haunted our camp one evening, not showing himself but very nearly roaring. Over the lip of a waterfall, we had a vertical view of a nice 8 pointer in advanced velvet cooling himself in a pool. Many birds, including one hostile bush hawk owning a cliff - robins doubtfully spotted twice, perhaps in error as we had no camp visitors.

N.L. ELDER.

KURIPAPANGA - PAKATUTU.

Nov. 13th-14th.

Les and I had talked a lot about taking a trip across the Kawekas from Kuripananga to Pakatutu and we finally jacked up arrangements and left Hastings on Friday night, 13th November. We arrived at Swamp Hut at about 10 p.m. and left the Model A on the side of the road for the boys to take back after their Cairn Trip. We found our way to Kaweka Hut at about 11 p.m. Ross Smith, John Groome and Dick were there, in bunk. After Ross had very kindly boiled the billy for us we turned in, a yarn or two and to sleep about 1 a.m. We more or less woke up at five and had a look outside. The wind had died down after blowing strongly all night and the weather was overcast but fine. We decided to take the risk and bade fond farewell to the boys at 6 a.m.

We headed for the tops and by the time we got there the wind had got pretty strong. After half an hour up there, we got the works properly. I've never known wind like it. It was coming from the westerly side and we had no show of getting out of it; most of the easterly side is sheer shale faces. We staggered along with our heads well down and our legs as wide apart as possible so we wouldn't get blown off the tops. We were both wearing "kidney basher" packs with three days supplies and quite often the wind would catch them underneath and darn near lift them off our backs. Our ears got sore after a while with the wind whistling into them and we couldn't look up much in case we got a shower of shale in our eyes. After one five minute break in six hours we got to where a leading ridge drops down to the Makahu stream. We dropped down 100 yards into a little basin - no wind there. Boy! What a relief! We had lunch and morale rose about 200%. We then had a good look at the surrounding country and took photos. We saw about fifty wild sheep up the top and I got a photo of ten taken within a distance of five feet. No deer on the top of course. We could see the green fields of Pakatutu away in the distance and Les said "Do you reckon we could make it to-day, Doug?" It started to rain so that decided it.

We dropped down into some nearby bush and while I boiled the billy at the first stream we came to, Les went round the corner and shot a jap hind. We saw eight deer in this area and managed to get another one. Continuing down the ridge, we dropped into the Makahu stream and followed it down till we came to the road leading into the Makahu Hut, the time being 6 p.m. We followed the road the rest of the way, meeting up with Bob Godfrey and his brother half way. He boiled the billy for us and we finally arrived at Pakatutu about 9 p.m. much to the amazement of the Turfrey family. After Mrs. Turfrey had made us a beautiful meal, Les and I hit the hay and awoke rather late next day for a lazy day's pig hunting with his dogs. We then left in his car for a slow trip back to Hastings.

Les Turfrey, Doug Reid.

(Surely a marathon trip! But Doug said they just had to keep on going because the weather was too bad to stop. Editor.)

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK.

20th Feb. - 1st. Mar.

I left Hastings on a warm sunny Saturday, arriving at Elmerston North in a cold wet southerly (omen?) to meet my friend, Graeme Craighead. We got to the Chateau around 12.30a.m. planning to doss down in the camping ground, but didn't need much persuading when we were offered a bed in the Ruapehu Ski Club Hut, which was undergoing alterations. We slept very comfortably on sprung mattresses with a heap of blankets over us and, next morning, followed the ski-tow up the valley as far as the glacier, which ended about the 6,500 ft. mark. We spotted the Alpine Club Hut squatting on its rocky ledge and worked our way over to it. We found the glass over the emergency key smashed. In the afternoon we went down to see Alex Salmons, the Park Ranger, to enquire about conditions on the top, and when we returned, the mist had closed in, preventing us from moving that day. A Ski Club member then popped up to tell us that the fee at the R.S.C. hut was 14/- each per night. This was eventually dropped to 7/-, or gratis if we prepared the evening meal for them. You can guess which offer we accepted and so we spent another comfortable night. We said goodbye to the working men next morning and slogged slowly up to the Alpine Club hut in mist and light rain. Here we spent the afternoon trying to light the stove, but only succeeding in smoking ourselves out until we found something called a damper at the back of the chimney. In spite of this effort, we considered the snug little hut a real home from home.

Up early on Tuesday to find mist swirling round the hut. However, it cleared about 7.30 a.m. and off we headed for Crater Lake, taking frequent compass bearings as the mist was following us up. It was beautifully fine on top and we could see miles and miles - of clouds. We climbed halfway up Para-te-tai-tonga (9,025 ft.) and took a photograph of the lake but could see no sign of its having overflowed. There is a broad shore at the nearest or western end which the lake has disclosed and the lake itself is appreciably smaller, but we could see no sign of a hole or outlet from our vantage point. The mist was now coming up thickly, so down the centre of the glacier we went, or thought we went, for on taking a bearing, we found we were heading 45° out of our way. The main glacier takes a fairly sharp turn to the south-west which is not noticeable when you go up, but on descending, the best plan is to keep well to the right. Visibility at 30 yds, in the afternoon, so we took a rope and lowered ourselves over cliffs, using shoulder belays and other belays we could think of - thank goodness no climbing type came along. We were only a hundred yards from the hut, but on the way back we missed our tracks and came off the ridge quite a distance from it - funny stuff, mist.

