

THE  
YARRA RANGES NATIONAL PARK  
HISTORICAL INFORMATION AND ARTICLES

Information correct to March 2006.

The Yarra Ranges National Park.

The area that is covered by the Yarra Ranges National Park was first reserved in December 1995. It covers of slightly more than 76,000 hectares ( 760 square kilometres ). Nearly 90% of the park is closed to the public, as it forms part of Melbourne's water supply catchments.

The main water catchments that make up the National Park are the Maroondah, O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra. Some of the smaller catchments are Donnellys, Sawpit, Graceburn, Bagder, Cement and Armstrong creeks. The Acheron river and the rivers and creeks on Lake Mountain, within the park, flow eventually into the Murray river. The Taggerty is one such river.

Within the park areas open to the public there are many features which will still interest the bushwalker or picnicker.

The most popular areas within the park are Mt. Donna Buang, Lake Mountain, Dom Dom Saddle, Fernshaw, Cement Creek, Cambarville, Badger Weir Picnic area and Donnelly Weir Picnic Area. Away from these locations are numerous walking tracks where very few people may be encountered. The best time to walk so as to have a wilderness experience is on a weekday.

There is approximately 125 km of managed bushwalking tracks within the park. Many more kilometres may be added if one were to walk some of the little traveled and isolated boundary roads, on the edge of the water catchments. The following pages list the 23 walking tracks managed by Parks Victoria. Some of these walking track are within water supply catchments that are normally closed to the public. Some of the tracks may also be closed at various times of the year, due to storm damage or on total fire ban days, so check with Parks Victoria to find out if they are open.

Historical accounts of travel and events within and slightly beyond the national park boundaries are included. The conditions stated in these articles have changed over the decades but give a good indication on how things were.

Further information may be obtained by phoning

Parks Victoria on 131963

Internet [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au)

or

[www.tracks.vic.gov.au](http://www.tracks.vic.gov.au)

or

[www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

or

Parks Victoria Information Centre (03) 9816 1170.

Level 2

35 Whitehorse road

Deepdeen 3103.

Level 10

535 Bourke Street  
Melbourne Vic 3000  
Fax : 03 9629 5563.

Yarra Ranges National Park  
Postal : PO Box 605, Healesville 3777  
Telephone : 03 59647088.

Melbourne Water 607 Bourke Street Melbourne Victoria 3000, PO Box 4342  
Melbourne Victoria 3001  
Telephone 03 92357100  
Telephone 131 722  
Fax 03 92357200  
Internet <http://www.melbwater.vic.gov.au>  
or try [www.melbwater.com.au](http://www.melbwater.com.au)

Melbourne Water Northern Field Operations  
414-420 Maroondah Highway Healesville  
Telephone 03 59624288

Melbourne Water Southern Field Operations  
Lot 2 Donna Buang Road Warburton 3799.  
Telephone 03 59662019

National Parks Service Ranger at Worri Yallock  
Telephone 03 59647088

National Parks Service Ranger at Marysville  
Telephone 03 59633310  
or try  
03 59633306

Badger Weir Park Office  
Telephone 03 59623719

Maroondah Reservoir Park Office  
Telephone 03 59626228

Upper Yarra Reservoir Park Office  
Telephone 03 59668566

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment  
Information Centre, 8 Nicholson St, East Melbourne.  
Telephone 03 96378080  
Internet <http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/>

Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Management Board  
PO Box 40, Marysville 3799.  
Telephone 03 59633288  
Facsimile 03 59633688

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 58 Lyell Street,  
Marysville, 3779,  
Telephone 03 59633379

The Cooperative Research Centre for Catchment Hydrology  
Department of Civil Engineering  
PO Box 60  
Monash University,

Victoria Australia 3800  
Telephone +61 3 9905 2704  
Facsimile +61 3 9905 5033  
<http://www.catchment.crc.org.au>

Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment and Land Protection Board ( CALP ).  
PO Box 48 Frankston, 3199.  
Fax 9773-6521.

Enetech manages some of the catchment areas.  
They are located at Healesville and Warburton.  
414 Maroondah Highway Healesville  
Telephone 59627949  
Facsimile 59627924  
20 Kelly's Rd Warburton  
Telephone 59669794  
Enetech is a part of the Tenix group, a defence and technology contractor.

Bicentennial National Trail  
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~bnt>

Theiss maintains Hydrographic equipment in the catchment areas.  
They are located at Worri Yallock, on the southern side of Syme Road.

Sustainability and Environment Department customer service centre 136186

Internet [www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au)

Port Phillip Region  
Catchment Management  
Worri Yallock Symes Rd 59544044

## WALKING TRACKS

### Badger Weir circuit

To get to Badger Weir follow the Maroondah highway out of Melbourne to Healesville. Drive through Healesville and after crossing Graceburn bridge turn right down the Donna Buang road. After several kilometres the Badger Creek road is reached and a left turn is required here, follow the road all the way to Badger Weir picnic ground. The roads leading to the picnic ground are adequately signposted and no difficulty should be had reaching there.

