

Across the Baw Baws

N eminent art critic has declared that the outlook to a mountain is finer than the outlook from a mountain, because, from higher points, the values of perspective are lost. The lovers of scenery, natural colour, and wild life may test the matter themselves on the tourist route which has been conveniently, not exactly, styled "Across the Baw Baws." It commences Warburton, the train terminus on the picturesque Upper Yarra, and ends at the mountain mining township of Walhalla.

In order to make the tour convenient both to riding parties and to hikers, three shelter-houses have been built on the track, which traverses wild and unsettled country.

In these notes the main points of interest upon the tour are briefly touched upon. It is for tourists to make their own itinerary. They may make the round tour, or turn about when and where they please, for the mountain huts—to use a term not contemptuous, but useful, for the bush—are always available for a night's shelter. These huts were built for the convenience of tourists; they are public property, free to all; and it should hardly be necessary to say that the Government looks to the tourist to aid in their preservation, and to make it a point of honour that they are kept clean and in order.

With the accompanying map, telling its own explicit story as to distances, landmarks, and camping sites, there is no need of detail on these points.

Travellers should study the map and reference table thereon, and, if without a guide, regulate their movements so as to reach shelter-houses before nightfall. For a walking tour every person should have a convenient pack or kit, containing necessary clothing, food, food supplies, knives, forks, &c. Good strong boots and gaiters should be worn. As the nights are sometimes intensely cold, warm clothing is very necessary, and no bedding is provided in the houses. A small pocket compass (inexpensive) is a desirable companion.

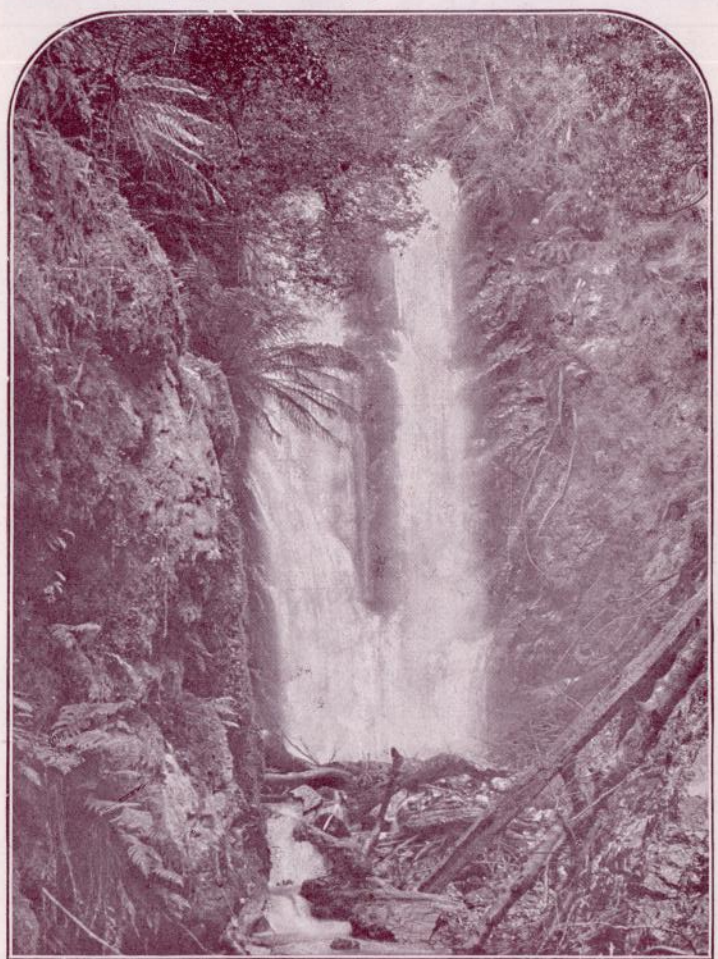
Tourists are cautioned against undertaking this journey between June and September unless they are fully equal to the difficulties they will have to experience in travelling in snow country. The snow should be made from Walhalla to Talbot Peak shelter-house, and return to Walhalla.

WARBURTON is 47½ miles from Melbourne, and is the railway terminus from which tourists reach the Upper Yarra Hotel (known as McVeigh's), at Walsh's Creek—the first habitation on the track to Walhalla. The township has a population of about 1,000, and contains several well-equipped stores.