Wednesday, up to the lake again, this time working to the left across the Plateau towards Te Heu Heu. We were half-way across when mist came billowing over Te Heu Heu ridge, so we cut across to it and then down on to the glacier again, by compass.

Water was running underneath the ice. This, together with the mist, gave quite an eerie effect. We decided to have a look round the lower part of the mountain on Thursday, but two bods got time off from the R.S.C. working party and asked us to take them up to the top which we did. (I hope the Guides' Union doesn't hear about it.) The mist seemed to be more local and we obtained our first view of the surrounding country, even a short glimpse of Egmont. The small crevasses which we had noticed on Tuesday seemed to be gradually widening and several new ones had appeared.

On Friday, we staggered under about 60 lbs. apiece down to the Chateau, where we stayed for a couple of hours, lying on the golf course. We set off at 4.20 p.m. for Mangatepopo hut and collapsed there about 7.10 p.m. A tin of pineapple sufficed for dinner and we were soon asleep.

The next day it rained and we rested. We attempted to climb Puke-Kai-Kone (5,000 ft.) in the afternoon, but were beaten 100 ft. from the top by cold wind, rain and heavy mist, which was rolling in from the west again. On Sunday, the mist lifted enough for us to see Ngaurehoe and Tongariro and, cheers! the sun came out, enabling us to dry our clothes. We set out for Tongariro at 1 p.m., climbed it, and got back at 4 p.m. just in time to avoid torrential rain which persisted for the rest of the evening. Now I understand why the Chateau golf course is so green.

On Monday afternoon we left for the Chateau during a lull, spent a pleasant evening with Alex Salmons and were homeward bound at 10 p.m. Ruapehu next year? We- ell.

Peter Wood.

KAWEKA HUT RECONNAISSANCE.

Jan. 30th - 31st.

In a vague sort of way it had been suggested that the decayed piles of the Kaweka Hut should be replaced this summer, but no working party had been arranged and the saw was still over at Kiwi Saddle Hut. A sort of a panic party was scrambled together on the last week-end of January to bring the saw across and decide on how to do the job. I was told off to take a shovel direct into the hut while the rest went up to Kiwi. Apart from getting in the road of a shooting-party by botanizing round the Lakes, I had an uneventful trip in.

The others had a livelier time. They went up some rotten rock short of the big scree and one bit came away with Peter who took a toss and got cut about. Next a buckle pulled out on D'Arcy's pack and, in tying it up with some force, both back seams ripped clean out.

With all these excitements they were running pretty late. I had gone up and along the spur opposite Kiwi to meet them climbing out from the river, but by 4 p.m. there was no sign and fog was dropping quite fast on the tops. As it seemed likely they had gone round by Kaiarahi, I went back to the hut, marking the route just in case.

By dusk the mist was down to the hut so I went out and had a roaring duct with a stag till we heard voices. This was Peter and D'Arcy who had followed my marks part way but had had trouble picking the turn down to the hut. Wally had gone round by Kaiarahi for a shot and had actually got round to within about 100 yards of the same turn off but couldn't locate the turn off so went down to water and rejoined us next morning for a second breakfast.

N.L. ELDER.

WAIKAMAKA - 66 - RANGI.

New Year.

We arrived at McCullochs a little before 4 p.m. on New Year's Day and were away by 4.30. It was a hot grind up to the Saddle which we reached by about 7 p.m. A thick evening mist hung gloomily over Three Johns and the sky inland was dark and rather forbidding, so, fearing rain, we pushed on after a short rest and arrived at Waikamaka a little after 8 p.m.

On arrival at the hut, we found Ed. Prattle (H.U.T.C.) and a pal of his, Bob Dent, just finishing their stew.

On the Saturday we had an easy day; down to the waterfall below the hut in the morning and back to the hut for lunch and a sun-bathe afterwards until about 3.30 p.m. Philip and I then took a stroll up to the top of 66 and sun-bathed again for nearly an hour. The view was spoilt by the heat haze but there was a nice cool breeze which made things very pleasant indeed. We were both surprised to find so much water about after the prolonged drought on the plains. All the tarns on 67 were still full and the Waipawa River had quite a sizeable flow as well mercifully,

On the Sunday, our last day unfortunately, as Philip was working on Monday, we rose at 4.30 a.m., repeat 4.30 a.m., breakfasted, packed up and away by 7 a.m., bound for Rangi Saddle. Once again, the creek running to the Saddle was comparatively full for the time of year. We reached the foot of the saddle a little after 8 a.m. and, instead of going to the top of the Saddle, shot away to the left. About three quarters of the way up we encountered quite a nice little rock climb over some rather rotten, loose rock, which made quite an interesting $\frac{3}{4}$ hour, finally emerging on to a high saddle directly below the summit of Rangi. We reached the summit of Rangi by about 9.15 and duly entered our names in the bottle provided.