Badger Weir and Badger creek are also sometimes called Coranderrk Weir and Coranderrk Creek.

Once at the picnic ground a pamphlet may be obtained at the information board. The pamphlet shows all the walks open to the public. One interesting walk is along the aqueduct from Badger Weir. This crystal clear water has its beginnings on Mt. Donna Buang the water then flows to Silvan Reservoir and thence to Melbourne's taps. Up to 110 megalitres ( 110,000,000 litres ) can flow through the aqueduct daily. At times some large fish may be seen swimming in the aqueduct.

Badger Weir park has opening and closing times, so check these at the entry gate on arrival. At the picnic ground there are wood barbecues with

the wood supplied, picnic tables, under cover areas and hot water laid on for weekends.

There are numerous rosellas in the area and it is quite easy to get good close up photographs. Keep a lookout for lyrebirds which may not be seen but can easily be heard. Sometimes a goanna family may be seen in the warmer months.

There are actually two Badger Weirs. The first was built in 1908 and is still visible on the east side of the Lyrebird track, although it is now filled with rocks and soil. The new weir is still in use and was built in 1929 and is a great picnic area on really hot days .

Just to the north west of Badger Weir is Slip Weir. To get to Slip Weir from Badger Weir you have to cross Badger creek and follow the walking track up the dozens of wood steps. For those who get puffed out, there is ample seating amongst the fern trees along the way. At the top of the staircase turn right and after only a very brief walk you will be at Slip Weir. The Weir and associated electronic equipment is fenced off but much can still be seen.

This is also not the first Slip Weir the first one was located higher up, but leaked water and so had to be replaced. This weir along with Blue Jacket and Picaninny Weirs forms part of the Coranderrk Catchment Hydrology research project.

The three adjacent water catchments of Picaninny Creek ( 52.8 hectares ), Blue Jacket Creek ( 64.8 hectares ) and Slip Creek ( 62.3 hectares ) were reserved for hydrology research in 1954. These three catchments lie on the southern slopes of Mt. Riddell. A good view of them can be obtained from along the Healesville to Mt Donna Buang road. The small catchments reflected the much larger catchments such as the Maroondah catchment. It is assumed that scientific research results obtained in the smaller catchments can be extrapolated to the larger catchments.

The hydrology research has been underway in earnest since 1968. Its main aim is to evaluate the relationship of Eucalyptus Regnans dominant forests and the water cycle. This was to be achieved by measuring the streamflow at the three weirs, along with rainfall, throughfall, stem flow, fog drip and soil moisture.

Picaninny Catchment, the furthest west, was clearfelled and regenerated in 1971 and 1972. Blue Jacket Catchment was selectively logged in 1972 and 1973. The Slip Catchment was a control catchment and its only disturbance was to allow the installation of measuring equipment.

The results of this research will continue to be useful for many years to come, bearing in mind that the dominant eucalyptus tree has a life cycle of around 550 years.

Conclusions so far show that Picaninnys water flow increased after logging. Three years after logging the water flow in Picaninny creek peaked and then started a rapid decrease. The regrowth eucalypt uses copious amounts of water. After 8 years since logging, in 1980, streamflow was the same as prior to logging. By 1990 streamflow was 50% less than that prior to logging, but the streamflow had started to stabilize.

Melbourne Water now undertakes little research and most of it is undertaken by the Cooperative Centre for Catchment Hydrology.

There is large old noticeboard illustrating the Coranderrk experiment on Badger Weir road, just off the Healesville to Mt Donna Buang road.

Parks Victoria have a pamphlet on Badger Weir Park available.

Beeches Track

This walking track is located near Marysville. It is pleasant to walk at any time of the year, but in periods of heavy rainfall access may be difficult as the Taggerty River may flood the access road. It is also advisable to keep a lookout for logging trucks, which also use the narrow dirt road access. To reach this walking track you must drive through Marysville and cross the Steavenson River. After crossing the river you should turn right on to the Marysville to Woods Point road, at the roundabout. After only a few hundred metres you should see a sign on your left hand side indicating the Lady Talbot Forest Drive, turn off and follow this road for 14.3 km.

The Lady Talbot drive has been popular since horse and buggy days. The drive is mainly dirt road and can become narrow in places but it is still suitable for a normal car. Beyond the Beeches carpark the road becomes very rough and a four wheel drive is recommended.

On the northern side of the road, near Marysville, is the Taggerty River. J.W. Lindt wrote of this area in 1911 about a trip that he had undertaken some years earlier " Among the numberless charming places to be found in the neighbourhood of the Woods Point road, none is superior to the upper reaches of the Taggerty River, and tourists to the Healesville district have missed much if they have not devoted a day or two in exploring the locality."