The first stage of the journey from Warburton to Walhalla is along the main road to Wood's Point, passing up the Yarra Valley, overlooking, for the greater part of the distance, the reaches of the river, tumbling and foaming in its rapids for nearly the whole distance, seldom settling into the deep, still pools of its lower section.

In the early spring the ever-curving stream is gloriously outlined by its fringes of golden willow. The Upper Yarra (McVeigh's) Hotel (twenty miles), at the junction of the Yarra and Walsh's Creek, ends conveniently the first stage of a journey which may be described as two days of river scenery followed by three days of mountaineering. With the provision of camping-houses, tourists who take the trip on foot are able to regulate the journey as they please, to combine sport with sight-seeing, and to make

each shelter-house the centre of side explorations to picturesque points, which are being opened up. Either the Upper Yarra Hotel or the first house below the fine succession of cascades, called the Yarra Falls, is a convenient point for anglers. From the former they are in touch with the long reaches of the river already fairly well stocked with English brown trout, while rainbow trout have been found in the tributaries extending from the hotel on to the Falls, and these fish increase so rapidly in size, under favorable conditions, that sport is already good.



YARRA FALLS.

Lovers of the wild life of the bush will find this section of the Yarra typically interesting, for here they first get touch of the lyre-bird, whose dancing-mounds are often seen later upon the uplands, the black cockatoo, the gang-gang, and other birds whose note has the typical harshness of the mountains.

Although the scenery along the valley is all beautiful, the track passing at intervals—and wherever little mountain creeks trickle in—through fern bowers, sheltered by fine sassafras and beech trees, the first notable feature on the journey is the Yarra Falls. The mountain, which is the first sudden step to the upland, is so precipitous that from the lowest fall upward for 750 feet there is a succession of white cascades, which, before the Lands

and Public Works Departments opened up a climbing track, were long hidden from view in the scrub—their charm and grandeur known only to a few bushmen and surveyors. It is not a spot at which the tourist may give an admiring glance and then pass on. The bird's-eye view comes later. Although these Yarra cataracts are clumped so close together, it takes some hours, and a fair amount of stiff climbing, even with all the conveniences that a clear track affords, to see them in detail.

From the lookout above the falls there is a fair view of the mountain, with the value of perspective not yet lost. Thence on, the track is a kind of switch-back, with the rise ever a little greater than the fall, until the end of the third stage is reached, at the second shelter-house upon the crest of Mount Whitelaw. There are several interesting points upon this stage of the journey. From the saddle of the range there is a view on either hand over the watersheds of the rivers, the Yarra taking its share of the mountain tribute to Port Phillip, the Thomson flowing into the Gippsland Lakes. Up to this point the tourist has never left the Yarra or its tributary streams, thence on he is rarely out of touch with the Thomson. Indeed, the heads of the rivers are so close together that the bridge on one of the branches of the Gippsland stream was long known as "The Bridge on the Yarra."