By this time there was a very stiff westerly breeze, which, after the stifling heat of the plains, was very pleasant and refreshing. In fact it was a fresh change to have some really clean fresh air for a while. From Rangī we moved on to 69 and thence to the spur on Three John that leads down to the Waipawa Saddle. There we sunbathed again for an hour before descending to the Waipawa Saddle and River. Once in the River bed we found a shady nook in the bush for lunch and a two hour laze by the river. Then back to the truck arriving about 4 p.m. and back in Hastings by 7 p.m. after a very pleasant and rather lazy trip.

Members of party: Philip Bayens, Ray Thomas, Craig Morgan,
Leader: Jim Gibbs.

ROCK CLIMBING AT TITAHĪ BAY March 27-28th

Four rock climbers keen to learn left Hastings at 3 p.m. on Friday night, one by Newman's Bus and three in Wally's two cylinder Bradford bound for Titahi Bay. One arriving there round about 1 o'clock in the morning we dropped down to the cave and found bodies already asleep. After a warm welcome (!!!) we crawled into our bags and waited for the morning to come.

Next day Wally started to give us some instructions in rock climbing. He brought us to the so-called "Farming up Rock" and showed us how to climb a rock, putting the emphasis on Rhythm balance and movement of legs and arms. Never move your legs before you are sure of your hand holds and vice versa. Try to get a 1, 2, 3 movement. Replace one hand and move both feet, replace the other and follow with your feet etc. Rhythm !!! Take small steps. Big ones cost too much in energy by pressing the body upwards. Stand well out from the rock to get the most of the pressure in your foot hold. Face the rock, if possible sideways so that you can see where you are going: and take your time. Gradually he brought us on to more difficult stiff and showed the difference holds: press holds, friction holds etc. Don't place your hand too high. When necessary place it in as low as possible almost at foot level. This gives you the full length of the body to come down with. We played around like that for the rest of the day becoming more confident, and gradually ceasing to break out into a cold perspiration on the tricky parts. Any novice who does not feel like this, so he says, in my opinion is a liar. Either he is deceiving himself or he has got more courage than I.

It began to rain later in the day and we were forced to move back to the cave (empty this time) where we prepared a most delicious stew in the pressure cooker and the after effects!

On Sunday morning we did some rope practice. Wally showed us different knots. The most popular are the overhand knot and the bowline knot. We started off on the "arming up Rock" be-laying each other. I won't go into the details but the principle of be-laying is friction around the body and arm. Such terms as active and inactive rope in direct and direct be-lay, and running be-lays are quite often used. Moving on a slab under be-lay and asking for a tight rope is nothing to be ashamed of. When we got the hang of be-laying we went on to descending on the doubled rope. This is rarely used but is handy on occasions when time is running short or bad weather is coming up. You look for a suitable anchorage and take the doubled rope between your legs in front of the body and over the right shoulder, hold the rope in front of you with your left hand, the loose ends hanging down with the right. Keep almost straight on the rocks and let the rope run through the right hand by decreasing the friction. Some people call double rope Rappel.

After the doubled rope, we started to move along tied to the rope. In this case there were three on the rope, A, B, and C. The party is stretched out the full length of the rope, A. in the front. You move as follows. C. moves up to B, while A. and B. are be-laying C., B. moves up to A, A. and C. be-laying B. A. moves up be-layed by B. and C. When sidling a slope you can put on so called running be-lays, i.e. simply putting your rope over little outcrops of rock, which brake the first jerk in case of a fall and make it considerably easier for the man be-laying you. Always see that the rope runs smoothly and does not get jammed. The ideal number on a rope is two. (Glaciers are an exception) You can move the full length of the rope at once while the front man is be-laying you all the time. Four is the maximum. Above that, split your party up for your own safety's sake. We finished the day round about 3 p.m. moved back to the cave had some stew, then deposited Rex at a place where he could catch the bus (which he didn't do). The three of us went back to Hastings by Truck where we arrived just after midnight which was unfortunately the end of an enjoyable and most instructive trip.

No. in party: 4.

Philip Bayens

Wally Romanes (Leader) Peter Pattullo, Rex Evans and Philip Bayens

FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS

A committee meeting of the above held on 6th March dealt with a number of matters that will have to be discussed at the annual meeting on 22nd May.

It is clear that the Federation's finances will have to be

considered. The volume of clerical work that falls on the secretary is increasing and is already what can be managed in his spare time by the most willing horse. Paid assistance will have to be used for the routine work in order to make the secretary's job a possible one. The committee have authorised expenditure up to £25 per annum for this and this will call for an increase in dues from members, as the Federation's present income, about £100 from dues, does not quite meet the outgoings.