Mr Lindt went on to write " I went to Marysville one fine day by the mail coach, and stayed the night at Keppel's Hostel. In order to get the morning light, a very early start was made, and the sun had not scaled the eastern hills when we left the township. We had a good vehicle, a pair of spanking horses, and the host, Mr Michael Keppel, kindly acted in the dual capacity of driver and guide. We crossed the bridge over the Steavenson River on the eastern boundary of the settlement, and then ascended the Woods' Point road in the direction of Mount Arnold. Close to the picturesque home of Miss Glover, we turned in to a side road, named " The Talbot Drive," after our late worthy Governor. The course out of Marysville lies due east, and on leaving the main road, "Talbot Drive" leads for a mile or more through cool forest glades, and after crossing a small bridge you get a glimpse of the Taggerty. The first glance convinces the traveller that he is looking at an ideal trout stream. The sun had arisen and his slanting beams revealed the lovely Australian forest in all its morning glory. This part of the river lends itself to a charming picture, but afternoon light being essential, we pushed on until a couple of miles further, where the Buggy road comes to an end. The horses were taken out, tethered and fed. We divided our load, consisting of camera, tripod and plates, and continued our journey towards Keppel Falls on foot. A steep rise was to be overcome here, in order to cut off a bend in the stream. From the high ground we obtained beautiful views on all sides, the tall grey boles of the eucalyptus Amygdalina ( now ( in 2000 ) known as eucalyptus regnans or mountain ash ) forming the dominant feature of the foreground. Much of the beauty of the hillsides and the flats on this part of the track had suffered severely by last season's fierce bushfires, but the bright yellow blossoms of the fireweed, which seems to flourish after conflagrations, did much to hide the charred logs and blackened stumps.

When we saw the river again, we stood on a high and precipitous bank, the swirling water being nearly a hundred feet below us. Both sides of the stream were shaded by luxurious beech trees (Myrtle), intermingled with acacias, sassafras and blackwood. The gorge being narrow and full of moisture, had escaped the ravages of the fire and abounded on all sides with artistic subjects for the camera. Still pools and underwashed roots were plentiful, and were described by our guide as haunts of the black fish and favourite shadespots for speckled trout.

Flat saddle creek, a tributary of the Taggerty, joins the latter about six miles distant from Marysville. There is a picturesque bush hut not

far from the junction, and going for a little way up we found a gang of hardy backwoodsmen at work, which had almost completed its task of cutting the track which leads from here to Woods' Point road, making the latter place in the vicinity of Cumberland creek, which also has a reputation for great scenic beauty. Retracing our steps and following the main stream again, we arrived at about ten o'clock a.m., at the foot of Keppel Falls, which is almost hidden in a close gorge. The river tumbles with a deafening roar through a mass of huge boulders of coarse grained granite, and you can trace the rushing glistening water coming down an incline of upwards of 200 feet. Both sides of the ravine are densely clothed in verdure, and aromatic odour of sassafras and eucalyptus pervaded the moisture laden atmosphere. On one of the moss grown rocks at the foot of the fall we sat and enjoyed a luncheon, and well earned rest, but not before a couple of pictures were secured ere the noonday sun would render the shadows hard and valueless. It will be many years ere man's destroying hand will destroy this delightful sylvan nook, and forest lovers will never regret the toil of penetrating into this primeval solitude, for if the exertion be great to reach Keppel Falls, the reward is more than adequate. "

Two and a half kilometres after turning on to the Lady Talbot Drive you will reach the Taggerty River picnic area, which also has an informative noticeboard. A further 4 km on is Athols Abbey picnic area. Next a Yarra Ranges National Park sign is passed as the climb into the mountains commences. Shortly after the sign is Phantom Falls on the left hand side, a short steep walk from the carpark. Phantom falls has a spectacular viewing area, newly built, that juts out over the creek on which the falls is situated, there is a bench here for you to rest up for a while.

Seven hundred metres further on is Keppel Falls carpark. A nice walk, which crosses Snowy creek, takes you to the dynamic falls. This is a pleasant walk in the hotter months.

The road becomes narrow now. Eight hundred metres from Keppel Falls carpark, along the road, there is a lookout of the falls, but to see them you really need a pair of binoculars. If you want to take a photo of the falls you should use a telephoto lens and tripod. At 13 km along the Lady Talbot drive you will reach the Taggerty River crossing, the Beeches walk may be commenced here or by driving 1.3 km further to where there are toilets and picnic tables.

Near the picnic tables if you look carefully you may be able to see a mountain ash that reaches 90 metres in height.

There is adequate signage and information displayed at the Beeches and finding your way should not be difficult.

Features of interest on this walk are the several hundred year old myrtle beech ( *nothofagus cunninghamii* ) and giant mountain ash ( *eucalyptus regnans* ).