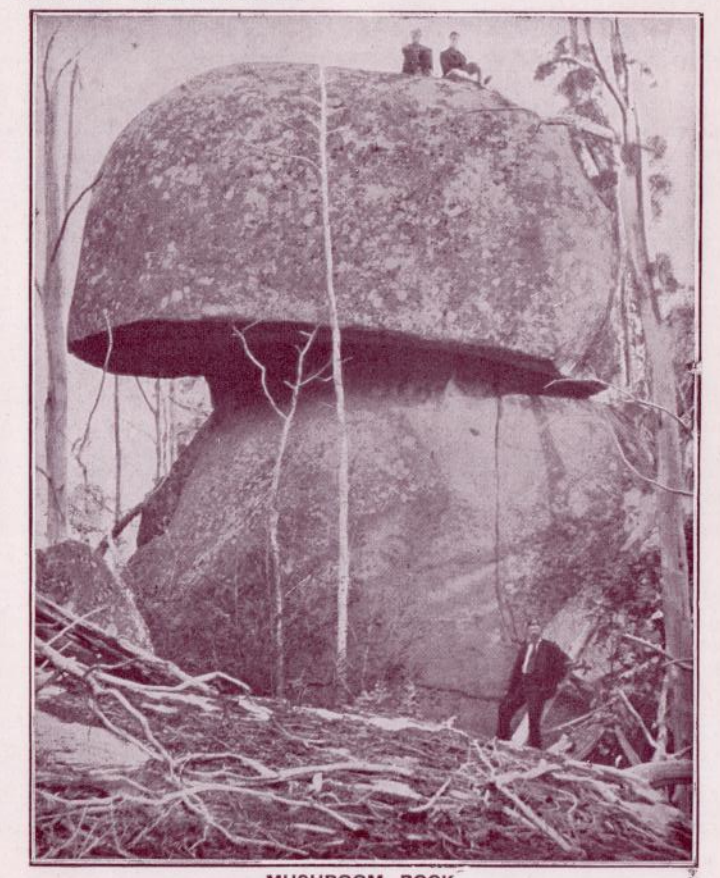
The contrast of a very old beech forest with comparatively young tracts of the same timber is afforded, for soon after leaving the Yarra Falls the track passes through a section of very old beech forest, the greater portion of which was, unfortunately, destroyed by fire. Enough of it remains, however, to give a distinctive charm to this portion of the tour, and tourists should regard these groves as sacred, to be carefully preserved from fire. This belt of vegetation resembles broadly some of the best stretches of New Zealand bush in the vicinity of the Cold Lakes and Sounds of the West Coast. The beeches—old, gnarled, spreading, in something of the habit of English oaks—are thickly festooned on bole and branch with green moss. Underneath is a band of mimosa, below this a layer of fern fronds. Though dense, the forest is not dark, for through the light leafage of beech and mimosa the sunlight sprinkles down upon the ferns. Towering over all, at intervals, is a giant mountain gum, the height of which is almost insensibly realized on noting that the beech, with all its grandeur, is dwarfed by comparison into mere scrub. Approaching the first crossing over the Thomson River there are some fine groves of younger beech.

From the Thomson bridge the track rises steadily, by a convenient grade, to the first high crest of the journey, Mount Whitelaw, on which is the shelter-house. Here the tourist is for the first time on, and not in, the mountains. The whole character of the scenery and outlook changes, the lofty trees and bush vegetation of the lowlands are left behind, the timber, though still fairly dense, is twisted and bowed down by the weight of winter snows. There is little to be seen but eucalyptus—the tough-grained, tortuous, stooping snow-gum. Some years ago a bush fire ravaged the whole of these lofty crests, and the dead trees give an aspect of desolation to the peak. A young forest of snow-gums has succeeded the older one, but it will be some years before the mountains once more wear their natural mantle of myrtle green, and the white skeletons of the dead forest are hidden away from view. Wearing down through many geological ages the crests of the peaks are littered with great boulders of granite, rounded and fashioned by the wear of the weather into strange and interesting shapes. Frequently, where nature is the only architect, one mass of granite is balanced upon the others, as at "Camp Holes," well known to cattle men who come to muster before the snows. Farther on, upon the sides of Mount Erica, are balance stones of granite, aptly named the Mushroom Rocks. The granite forms are endless in their variety, and extend over the fourth day's

tour, an easy walk from the shelter on Mount Whitelaw to that on Talbot Peak, a corner of Mount Erica. On this walk there is ample time for a side excursion to Mount Baw Baw, distinctly marked as a commanding point of the range by the trigonometrical station—a large cairn.

Amongst the peaks passed between Mount Whitelaw and Mount Erica are Mount St. Philack and Mount St. Gwinnear, named by a Cornishman, and an enthusiastic tourist of Walhalla, Mr. S. Barnes, M.L.A.

The mountaineering strictly ends with the third and last shelter-house on Talbot Peak. There the range breaks down abruptly, and away to eastward the view extends over blue billows of hills—a magnificent prospect. Sometimes, in the early morning, the tourist looks out upon the clouds, which are all massed under him. He is between cloud and sky, the blue waves of rain have foamed into white during the night, and there is a strange feeling of isolation and exaltation in the outlook. It is as though he had lost touch of the world. Every peak of these mountains has its spring in a strong, saucer-shaped dip, most of them covering an area of several acres, with a break at one point, through which the stream issues. They are strangely variable in flow—almost dried up at one hour of the day; running strongly the next—with no apparent reason for the variation. The glitter of the spring streams is not entirely that of trickling water under sunlight, for their beds are dusted with fine grains of mica and felspar given off by the wasting granite.