Although little has been heard of the Safety Campaign in the past few months a considerable amount of material is now nearly ready. The first copies of Safety in the Mountains (Ed.4) are published, most going to government departments, but Clubs should soon be getting their allocation. The display of equipment has begun its tour and should reach Jack Charters early in May. The National Film Unit is making a start on a series of technical films with one on snowcraft.

Broadcasting has come to very little. Few questions came in to the panel of experts and their discussions were put on at an impossible hour with little notification.

The inconvenience and expense that back country people are put to in the event of big scale search and rescue operations has led the F.M.C. to advise Clubs to maintain a search fund in order, to be able to lighten the burden on those who may have been of assistance to them in such a case.

Mr. Rod Syme of Hawera has been appointed in place of the late Mr. Noel Thomson as the F.M.C. representative on the National Parks Authority.

The proposed constitution of the new N.Z. Ski Association which will be set up in May in place of the Ski Council, was discussed. This will be separate from the F.M.C. and it appears that some clubs will affiliate with both bodies, though the actual position will not be clear until after the May meeting.

The committee approved a request from the N.Z.A.C. for support to a proposed change in the constitution to safeguard member clubs from interference by the F.M.C., but this approval is to be re-examined as some members have doubts about the course taken

N.L. Elder.

REPORT OF THE F.M.C. CONCERNING THE DEATH OF
TWO CLIMBERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES ON MT. EGDMONT ON 1st
AUGUST, 1953.

On August 1st 1953, one week after the major tragedy on Mr. Egmont, two further climbers lost their lives. They were Hector James Hickey aged 28 years and Maurice Geoffrey Rogers aged 21 years.

The mountain was in iced condition rendering it necessary that climbing be undertaken only by experienced parties. These

young men drew some equipment from Stratford Mountain House and without announcing their intentions later commenced to climb up the East Ridge, one of the most dangerous winter routes on the mountain. At 4 p.m. they were seen at an altitude of nearly 7,000' by Mr. Rod Syme and other who were in the vicinity of Manganui Hut; and kept under observation for an hour and a half when darkness fell. They were then traversing towards the north a few hundred feet below the Crater, and Mr. Syme feeling that these men were in a dangerous situation, called the search and rescue organisation into operation. It was not known what the intentions of the climbers were but Mr. Syme concluded that the men were climbing late towards the summit through fear of returning by the same route.

The bodies of the two men were found at 7.55 a.m. on the following morning above Hongi's Bluff on the north side. They were roped together and had fallen and slid 1,400' to their deaths. There is evidence to suggest that the slip occurred at approximately 8 p.m. the previous evening. The climbers had left the East Ridge to sidle high up across the North Face probably in the hope of making a safer descent. Examination to the steps cut by the climbers showed them to be crude, rendering descent by them very difficult.

The initial cause of this accident was that these men, although reasonably well equipped, did not possess the degree of experience necessary to carry out in safety the climb they had undertaken. This led them to a position, late on a winter afternoon, on a steep, exposed, icy surface, from which, apparently, they found they could not retreat. If at this stage they had continued their ascent to the Crater, they could have been safe for the night, but in choosing to traverse round to the north, their lack of knowledge of the mountain led them into a very dangerous position above some icy bluffs over which they fell in the dark.

It is difficult to make recommendations which can prevent such tragedies, for the accident on Egmont less than a week before, when six lives were lost, should have been sufficient warning to keep all but fully experienced climbers from going up on to the frozen slopes. However, it is recommended that closer control could be exercised by those who accept the responsibility for hiring out climbing equipment.

The accident illustrates the well established rule that a party must not go beyond the point from which it cannot retreat in safety. The problem is that inexperienced people are the very ones who find difficulty in making such a decision. Possibly a factor contributing to this party over-reaching itself was the wearing of crampons by only one. If the leader is the only one wearing crampons he is in danger of over-estimating the degree of security of the party and of under-estimating the difficulty of the climb. As a general rule, all the party should be similarly equipped with or without crampons.

C L U B T R I P SNo. 469. BOUNDARY STREAM WATERFALL - TUTIRA Nov. 29th.

We left Holt's at 8.15 a.m., picked up a good number on the way through - Ian's truck was crammed full with 24-in all - and arrived at the stream at 10.45. We left there and followed the stream up for an hour and arrived at the waterfall at mid-day. We got the fire going and the billy on and Bob said he would look after it if we wanted to go for a swim. The weather wasn't really ideal for this, but four of us plucked up courage and went in - it was cold but refreshing. In the meantime Ian and Alan had gone off to the top of the fall to measure its height as there were many opinions on this subject. Anyway it is approximately 240 feet.

We decided to split the party into three for going up the cliff beside the fall as 24 was too many at once. We wandered a short distance along the stream and then set off through the scrub and bracken to the road which comes up from Shine's homestead. Some of us ran up to the top of the Sugar-loaf and had a look round, then we set off through the farm to the road and truck.

We left there at 5.10 p.m. and arrived in Hastings at 7.40 p.m.