Leeches abound in this moist area and if they attach themselves to you sprinkle a little salt over them and they will drop off. Keep a lookout for lyrebirds which frequent the area. Watch for horses and their riders on the road around the Beeches as this is part of the Bicentennial National Trail that goes from Healesville to Cooktown in Queensland. This is one of only two areas in the National Park where horses are allowed.

Parks Victoria have pamphlets on the Beeches and Keppel Falls walk available. There is also a pamphlet on Lady Talbot forest drive available.

Ben Cairn

The walking track to Ben Cairn is enjoyable at all times of the year, although after rainfall the rocks on which you will walk become a little slippery. There are a number of giant rhyodacite boulders that make up Ben Cairn and they are popular with rock climbers.

There are two ways of getting to Ben Cairn. One is by coming from the west along to the Healesville to Mt Donna Buang road or alternatively from the east on the same road. During the Winter months this road is closed near Mt Donna Buang and near the top of the Don Valley. There is nothing to stop the bushwalker still using the road.

After the turn off from the Warburton to Mt Donna Buang, just near the summit of Mt Donna Buang, you will immediately pass the gate that is closed in winter. One kilometre further on you will come to a hang glider ramp on the left hand side. There a good views of the Yarra Valley and Little Yarra Valley from here. Several more kilometres will bring you to an area where the dirt road has been widened to allow car parking. There is a sign to indicate you are at Ben Cairn as well as a distance sign to Mt Donna Buang ( 9km ) and Warburton ( 19 km ). From the car park the start of the track is on the uphill side of the road and can easily be seen, new posts indicate the start of the walk. The track has recently been upgraded and is quite wide and really easy to follow. You can then follow the orange trailblazers on the trees to the summit. The walk should take no longer than 20 minutes one way. The summit is only a little above 1000 m.

The track to Ben Cairn has been recently realigned, widened and upgraded and those familiar with the old track can still see parts of it, which will now slowly be recovered by the bush.

When at the rock formation you will obtain glimpses of the Yarra Valley and Dandenong ranges. If you are careful it is also possible to navigate your way to the base of the giant rocks. Many years ago there was an uninterrupted view of the entire district from the summit, but with regrowth the view is gradually disappearing. Access to the edge of the rocks is protected by a chain mesh barrier, but children should be closely supervised on this walk. In the early 1900s a track lead down through the bush from the base of Ben Cairn to Millgrove, but has now overgrown. On the slopes below Ben Cairn are the sites of a number of sawmills which the adventurous off track bushwalker can try to find.

Nicholas Caire in 1911 wrote of Mount Donna Buang and Ben Cairn and how to get there " The story of the opening of these two mountain summits that bid fair to make the eastern boundaries of Healesville as popular as the northern and western, is still too recent and unfinished to turn into history. To the Hon. A. R. Edgar, Acting Minister of Public Works, however, it may be said, tourists owe the first public step towards making practical tracks to these promising holiday resorts. Donna Buang overlooks the little township of Warburton, that nestles four miles below its rounded top. To Warburton is due credit for first approaching Mr. Edgar, and of pushing the first "party of exploration," and of arousing Healesville to a sense of its duty to its own tourists. When the first official party had struggled up from Warburton to Mt Donna Buang, they were just in time to welcome another party of composed and cheerful horsemen, and a horsewoman, who had ridden up all the way from Healesville. Both parties took about four hours to reach the summit, but in a very short time either track will be covered, with less fatigue, in less than half the time, if Ministerial promises can be fulfilled. "

" It is not necessary here to advocate Healesville's claim against Warburton's to be the proper starting point for the Donna Buang and Ben Cairn trip. "Much may be said on both sides." To the stout pedestrian who revels in mountaineering, and believes that the finest pleasure in travel is the surmounting of its difficulties, the Warburton side offers great attractions. The stiff climb is well worth the fatigue. A height of 4,000 feet is obtained in about 4 miles of track - which is pretty good going,

and a feat to be proud of having accomplished. But Healesville side also has its merits. The route is longer - about 14 miles, but it can be ridden by those to whom walking is a trial, and can be walked by those to whom a stiff climb is impossible. Moreover, this 14 miles lies through some of the most varied and magnificent bush scenery in Victoria. "

" The writer's own preference would be to ride in from Healesville, camp the night on Donna Buang or Ben Cairn, and descend the next morning into Warburton, and probably such a course will be quite practicable when the tracks are formed, and the promised Shelter Chalet completed. "

" Presuming then, that the Healesville visitor wishes to climb Mt. Donna Buang or Ben Cairn, let him first hire a horse from any good local stable. Most Healesville horses are sure footed, and used to mountaineering. Then arrayed in leggings and thick old tweed, carrying a billy and a lunch bag, and feed for the horse, and attended by a party or guide, he sets out. The best time is to go in July or August, the latter end of the latter month being excellent, as the sun generally shines, though the snow is still at its thickest. "