MUSHROOM ROCK.

The fifteen-mile last stage of the journey is first an abrupt descent down the steep side of Mount Erica—a drop of 3,500 feet in three miles—through a magnificent forest of white-gum and ferns, where the sudden change from the silence of the spacious mountains to the bird song and close companionship of the bush is at once noticed. Thence the long tourist track is lost in older bush roads, which all centre upon the Thomson River bridge, and finally upon wonderful Walhalla, strangest and most interesting of all the mining towns of Victoria.

For the sake of convenience the route has been described as from Melbourne, via Warburton, to Walhalla, but it may be reversed at the pleasure of the tourist. Should the tour be made in reverse order, the morning train is taken to Moe, on the main Gippsland line, where passengers change into the narrow-gauge train for the twenty-six mile journey to Walhalla.

WALHALLA.

The construction of the Moe-Walhalla Railway has rendered the latter place easily accessible from Melbourne, and curving as it does round hillsides and fern gullies and skirting deep ravines, including the gorge of the Thomson River, the trip on this line is worth making for itself alone.

The country begins to be interesting ten miles out from Moe, at a watering station on the Tyers River, and thenceforward a succession of surprises is sprung on the traveller. Here he passes through forests of poor stringybark growing on poor, gravelly soil, and there he contemplates on either side some fine growths of useful timber—blackwood, stringybark, messmate, beech, black-butt, and other valuable trees.

Climbing upward, ever upward, the train travels through constantly improving country until at Moondarra, fourteen and three-quarter miles from Moe, the traveller sees on either side of him extensive hills of splendid red soil, which produces abundant crops of onions, potatoes, and maize. As the line winds its sinuous way around the ridges and along the hilltops splendid views of rich fern gullies—where giant ferns show up above the hazel, musk, and other undergrowth—are obtained, while the pleasant trickle of running water far underneath the rich growth adds music to the scene. Once on the Moondarra plateau the traveller obtains his first view of giant Baw Baw away to the north.

Leaving the tender sylvan beauty of the fairy dells and rich slopes of the Moondarra plateau, the train descends into the valley of the Thomson, and here the character of the country changes. Instead of the graceful and pleasing scenery, such as has been left behind, battlemented mountains and scarred precipices seem to warn adventurous travellers against intruding on the hidden places of nature.

Down, continually down, goes the train until it drops by a series of sideling tracks, along awe-inspiring precipices, where passengers can look down into unknown depths on one side and on the other up beetling mountain sides that make the eyes ache, then on until the station on the Thomson is reached. Crossing the Thomson by a bridge supported by cement piers, which is a monument to the skill of the engineer who superintended the construction of this remarkable line, the train shortly afterwards enters the Stringer's Creek gorge, where the fight against the repelling forces of nature was felt at every step. With barely an inch to spare and the track curving in a series of hairpin bends, this remarkable track twists and squirms alongside the narrow creek, the beetling cliffs on either side overhanging the train.

Walhalla is reached at length after a highly interesting journey of three hours, and the train draws up to the platform, which is built right across the narrow valley of Stringer's Creek. With its winding and narrow streets, formed almost in the bed of the

deep valley of Stringer's Creek, and its houses perched one above the other on the steep hillsides, Walhalla, once famous also for its wonderfully rich gold mines, presents many attractions which will be appreciated by tourists.

The most interesting are:—

THE WEEPING ROCK.—Less than a mile from the railway station. A small stream trickles down the vertical face of a posed rock, about twenty feet in height. Start from the station and proceed as far as the first bridge. Cross the Little Joe Creek and climb the hill in front until an old tram line is reached. Follow this round to the Weeping Rock.

THE GREENLEAF SPUR.—The best view in the neighbourhood can be obtained from here. An easy day's walk of about three and a half miles from the town. Route:—Climb the hill to Moondarra, and then proceed north along the top of the range on a good track. Alternative route:—Take the old tram line above the Creek Junction and proceed north to the Fear-Not Creek. The track continues parallel with the creek for a few hundred yards and then crosses it several times and ends at the Greenleaf. The distance is longer this way, but the climbing is almost imperceptible. The track up the Fear-Not is very beautiful on a fine day, and offers a charming variety of avenues of shrubs and fern with the clear, sparkling creek water running over shingle and rocky bars. From the Greenleaf a very extensive view can be had looking north up the valley of the Thomson and Aberfeldy Rivers. To the left looms the vast bulk of the Baw Baws, and far away on the right may be seen Mount Useful overtopping the surrounding hills.