No. in party: 24

Leader: Audrey Coburn.

Meg Tomkinson, Audrey Coburn, Pat Bixley, Edna Ansell, Doris Torbett, Pat Bolt, Grace Dixon, Joyce Stanley, Pearl Smith, C. Berry, Pat Basil, Marie Valler, Ian Berry, Derek Conway, Alan Berry, Brian Jobbins, Peter Wood, Rex Evans, D'Arcy Williams, John Phelps.

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No. 470. FLAT ROCK - RONGAIKA Dec. 12th - 13th

At 9 a.m. on Saturday morning only four of us assembled at Holt's as the weather was dull and windy with rain threatening. On arrival at Clifton we obtained permission but had to wait an hour or so for the tide to go out a bit. About eleven we set off accompanied by three others who had one bicycle between them. After a showery trip we arrived at the rest hut just before heavy rain set in. After lunch the rain stopped and we went up and watched the birds in brilliant sunshine. Back at the hut we went for a swim and while we were having it Angus rolled up. After we had our stew we listened to Dick Burton's radio. Thanks to Dick Burton and also the 2YZ evening programme. Angus said farewell at 4.30 A.M. on Sunday and at 9 A.M. we left for Rongaika where we watched the heavy surf pounding against the rocks, then went along to the sandhills where the boiling-down pots are. A swim, a sunbathe then we left for the Cape where we had lunch and another swim before we set off round the cliffs back to Clifton where we met some of the boys who had come out for the day.

No. in party: 5.

Leader: John Mitchel

Dick Burton, Ray Thomas, Rex Evans, John Mitchel, Angus Russell.

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NO. 471.

TUKI-TUKI RIVER
RIVER AND ROPE INSTRUCTION

Jan. 24th

Fifteen of us left Holt's at about 9.15 a.m. on Sunday. On the way through Havelock North, we picked up three more and two of our cyclists from Napier and Haumoana, and arrived at the ford on the Tuki Tuki by 10 o'clock. As the river is very low this summer I think we were fortunate in finding a short, narrow rapid deep and swift enough to practise the river and rope instruction given by Wally Romanes. We tried various methods for over an hour and then went back to the willows at the ford for a boil-up and lunch at mid-day.

The afternoon was spent pleasantly in bright sun-shine, eating talking, swimming and sun-bathing. We were joined during the day by four other members who found their own way out on bikes, walking etc. At four o'clock we had another boil-up and by 4.30 p.m. were all on our way back home.

No. in party: 22

Leader: Doris Torbett.

Molly Young, Pat Williams, Zala Stowell, Janet Lloyd, Pat Bolt, Lou Eades, Audrey Coburn, Hal Christian, Norm Elder, Rex Evans, Wally Romanes, D'Arcy Williams, Peter Wood, Bob Woon, Derek Conway, Dave Williams, John Reid, Phillip Bavens, Jack Landman, Edna Ansell, Pearl Smith, Doris Torbett.

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No. 472.

KAWEKA HUT WORKING PARTY.

Feb. 6th - 7th.

An early start and a pleasant breeze helped folks along for, by 10.30 A.M. Saturday we were at the hut, working well. Norm with a couple of stalwarts dashed off to cut and prepare half a dozen piles and the ladies "spring cleaned" with great gusto, while those remaining coughed and choked in the resulting dust cloud. However we tried not to complain and battled on until the pile party returned.

Our forewomen would not let us call it a day until about 6 p.m. when we stepped back to survey our efforts. Five new Beech piles, each 3 ft. long, had replaced those rotten ones along the back wall, our new 4" x 2" Matai plate which we carried in that morning, was in position and Laurie and Robin were putting the finishing touches to a pane of glass, (also carried in). Meanwhile the women folk had not been idle. I thought of that saying, "If it doesn't move, whitewash it". Well, it was not quite as bad as that, but we could not stand still too long for fear of being scrubbed! Somehow amongst all this activity, they had found time to cook a satisfying meal.

Sunday morning 8 a.m. found all hands on the job once more. That little repiling work there remained was finished off and before long we found ourselves with a billy in either hand carting river shingle to make a floor in the hut. Phew! We had removed the cupboard during building operations and replacing this took a while. Outside some manuka was cut to let in light and the wood stack received a shock.

As with all things there came an end and we were out at the road about 4.30 p.m., I for one feeling quite satisfied with the work done. Every person giving just a little more than their fair share made for an enjoyable, if strenuous, week-end.

No. in party: 9.

Leader: Wally Romanes.

Molly Young, Kath & Norm Elder, Edna Ansell, Ian Stirling, Wally Romanes, Laurie Cantwell, Robin Fargher, Alan Ansell.

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No. 473.

Matthew's Hut

Feb. 21st

With weather prospects far from satisfactory we looked like having a wet day but with a cry of "Press on regardless!" the hardy types climbed aboard our "chariot" and away we went. Mathews' hut came into view about midday, so on with a brew and a change to dry clothes. We were rejoined by Doug Reid who had taken a rifle and left us about half way in.