" Leaving Healesville Post Office early (about 8 a.m. at latest), the party proceeds up Fernshaw road, crosses the Graceburn Bridge at the Poplars, then turns up the Don road to the right, past "Graceburn Glen" (Mrs. G Wilson). The Graceburn is crossed again by a bridge or a ford, and for half a mile the road runs past the splendid Recreation Ground and Golf Links on the right, with picturesque paddocks for a foreground on the left, and a background of mountains - Juliet (with Gracedale House plainly visible at the base of a foothill) and Riddell. The other side of the Recreation Ground may be seen some of the finest houses in Healesville along the slopes of "Atkinson's Hill," and "Cochrane's Hill." At the highest point is the property purchased by Lady Clarke just before her death and now occupied as a weekend residence by Miss Vera Clarke. Lower down are the houses of the late Hugh R. Reid, and the late J. C. Stephens, the residence of "Ada Cambridge," the well known Australian authoress, Dr. Stirling, Messrs. Raymond, and Mrs. Shelmerdine, and the establishments of "Warrawee" (Mrs. Jolliffe), and "Wildwood" (Miss M'Auley). Leaving the Golf Links, the cemetery is passed, and a cross road leading on the left to Mt. Riddell track and on the right to "Airlie" (Mrs. Wilson), and to the Badger Creek Settlement. Continuing, the Don road leads up past "Pine Lodge" (Mrs. Deanne), and "Kolonga Farm" (Mrs. Reed), soon after which it descends past a by road leading to the "Swiss Chalet" (Madame Leuba), and reaches the pretty Badger Bridge. Formerly a track opposite the house of Mr. Potts, on the rise before and above this bridge, was taken and followed up through the Badger Valley, past the new Weir, but it has been found better to continue up along the Don road, Accordingly, a few furlongs beyond the Badger River and past another side road leading to the outskirts of the Settlement, the road is followed up a series of sudden zig zags that enable it to ascend the first slopes of Mt. Tooleybewong. A short distance up, Wade's Lookout (Mrs. Harrison) is passed. The view from the verandah of this hostelry is excellent. A little way further is "Ravenscroft" (Mrs. Myers), a little house situated in a pretty gully, and then the road passes out of the region of residences and winds along steep sidelings, cutting here and there across the heads of fern filled gullies. The traveller who knows the Blacks' Spur road, but to whom this journey is new, will find much scenery that is familiar, but also much that is new and pleasant. It is a well known tenent that in what may be termed the philosophy of scenery, that the presence of human habitations adds a great charm to the landscape. In this charm the Don road excels the Spur, while lacking somewhat of the sudden bursts of crowded ferns. A couple of bends beyond "Ravenscroft" the site of an abandoned timber mill is passed, at the head of a very fine fern gully that runs down to Badger Weir. Here the road swerves to the right, and, curving widely to the left, with glimpses of



the Healesville valley through the big trees arrives at Munro's road. At this corner the road to the right goes to "Claveron" (Mrs. Chapman) and "Nyora" (Mrs. Robarts), while the Don road turns abruptly to the left, and a few yards further on opens up Malleson's Lookout. This celebrated viewpoint, which offers an extensive outlook at all times, is particularly entrancing in the clear frosty mornings of August. Leaving the Lookout, the party proceeds a few chains further along the road till the house of Mr. Panton (ex Police Magistrate) is reached, and a halt is made, as the track here leaves the main road. Tightening up girths and readjusting bundles one looks across the intervening valley of the Don, and sees between the dead trees the lofty brow of Ben Cairn. Malleson's Gully lies below, and to be reached by continuing along the road, but our present expedition turns up through Mr. Panton's paddock, and begins to climb in earnest. We have reached about 2,000 feet in comparatively easy stages. The next 2,000 feet are built of sterner stuff. What sort of scenery the track shortly to be opened up will provide it is still too early to describe. At present (October, 1911) there is a choice, not yet made, between about three ways up or around the hill. The pioneering way, though the most difficult, offers, however, the finest views, namely, by going sheer over the summits of the hills, to avoid the fallen trees and the steep grades of the hillsides. From the top of the first hill, 3,000 feet high, one overlooks both the valleys of the Don and Yarra. To the north, between Mts. Riddell and Juliet, rises Carter's Saddle, where the road goes over the Blacks' Spur, and, between that and Juliet, the many peaked Cathedral Range is plainly visible, beyond Marysville. In the opposite direction, the eye takes in a foretaste of what is to be seen more extensively from Ben Cairn. With difficulty abandoning this point of view, the party pushes on, descends into a saddle between two hills, with gullies still to the right and left, climbs the next hill, descends another saddle, reaches at length the beaten track that was originally cut by the men of the M.M.B.W. as a boundary mark, and as a means of "beating the bounds." This track, here joined, goes down a steep hill on the left, into the Badger Valley, and offers by that route some fine glimpses of the Healesville Valley. Our route, however takes the track to the right, up hill, after clambering through mountain scrub, gum saplings, hazel and elderberry ash, perhaps laden with snow a foot deep, emerges on a lofty saddle with great granite outcrops under foot, and a magnificent forest of mountain ash, slim and clean, and stately, high overhead and covering the mountainsides. Splitters used to camp here and split pailings almost as smooth as a planed board, which they conveyed per bullock wagon down the Don Valley, up and over the Ben Cairn out spur, and so to Millgrove. This splitting is now prohibited by the M.M.B.W., but the bullock track still remains and serves as part of the Ben Cairn route. Right in the heart of this mountain ash country, the tracks divide at a huge fallen ash trunk, near a splitter's bench. That to the right goes to Ben Cairn, the other turning smartly to the left, reaches Donna Buang, and still going on, traverses the hills bordering the upper reaches of the Watts and the Acheron, and comes out at the "timber landing" at the summit of the Blacks' Spur.