BLACK DIAMOND HILL.—This is the highest hill in the immediate vicinity of the town, being about 2,075 feet above sea-level. The summit can be reached by several easy tracks from the town at a distance of under a mile.

HAPPY-GO-LUCKY.—A small village situated on the main coach road from Walhalla, and distant about two miles. The Happy Hill, 1,950 feet above sea-level, in the immediate neighbourhood, affords a fine view. On very clear days Lake Wellington can be seen, with glasses, from this eminence.

SPORTS GROUND.—Unique as the town of Walhalla is, the sports ground is even more remarkable. A flat spur on the range dividing the two branches of Stringer's Creek has been cleared and levelled off, and the necessary shelter buildings and fencing erected. The main route to the sports ground is a winding zig-zag track of a fairly easy grade. Other tracks also leading off the main street are steeper, if more direct. The height of the sports ground above the street level is 550 feet.

LAMMER'S CREEK.—This is situated due east from Walhalla a distance of a little over two miles. The route is from Malden-town and down the Eureka Spur. The track is good until near the end of the Spur, where it becomes obliterated owing to the steepness of the declivity. This creek is worth a visit to those who do not mind the roughness, lying as it does in its deep valley embowered in hazel and musk scrub and giant fern fronds, through which the crystal clear cold water trickles from pool to pool over its bed of clean shingle and under fallen forest giants. Some of the rarer specimens of ferns can be found here. From the Eureka Spur a sideling track, the right will take the visitor to the now abandoned Eureka Gold Mine.

LONG TUNNEL EXTENDED TRAM LINE.—There are many miles of tram line in the neighbourhood of Walhalla, but none, perhaps, offer more charming views than this one, constructed as it is close to the top of the range. As the line crosses the range views of both valleys of the branches of Stringer's Creek are obtained. This tram line can be reached in five minutes' walk from the sports ground.

WARBURTON or WALHALLA

Shelter House

Yarra Valley

McVeigh's

Upper Yarra Hotel

Victoria

JUNCTION OF THOMSON AND ABERFELDY RIVERS.—This is a good trip for the angler who wishes to reach a portion of the river that is little frequented. The shallow clear water of the Aberfeldy is in striking contrast to the darker waters of the Thomson. In the summer time a considerable difference will be noticed in the temperature of the two streams. The track branches off the Greenleaf track and is not easily followed.

THE STEEL BRIDGE.—This is another angler's trip, and can be easily reached by two routes. The easier, though longer, route is along the south tram line, starting from the Long Tunnel Mine. The other track starts from Black Diamond and runs parallel with the creek of the same name, eventually reaching the tram line. The river is very beautiful at this spot, being very rocky and with but little scrub. Crossing the graceful cantilever bridge and proceeding south along the line, the little flat called Poverty Point is reached. Here will be found a substantial empty hut, which offers an ideal spot for a camp within a few yards of the river.

THE NO. 7 TRAM LINE. on the east side of the town, affords an easy and pleasant walk as far as the Coronation Mine, which has now ceased operations. Where it approaches and crosses the creek giant wattle trees, scrub, and ferns abound.

HAPPY JACK'S CREEK.—An easy walk to a delightful little creek abounding in fern and mountain scrub. The route is along the valley road to the Thomson Bridge. After crossing the bridge the road to the right should be followed until it turns on itself in a sharp bend. Here will be found the terminus of an old tram line that leads to the level of the creek at the site of an old saw-mill. Between this point and the creek there are two or three waterfalls which, however, are not easily explored owing to their precipitous nature and the dense scrub. Alternatively, the junction of the creek with the Thomson River can be reached in about half-a-mile by proceeding along a track on the west bank of the river.

There is practically no shooting in the district, there being little game of any sort. A few brownwinged pigeons are sometimes found at the head of the gully and on the ridges, but the thickness of the scrub prevents good sport. A few rabbits and hares may be found in Moondarra.