Our return trip was reluctantly begun about 3 p.m. and we moved steadily out pausing to cast a critical eye over the new swing bridge spanning the Ohara River. A first class bridge, built by the Deerstalkers' Association, it will prove of real value during bad weather.

Hastings saw us again at about 6 p.m. no worse for our wetting and realising that bad weather detracts but little from a trip.

No. in party: 9.

Leader: Wally Romanes

Ray Thomas, Doug Reid, Laurie Cantwell, Barbara Maultsaid, Joyce Stanley plus 2, Wally Romanes, Jack Landman.

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No. 474. DISCING SHUT-EYE TRACK

March 6 th - 7th.

Timed for 1 p.m., after collecting paint brushes etc. we got off at 1.30 p.m. in a rising gale of wind. A few miles down the South road we were treated to a loud pop and a whistle of escaping air. No one worried much as we changed the wheel, for wasn't it a lovely day - the sun shining, the birds singing and our heads set in the right direction. Faces grew a bit longer however when we found the spare had an ominous bulge in it. Waipawa passed we were counting the minutes till we would be on the ranges when I smelled hot rubber - another flat. As there were ladies in the party the language was more restrained than might have been expected. Wally having got on the phone with Hastings and jacked up arrangements for our rescue next day we set out in drizzle to walk the six miles (I'll swear it was eight!) to the end of the road. Some of the ladies got a lift in

a passing car which dropped them half a mile too far and they had to walk back.

The plan had been for half the party to sleep at Waikamaka hut and paint the roof next day while the others went to Shut-Eve Shack and disced a new track down the spur to Triplex Creek. In view of the late hour and the weather we decided to spend the night near the road and after Helen had exercised her charm on a farmer we got permission to doss down in the woolshed or a partly renovated house. As the house floor looked the softer we chose it, but must have been wrong.

Next morning in spite of the rain Wally managed, without using his boots, to get us on the road though I did hear murmurs of "Has anyone got a pack of cards?" Roof painting being obviously off we all made for Shut-Eve Shack. Triplex Creek had, during the night, tripled itself and a lot more. However a handy fence and some acrobatics got the party all safely over. We couldn't follow the creek for obvious reasons so we had to do a bit of bush-bashing roughly along the right bank of the creek. Being well inside the clouds we couldn't see much round us. Finally, promises of a boil-up in the hut only two minutes away persuaded the laggards to complete the course. However in the hut it was standing room only and with half the chimney blown away and rain pouring in we gave up the idea of a boil-up.

We didn't spend long in the hut and, on leaving, Wally got volunteers (partly by the "You, you and you!" method I suspect) to disc the track down to the creek while Helen led the rest of us home. The whippers-in did an excellent job and kept me in touch with the pack in spite of my blisters, boils and housemaid's knee. The creek was now in full flood and over a hundred yards from it we could hear the boulders rumbling along the bottom. When we got to the fence over the creek it wasn't there; (it is on St. Patrick's day I am writing this) but half a mile downstream where the river fanned out we were able to make a reasonably safe crossing.

The Reid Bros. Inc. and Ian Stirling had spent several hours in the rain working on the truck and delivered it on our doorstep and were we glad to see them! Great stuff! That's the kind of coppers to have.

No. in party: 15.

Leader: Wally Romanes

Ray Thomas, Doug Napier, Edna Ansell, Helen Hill, Jack Landman, Laurie Kennv, Rex Evans, Brian Cantwell, Shirley Geraghty, Robin Fargher, Terry O'Connor, Joyce Stanley, Bob Wallace, Wally Romanes, Doc. McPherson.

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No. 475.

THREE FINGERS

March 21st.

Cramming everyone onto the truck for the benefit of the transport fund we reached Big Hill 21 strong. A fine day, windy above, but some delay at the start and a leisurely pace into

Herrick's put Three Fingers Trig definitely out of the question. As an alternative to a lot of fruitless scrub-bashing most of the party set off to retrace an early exit route of Arch Toop's by way of the First Finger and the Gull, which looks tough but is actually quite serviceable. After sidling among some limestone cliffs there are a series of bush terraces above a series of cascades and small falls.

We didn't actually go up the razor-back of the First Finger as a good game track took us up a sort of sloping terrace just downstream of it. This swung into the main spur and we scrambled onto the crest a little above the big waterfall between it and Herrick's Spur. No time for more so we turned back, making slow time out.

The highlights of the trip were the variety of animal life encountered - and encountered is the word. A charming tame fawn showed every sign of considering itself a member of the party, walking sedately in file, then putting on a dazzling circus display - finally having to be firmly cut off by a gate. A horde of wasps nearly blocked the track down to the Gull. Next, on a steep slope in scrub, a runaway pig crashed through the party from end to end, mistaken by some for a big black boulder and causing considerable consternation. A couple of goats an opossum and a stoat were sighted but all got away.