"From the turn in, which is indicated by a sign board, the summit of Ben Cairn is barely two miles away. Donnabuang is still further, relatively, in point of time. If one is limited as to time, or short of breath, or subject to fatigue, or is content with what is really the finer outlook without hankering after the glory of having ascended Donna Buang, the advice is tendered to leave Donna Buang alone, and go merely to Ben Cairn. The writer has been to both, and has thoroughly enjoyed both, and probably the Government Tourist Committee will shortly be making Donna Buang more artificially comfortable and attractive than Ben Cairn, but there is no doubt that Ben Cairn shows the more extensive and interesting panorama, with a much more rugged and delightful foreground.

If however the visitor can and does do both, he will have seen scenery which is certainly unequalled by any other within a day's journey of the Metropolis. Mt. Donna Buang has been called by a catchy figure of speech, "The Poor Man's Buffalo !" It was surely unnecessary to drag in either the poverty or the Buffalo, as undoubtedly even the rich man will delight in the scenery and accessibility of Donna Buang, while the poor man will still miss some of the ruggedness and sublimity of the Buffalo Plateau."

"BEN CAIRN.- Let us presume that the visitor first takes the Ben Cairn track, p to 110 megalitres ( 110,000,000 litres ) can flow through the aqueduct daily. At times some large fish may be seen swimming in the aqueduct.

Badger Weir park has opening and closing times, so check these at the entry gate on arrival. At the picnic grooves fragrance when crushed. Some of the beeches attain a girth of 10 to 12 feet, and a great height. On a bright sunny day with snow underfoot, this gully is a lovely sight. Later on, in the spring, the sassafras blossoms, like wild orange blossom, litter the brown soil beneath and mingle with Marchantia and maidenhair fern. Some big gum trees still linger on both slopes of the Don Gully. On the further slopes is a particularly fine one. Following up the track, between stunted saplings of gum and wattle, the bullock track is left to descend to Millgrove, and the new track to the right is followed and in a short distance the track turns up to the left and so to the summit of Ben Cairn. The view thence is exhilarating and superb, but first a brief description of the rock itself. "

" Ben Cairn was ascended and named by the present Surveyor General about twenty years ago. It had previously been known to a few of the inhabitants of the Yarra Valley, whence it is plainly visible. Geographically, it is a spur from the main range that is hereabouts very irregular in conformation. The whole hill is doubtless a huge granite "blob," isolated by the flow of an ancient glacier that some thousands of years ago scraped out the Yarra Valley."

Victoria's best known bushwalker of the 1920s Robert Henderson Croll also visited the Ben Cairn area around 1928 and wrote the following story.

"Two or Three day walks

The Rock and Donna Buang

My heart turns to high places...

-Dorothea Mackellar

The first generation of our native born not only "learnt from their wistful mothers to call old England 'Home,'" "but many of them gathered from over-patriotic fathers the conviction that everything was immeasurably greater or finer in the British Isles than anything Nature could produce here. The mavis and the lark sang across the years songs that were sweeter by far than those which the magpie and the harmonious thrush were pouring forth so liberally, the scent of the violet was richer, at least in remembrance, than that of the wattle or boronia. Particularly were the prominent features of the landscape slighted: there was no creek to compare with the English brooks and the Scottish burns, while the hills which had towered so high to their childish eyes seemed in retrospect to overtop with ease the mountains of this new land.

A Brother of Ben Nevis

Thus many a young Australian realises with surprise that there is at least one peak within fifty miles of Melbourne which is higher than anything in the United Kingdom, with the solitary exception of Ben Nevis. Donna Buang is 4080 feet, so the Scottish mountain can give it but 400 feet at the outside. The late Mr. J. A. Panton is said to have discovered it in 1865, and he is held responsible for the name. It stands very little higher than the huge huddle of hills of which it forms a part, and it has no striking features to mark it out on the skyline. But it gives a

magnificent outlook. About five miles away to the west is Ben Cairn (better known as The Rock), also a place of noble views, and these two high points form a natural pair for the walker to visit who has the weekend at his disposal.