The Thomson River has been stocked with English and Rainbow trout, and good catches have already been made in this stream. In the upper waters of the river good black-fishing may be had.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF TOURISTS.

Shelter-Houses.

- (1) Below Yarra Falls.—Two rooms; six wire stretchers.
- (2) On Mount Whitelaw.—Two rooms; four wire stretchers.
- (3) On Talbot Peak.—Two rooms; six wire stretchers.

No bedding is provided. Tourists must take all necessary covering. Each house is furnished with the following conveniences:—Enamelled ware plates and cups, frying pan and washing basins, tin billies for cooking, &c., buckets, broom, axe.

All other conveniences and a supply of provisions must be carried by the tourists. Parties starting from the Warburton end should arrange to obtain a supply of provisions before leaving that town.

As there will be no attendant at these shelter-houses the tourists themselves must be relied on to keep them in order. Visitors are urged to sweep the floor, to burn all litter and waste, to leave no food exposed to attract vermin, to carefully cleanse and dry all the vessels used, and to put all articles in their proper places. If left in a dirty condition the vessels will soon become

useless to visitors. The whole value of the shelter-houses depends on those who use them, and a little care exercised by ALL will render them at ALL TIMES fit for occupation.

It is earnestly requested that visitors will give full attention to the above notice. A small supply of dry firewood left in the house by departing tourists will be a great convenience to the party following, who may arrive during wet conditions or at evening.

RAILWAY TICKETS.

Passengers holding return halves of tickets issued Melbourne to Warburton may return from Walhalla on payment of the fare for the extra mileage travelled; and those holding return halves of tickets issued Melbourne to Walhalla may return from Warburton without extra payment.

WARBURTON TO WALSH'S CREEK AND WOOD'S POINT (58 Miles).

Travelling for twenty miles along the winding road that dips out of the pretty town of Warburton and slavishly follows the course of the Yarra, the tourist arrives at Walsh's Creek, and if of the opportunity it affords in discovering what a very beautiful stream this young and lusty Yarra is, the trip is well worth making, for it is certain that this twenty miles of Yarra track, shaded with big timber and moss-grown undergrowth, reveals at every turning delightful views of as pure a stream as ever mirrored the smiling face of nature.

Big Pat's Creek, a favorite camping ground, is crossed four miles out from Warburton, and thence on the road crosses many tributary streams and fern gullies of exceptional grandeur. After crossing Starvation Creek it gradually rises over the "Peninsula"—where an attempt was made to divert the course of the Yarra for gold mining purposes—and quickly descends again to river level, and soon afterwards McMahon's, thirteen miles from Warburton, is reached. Pushing on from McMahon's, the road passes over a small saddle and again returns to the river three miles farther on, passes through a cutting on the river's edge, and then follows closely its course for another four miles till the Upper Yarra (McVeigh's) Hotel, which nestles among the mountains just at the bend where Walsh's Creek tumbles into the Yarra, is reached.

The road here leaves the Yarra, and it is a gradual climb past fern bowers, sheltered by thick scrub to the top of the ridge, sixteen miles from the hotel. The road is fairly good and the grade comparatively easy. On the crest of the ridge it junctions with the road from Marysville, and continues thence along the top for about eighteen miles to Matlock. On that stretch overlooking the Jordan Valley some beautiful views of the distant mountains are obtained; and from Matlock it is a short and quick descent to Wood's Point.

MARYSVILLE TO WOOD'S POINT (51 Miles).

The road from Marysville to Wood's Point lies for practically the whole of the distance along the crest of the Great Dividing Range, and as the accommodation houses that at one time existed at intervals along it are now closed it is a tour that can only be undertaken by caravan, or by those who choose to carry a sleeping outfit and sufficient provisions to last throughout the journey.

On leaving Marysville the traveller begins to ascend Mount Grant, the road traversing part of the mount known as Robley's Spur. At first the densely timbered valley of the Steavenson River, on the right, is overlooked, with Mount Kitchener forming a background to the picture. As the road winds round to the opposite side of the mountain, a splendid panoramic view

is obtained of the hills beyond—the Cathedral Range, and the peaceful and fertile valley of Taggerty, with Mount Margaret in the distance. An elevation of over 3,000 feet is attained, and the road then becomes comparatively level.