No. in party: 21

Leader: Norm Elder

Edna Ansell, Pat Williams, Helen Hill, Pat Bixley, Irene Boyd, Grace Dixon, Kath Elder, Brenda Keen, Barbara Maultsaid, Pat Bassil, Brian Cantwell, Ray Thomas, T.O'Connor, Ian Berry, Dick Caldwell, Brian Lee, Bob Wallace, Ian Phelps, Jim Trumper, Alan Berry, Norm Elder.

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MAKARORO April 3-4th

(Cancelled owing to bad weather)

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S O C I A L N E W S

BIRTH: To Dulcie and Alan Oulaghan - a daughter.

MARRIAGE: Mick Greenwood to Mary Harris.

ENGAGEMENTS: Ian Berry to Pat Bixley.
Pat Williams to Jim Edwards.

DEPARTURES: D'Arcy Williams has gone back to Taranaki.

Audrey Coburn has gone to Palmerston North.

John Groome now has his headquarters in Palmerston N.

Doris Torbett, by the time this is printed, will have left for a holiday in Australia.

Ursula Greenwood has been paying a brief visit to England but is already on her way back.

Meg Tomkinson and Barbara Higgins have returned to England. Meg writes from Kidderminster giving an amusing account of an "Ascent" of the Clee Hill, (1700') achieved by Hugh Elder and herself.

NEW MEMBERS We welcome the following to the Club:-

Ian McPherson, Rex Evans, Joyce Stanley, Jack Landman.

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CLUB EVENINGS

26/11/53.

Jack Hall gave a lantern lecture on his Wapiti expedition in Fiordland. The coloured slides gave us an excellent idea of the steep nature and extent of the country.

18/2/54.

Derek showed us coloured slides of their Routeburn-hollyford-Greenstone trip and also a few of the Club's trip to Ruapehu.

4/3/54.

Wally showed us slides of his Tasman Traverse. Doug Reid put on slides of his trip shooting Wapiti-Red Deer crosses in Fiordland and also a few slides of his Kaweka-Pakaututu trip taken on the rare occasions when the wind would allow them to hold the camera steady.

18/3/54.

George Lowe looked in on his way from Seattle to Jogbani. He had with him some coloured slides taken on tour that he hadn't yet had time to look at himself. So we enjoyed with him, views of mountains in Wales and the Val d' Isere, skyscrapers in New York, the Salt Lake Plains and the harbour of San Francisco.

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ADDITION TO LIBRARY

We are the proud possessors of an autographed copy of Sir John Hunt's "Ascent of Everest". George presented it to the club with a flattering inscription on the front page. Then come the signatures of all the members of the Everest Expedition.

This book is on show at each club meeting, but we feel it is too valuable to lend out to individuals in the ordinary way.

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ROUND ROBIN FROM BOSTON

While George, Ed and Charles Evans were lecturing in Boston they met Julia Cotter (née Isdale, ex- H.T.C.) and Lucy Watson-Smith (née Cranwell). These five, together with Lady Hillary and James Morris (Times Correspondent) sent the Club a Round Robin written on the back of a post-card of the Symphony Hall where the lecture was held. This post-card is now in the club Album.

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FOREST SURVEY WORK IN WESTLAND.

The following is taken from a letter written to Norm Elder by John Groome:

I have moved south from Murchison, and am now based in the Grey Valley. The party to which I am attached is completing the Forest Survey of the Coast and Nelson. From Murchison we carried out a sampling survey of the remaining timber resources in the tributaries of the Buller and combined this with a botanical and watershed survey of the higher land. The timber assessing was done by measuring one acre plots at the intersection of the even-numbered grid lines on the Ordnance Maps and in practice involved all forest below about 2,000'. Above this we did inspection trips to the tops and mapped altitudinal species changes and the effects of the various animals on same.

A most interesting area with a lot of gold mining history, the results of the 1929 earthquake evident everywhere and plenty of fishing and deer. The latter of course kept Dick happy and he has now reached the stage where he can catch fully grown hinds in the bush and snap their necks. H.T.C. members might not be quite so friendly if they saw him in action. I managed to work in two trips of particular interest. At Christmas and New Year we travelled up the Wairau to the head of the Rainbow over into the Clarence and down to Lake Tennyson. Returned via the Rainbow, Travers River and L. Rotoiti. Met up with numerous Tramping Club parties as this area seems to be getting more and more popular and it certainly lends itself ideally to T.C. excursions - having good access (from the Lewis Pass or Tophouse Roads), several lakes, 7,500' peaks (some quite difficult), and a contrast within a few miles from heavy beech forest to dry tussock grassland. There is room for some enterprising firm to take Wellington Clubs per amphibian planes across to L. Rotoiti or Rotoroa on Friday nights.