There are several ways of attacking them, the one thing common to all being a long pull up. On most of these the walker will be happier if he has had sprigs or nails put in his bootsoles to give him grip, and he should not neglect his leggings. The conventional mode of reaching the top of Donna Buang is to drive from Warburton to the horseshoe bend on Cement Creek, and walk along the well graded track which ends on the summit, in all about 12 miles. As a winter trip, with snow on the ground, this is fairly severe, but the long days and dry tracks of summer make it easy enough. A more direct route is up the timber tracks from Warburton. They may be readily found by local inquiry. They cut the distance down to five or six miles, but they can be recommended to the young and sturdy only. The walk could continue across to Ben Cairn (five or six miles), down to Millgrove (four miles), and "so homer," as Mr. Pepys used to say.

That would make a very full day, but the excellent tourist road which now connects the two peaks provides quite good going.

#### Swag and Sleeping Bag

In reverse order the trip just outlined could be comfortably accomplished if one cared to carry a swag or sleeping bag. Sleeping bags were difficult to obtain during the period of the war, but now that things are back to normal the shopkeepers will no doubt stock them again. With a swag of some kind and tucker enough for three meals, Ben Cairn may be climbed from Millgrove on a Saturday afternoon, a camp made just at the back of the big rocky outcrop which distinguishes this peak, and on Sunday Donna Buang may be crossed and Warburton reached in time for the evening train. Night on the top of the Rock, in good weather, is an experience worth all the trouble of reaching there. Above are the stars, very bright at this altitude of over 3000 feet, and beneath is another heavenfull, for the great basin of the Yarra, walled on both sides by mountains, is directly below, and is sprinkled with little townships, each township holding a handful of lamps, many of them electrically lighted.

#### Other Approaches.

Coming from Launching Place the Don Valley road gives good approach to a well cut track that goes off easterly at Panton's Gap and ends at the Rock. But better still, in the writer's opinion, is the walk from Healesville which takes in portion of this route. It provides two pleasant strolls, and there is no need to camp out. The afternoon train on Saturday is early enough to permit of leaving the township at 3 o'clock. The Don Road, which must be followed, is not uninteresting at any point, and as it dips to the Badger Creek it is beautiful. Some very fine samples of Christmas bush mark the rise on the far side, and, about a mile on, there is a short cut which is worth taking. It turns to the left near a house. Its steepness is modified by the outlook it gives, and it saves some very long bends in the coach road. A little further on a finger post directs to Malleeson's Lookout, commanding a prospect of much charm, and soon the guest house of this hillside ( really Mount Tooleybewong ) comes into view. It is known as "Nyora," and is about nine miles from Healesville.

#### The Paddock Track

Next morning there are more views to admire before the paddock track is sought. This should be inquired for. It meanders along hillsides, until it drops suddenly to the Launching Place Road near a large signboard bearing directions regarding Ben Cairn and Donna Buang. This is Panton's Gap, with Panton's old house still standing in a grove of walnut and chestnut trees. Long sidings over the Badger Valley succeed until the crossing of a saddle changes the slope to a southerly one. Excellent

valley peeps are obtained. At a convenient time the Don races under the track where there is a sharpish turn. Later this bustling stream may be seen again by going a few yards off the beaten way. Some Aberdeenshire man was evidently in this part of the country when names were being given, for the three main streams of the locality are the Dee, the Don and the Ythan. The growths are more striking as the way ascends, and in the proper season may be seen in all their native beauty, the fine blooms of the Eriostemon and the mintbush, both now well established garden favourites. Little runnels make a pleasant coolness, and at the last of these the billy should be filled, for there is no spring on the summit. There is water, however, within ten minutes, in a line directly behind the Rock.

#### Timber Slide and Tram Track.

To continue on to Millgrove from Ben Cairn, one must follow the Donna Buang pad northwards to where it first divides. The branch to the right, turning sharply back and running under the rock is the correct one. When I was last there it was badly overgrown, and probably it still needs clearing. Its general inclination is to the right, until it slips down a short timber slide on to an old tram track by a creek. The tram track makes fair walking and it may be kept as far as the aqueduct. By turning to the left along the bank of this channel excellent going will be found. It joins a road which crosses the Yarra at its junction with the Dee, close to Millgrove, which has a railway station. An alternative is to continue along the Donna Buang Road till, just past a beech grove, a saw mill winch is visible. To follow the mill tracks down is to go direct to Millgrove.

Still another pleasant way from Healesville calls for the use of a swag, and for the strength to do a strenuous day on foot. Make the Badger Creek on Saturday afternoon, camp the night there, and, just above the bridge, pick up the boundary track of the Metropolitan Board's reserve. It is small and may not be well defined, but after it has reached the top of the divide by a breathless zig zag there are no severe pinches. When it reaches Donna Buang the final stage may be completed on the main road from Warburton. En route Ben Cairn could be visited. To do this trip one must keep going. It would be more pleasant on a weekend with a Monday holiday. A night could then be spent on the Badger, and another on the Rock, and there would be ample time to admire the scenery and listen to the lyrebirds, for which these particular mountain tops are famous.