Shortly after passing Tommy's Bend—a celebrated beauty spot—the road crosses the Divide into the southern (Yarra) watershed. The O'Shannassy River is crossed, and the road then begins to ascend the Divide near Mount Arnold, where it attains an elevation of about 3,700 feet. Descending the slope towards Lyn and Cumberland Creeks many magnificent specimens of mountain ash grow alongside the road, and at a spot about half a mile from the road—to which a track has been blazed—is the giant tree King Edward VII. It is a gnarled and hoary specimen, with a circumference of 87 feet at the base; and a grove of myrtle trees in the same locality is also very interesting.

Tourists must not pass on without visiting the Cumberland Falls. They are about a quarter of a mile from the road, and there is a good walking track, indicated by a finger-post on the roadside. The scene which presents itself is one of fascinating beauty. It is a mist-filled gorge, with rugged sides, clad to the summit with giant eucalypts, stately tree-ferns, and luxuriant undergrowth, and down a zig-zag course, over huge granite boulders and fallen tree trunks, the torrent rushes with a mighty and deafening roar.

Leaving the falls, mile upon mile of corduroy road is traversed, and the character of the country changes somewhat. It is less verdant, and the trees are neither as fine nor as varied. Travellers are now in a region where vehicles seldom are seen, as the traffic to and from Wood's Point is either through Mansfield or Warburton. Twenty-nine miles from Marysville the road from Warburton joins the Marysville-Wood's Point road, and from here on to Matlock, about eighteen miles, the track is rough in parts, but fairly good where the graded sideling road is cut round the head of the magnificent Jordan Valley, a sight that will linger long in the minds of those who view it. Six miles out from Matlock a fine spring will be found close to the road.

Half a century ago Mount Matlock was the guardian of several mining towns, most of which have now disappeared, and just below the crest of the mount is the village of Matlock, which, from its proud eminence, looks round on a great mountain sea, stretching away on every side. Sixty years ago its fame was at its zenith, but its material well-being depended on the gold mines of the surrounding country. When the gold failed the population decreased, and its homes were abandoned, till now but a few houses remain, and of these some are untenanted. From Matlock to Wood's Point is a distance of four miles, on a rapidly descending grade.

WOOD'S POINT.

Wood's Point is the small and lofty centre of the district known as Upper Goulburn. A mining township on the Goulburn River, possessing a couple of hotels, post-office, and a population of about 150 souls, it would, were it more accessible, rival some of the better known mountain resorts of the State. Being built upon the side of a very steep hill, the township presents a very unique appearance, many of the houses standing upon sites eighty feet above the roadway. The principal hotel is a structure of five stories in height in front, and each story, owing to the building standing so close to the hillside, at the rear, is practically on the ground level.

According to unwritten history, the population at one time numbered some thousands, but as the gold yield diminished, most of the people deserted the town. The search for gold still goes on, but the returns are small and the seekers few.

WOOD'S POINT TO WALHALLA (46 Miles).

Having reached Wood's Point by either of the little-frequented roads that lead in through invariably picturesque country from Warburton or Marysville, the tourist leaves it by the still less frequented, but equally beautiful, track through Jericho, Red Jacket, Aberfeldy, and thence down the valley of the Aberfeldy River to Walhalla, forty-six miles distant.

Returning from Wood's Point through Matlock, the track, over wild mountain country, leads down through what remains of the once busy little villages of Jericho (Jordan), eight miles, and Red Jacket, two miles farther on, at the foot of Mount Matlock. To reach the former place, the traveller has to cross the Jordan River, and if he is wise, he will stop for swim in the fine pool which it forms near the middle of the town. Jericho is a small mining township, with post-office, store, and State school, but is chiefly noted for the comfort of its hotel.

The houses that lined the road—once a busy highway—between the two places are now nearly all gone, and on the one hand the mountain side is a wilderness of glinting saplings and wattles; while the opposing slope stands up boldly with its regiments of thousands of forest trees.

It is a stiff climb out of the Jordan Valley, and a ten-mile tramp over mountainous country brings one to Aberfeldy (or, as it was once called, Mount Look-out), high up in the mists that drey the sunshine of early summer, and from it one looks down on the hills round Walhalla, twenty-six miles distant. Along this road the scenery is superb, and over it passed the transport service between Wood's Point and Walhalla, and though tradition tells of the prosperous days and gaudy nights of Aberfeldy, its glory now depends on its natural beauties. Comfortable hotel accommodation is to be obtained here.