The second trip took us down into the upper Mokihinui River which flows westwards to the coast about 12 miles above Westport. It begins in the Matiri Tops (the southern portion of the limestone country which extends northwards to the Goulard Downs). We crossed these from Murchison and descended to the flats of the Mokihinui at 250' a.s.l. although 18 miles from the coast. The bird life in this valley must be numerically greater than almost any other part of the mainland I think - Wekas (a nuisance at every camp), bush Robins (as cheeky as ever), bellbirds in flocks, enough pigeons to live on for several tribes, and odd birds like parakeets, kakas, Keas and long-tailed cuckoos. Deer and goats are far too thick also - Dick collected 8

goats in a day. Although the majority of the valleys and the tops here were fairly easy to negotiate we struck a few belts of crumbly, granite bluffs which were far too treacherous for comfort and it was almost a pleasure to get onto limestone bluffs sheer and all as they are.

Having completed field work in the Buller we have now shifted to the Grey Valley in Westland to complete the Forest Survey of an area south of Lake Hochstetter roughly 30 miles N.E. of Greymouth. The work here is in heavy forest and sampling is done by plots $\frac{1}{4}$ mile apart on lines 1 mile apart, the location of each being indicated on aerial photos, by which with the aid of compasses, stereoscopes, prayers and luck we find our way. We normally work in 3 - man parties and are out for from 5 - 8 days at a stretch following a line through and measuring as we go. This can hardly be described as being a pleasant area to work in - silver pine pakihis, dense beech regeneration, swamps, rivers, and milled areas all have to be negotiated with packs up and following a compass line. This is far more difficult than picking the easiest route as you can imagine. Admittedly there are quite a few extensive river terraces which are easy going but involve far more measuring of trees so actually progress is retarded. To add to our difficulties the present warm weather has produced a swarm of mosquitoes unknown even on the Coast. We have attempted to combat them with everything known - "Dimp", shoo, nets, cotton wool in the ears, and of course much cursing - but sleepless nights are quite common still.

Here is one of those "hard-to-believe" tales you sometimes hear about the hills which however I can vouch for. We picked up a deer-culler on the road yesterday who was returning to his base up the Ahaura River after doing a 5 day trip around the tops. At this stage he carried 1 rifle, ammunition, a knife, sleeping bag and cover and 31 deer and 14 chamois tails. He had set out 5 days before with 34 Weetbix instead of the tails and this was the sole food he carried. No tea - no sugar - no scroggin! Hardly in line with the "Safety in the Mountains" campaign but a good effort nevertheless. Regards to Kath and the H.T.C. and yourself,

JOHN GROOME

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USE OF CLUB TRUCK FOR PRIVATE TRIPS.

At a recent committee meeting it was decided after considerable discussion that private parties may not use the club Truck except under the following conditions:-

- (1) The Truck Committee's permission be first obtained.
- (2) All members of such a party be Club members.
- (3) The use of the Truck to be charged for at the rate of a sixteen person minimum.
- (4) In the case of private working parties the Truck Committee be given discretionary powers.

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NEWS OF GEORGE

In a letter to his family written on March 31st from Dharan, 30 miles inside the Nepal border George said that one hundred coolies were due to arrive that afternoon ready for the first march to Dhankuta the next day. Everything was going well. The food was good and plentiful, the party was a great bunch of chaps and their equipment was the best they had ever had.

Our best wishes go with them. They are going into the Barun by the same route George, Ed, Charles Evans and Eric Shipton came out after the Cho Oyu Expedition. For an account of that trip look up "Pohokura" No. 61. (Copy in Club Library.)

FIXTURE LIST

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Base:</u>	<u>Trips:</u>	<u>Leader:</u>
May 16	Puketitiri	A. Mohaka Hot Springs. B. Long Spur to 5384', out by Caunce's Flat.	<u>Pat Bolt</u>
May 29-30.	Kuripapanga	A. Kiwi Hut. B. Kiwi to Kaweka via Tutaekuri.	_____
June 5-6-7. (Queen's Birthday)	Makaroro	A. Tupari Bushline, Piopio, Colenso's Spur. B. Tupari, Potae, Piopio, Pohatuhaha.	<u>N. Elder</u>
June 13.	Big Hill	A. Ruahine Hut via Broom Block. B. Hollowback to Ruahine.	<u>E. Ansell</u>
June 26-27.	Puketitiri	A. N.VII Don Juan or Black Birch. B. Saddle or ridge to Donald River.	<u>K. Elder</u>
July 11.	Ruddenclaus	Te Waka	<u>J. Gibbs</u>
July 24-25.	Mill Farm	A. Howletts, Tiraha or Otumore. B. Ohuinga, Black Range.	<u>W. Romanes</u>
Aug. 8.	Smedley	South Wakararas	<u>Rex Evans</u>
Aug. 21-22.	Kuripapanga	A. Kaweka Hut, round tops to Kiwi Hut. B. McIntosh via either saddle in Cook's Horn Ridge or Kaiarahi Ridge.	<u>D. Conway</u>
Sept. 5.	McCullough's	A. Waikamaka or Three Johns B. 66 and Shut-Eye	<u>Alan Berry</u>

NOTE: "A" denotes "Base Party" ; "B" denotes "Fast Party"

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