There is little or no settlement on the section from Aberfeldy to Walhalla. It is a fairly good riding track, being mostly on cutting, with a little corduroy, undulating in places, but the grades are short, and the length of the road, and the variety of the scenery encountered, make it a very interesting section of the tour. The road winds round spur after spur of the Great Divide, and at every turn one gets a new and, if possible, more delightful vista than the last. Peak towers on peak, with the colossal heights of the Baw Baw mountains forming a majestic background. The trees are magnificent, and there frequently comes into view a fern gully which is simply a bower of beauty.

Across a valley hundreds of feet deep, one gets a glimpse of a waterfall, a streak of silver amid the dark-green of the forest. From the top of the ridge the cutting winds down to the river, which is crossed by a shallow ford, about fifteen miles from Aberfeldy, and this spot provides a suitable site for a camp, should this section of the trip be made to cover two days.

From the river there is a long ascent of about four miles to the top of the eastern ridge. The roadway in the cutting is in a rough condition in places, and at certain points only about five feet in width. Then comes the gradual descent on a wide road cutting into Walhalla, a township of unique attractions, most picturesquely situated on Stringer's Creek, a tributary of the Thomson River.

THE LOCH VALLEY

Warburton—Walsh's Creek—Noonjee—Yarra Junction (71 miles).

Another pedestrian trip through magnificent river valley and big timber country is that which may be made by branching off from the Walsh's Creek—Walhalla track at Alderman's Creek, about three miles beyond the Upper Yarra Hotel and bearing in a gradual south-easterly direction along the valley of the creek to Petschack's abandoned selection on the crest of the ridge five miles farther on, after crossing which and passing a side track leading to the selection of Mr. J. Petschack, a rapid descent is made into the valley of the Loch River. After travelling for about two and a half miles the bridge over Skerry's Creek will be crossed, and then follows a beautiful walk—partly through beech forest—of eight miles along the valley of the Loch River, which stream is crossed twice en route to the bridge at the junction of the Latrobe and Loch Rivers. Two and a half miles beyond the bridge brings one to Noonjee.

Easily accessible by rail from Melbourne, Noonjee, the terminus of the branch line from Warragul, is situated between the Loch and Tororong Rivers, on the fringe of a magnificent hardwood forest in a region hemmed in by the mountains and valleys of the Great Dividing Range and the Baw Baw mountains, and glorying in a wealth of wild-flowers. From Warragul the line passes at first through undulating country broken only by an occasional timber area, a homestead, or an orchard, and before Noonjee is reached some of the highest trestle-work railway bridges in the State are crossed. Around Noonjee there is much to interest lovers of nature. The call of the lyre bird can be heard on the hill slopes, and the platypus hides in the quiet places along the rivers. There is a newness and freshness about the district, and from the hills and table-lands in the vicinity magnificent views of the surrounding country are to be had.

The river valleys, which are easily negotiated, invite exploration. A timber tram-line runs for about nine miles into the Latrobe Valley, and another traverses the Loch Valley. The banks of this river are thickly covered with wonderful fern growths, and big trees provide shade for delightful cool resting places. On the Tororong River are the beautiful Tororong and Amphitheatre Falls, a favourite walking trip with tourists to the district.

Both the Latrobe and Loch Rivers are good fishing streams, and rabbits may be shot in the clearings and wallabies in the bush.

Should it be desired, however, to continue the journey on foot, there is a track, which runs westward by a little north, following the valley of the Latrobe River, thence by an easy climb through a gap in the ranges into the Little Yarra Valley, and so on to Yarra Junction.

Before leaving Noonjee a visit should be paid to the famous Glen Naylor, which is about three-quarters of a mile from the Naylor township. By the construction of tracks this beautiful dell has been rendered easily accessible, and, for the convenience of visitors, two rest houses, with tables and seats and detached fire-places, have been provided. A brook courses among the rocks, which are covered with most beautiful mosses, and staghorn ferns line many of the tree trunks.

The distance from Naylor to Yarra Junction is twenty-seven miles, and throughout the route is one of scenic beauty.