Logging on Ben Cairn was extensive over the years. A good description of what took place, by the last person to log in the area, is given in Val Smith's book on 'Don ( Ripper ) Reid, Story of an Upper Yarra Valley Sawmiller, 1997.

#### Big Peninsula Goldfields walk

This walk commences at the Big Peninsula tunnel. Which is located to the left of the Warburton highway, just before you arrive at McMahons Creek. You should follow the signs and markers placed along the way. There is a small old gold tunnel that you can enter as part of this walk so take a torch along. I would advise against going through the water diversion tunnel where the Yarra now flows.

The walk is up and down and it is best to take water with you when undertaking this walk.

#### Boundary Trail

This is a walking track at Lake Mountain. It has low maintenance and is recommended for experience bushwalkers. It leaves Gerratys car park at

Lake Mountain and eventually reaches Keppells hut after some hours of walking.

#### Cement Creek Rainforest walk

This walk is just off the Warburton to Mt. Donna Buang road. A new "skyway" was completed in 1999 and provides a walk through a rainforest without getting your feet dirty. There are also new toilets and plenty of parking in the area. The amazing thing about this walk is what little you get for having spent 750,000 dollars on it. This was the most expensive project for Parks Victoria according to their 1997/1998 annual report.

With the ever increasing amount of signs appearing in the National Park this area was renamed the Donna Buang Forest Gallery in August 1999.

I found it really stupid that one of the old toilet blocks, made of really nice stonework had been ripped down to be replaced by an ugly new one. This block could have easily been converted to a wet weather shelter. There is currently just too much waste of taxpayers funds going on in this National Park.

A pamphlet and map for this walk is available from Parks Victoria.

The walking area was also featured on GTV Channel 9 program Postcards in October 1999.

#### Condons Track

This is an interesting track, which is open to the public, through the closed catchment areas that can be accessed either via Donnelly's Weir, Maroondah Reservoir or the Mt. St. Leonard to Dom Dom Saddle road. The thing I like about this track is the lack of traffic noise when walking and the fact that parts of it have been a favourite walking track for over a hundred years. At the lower end off the track keep a lookout for where the Maroondah Dam water comes out of the mountain and into an aqueduct. This place is known as echo tunnel and if you call out you can hear your echo returned.

During the Easter holidays of 1999 three 'experienced' bushwalkers became lost on this walking track and had to stay outdoors overnight. They had adequate clothing but it rained all night , over 20 mm, and they became wet.

The missing walkers received extensive media coverage both on television and in print. Once making it out from where they were the walkers blamed lack of adequate signage for becoming lost. It is true that parts of the walk have inadequate signage, but too much signage would detract from the bush experience and you can never be sure if somebody has not tampered with the signage that is there.

The 3 walkers made a number of significant errors. The main one was leaving the walk until late in the day when there is little daylight left to recover from any navigation error so as to find the way back to the correct track. You must have extensive bushwalking experience to undertake some of the walks in the Yarra Ranges National Park. Signs may disappear, be damaged, be altered or overgrown. If you are in serious doubt over your ability return the way you came and don't proceed into unknown territory. Just because the walking tracks are close to Melbourne doesn't mean help will arrive to save you. You can die overnight in this bush given the correct weather conditions.

I would recommend to people to take some kind of bush navigation course so as to be able to find your own way out of difficulties and not have a large search and rescue organized on their behalf. An emergency position indicating beacon would be a useful device to carry with you. Mobile phones may not work in some of the valleys.

The most important thing is to let a responsible person know where you are going and how long you will be gone. Then when you return you again inform this person.

If starting the walk from the south the gradient is good and then gets steeper as the base of Mount Monda is reached.

#### Cumberland Memorial walk

A pamphlet is available from Parks Victoria offices for this walk. My favourite feature of this walk is the giant trees and the size of some of their trunks. I also find it interesting that they have survived so many bushfires, goldmining and the logging industry. It is a real pity that other similar areas in the O'Shannassy catchment are not open to the public.

Some of Australia's highest trees are located in this area. They grow to 70, 80 and 90 metres. A sign at a tree known as the 'Big Tree' indicates that in the 1950s it was 92 metres and then in 1957 damaged by a storm. The current height of this tree is stated as 84 metres, but in April 1999 when I measured this tree using a laser range-finder and a clinometer I could only make it out at 77 metres. The trees surrounding the 'Big Tree' I measured at 60 to 70 metres with lower understory trees. Most of the highest trees had indications of wind and insect damage.

Another thing about this walk is the amount of time it takes Parks Victoria to repair anything. A small footbridge that was damaged in a flood many months before my April 1999 visit had still not been repaired. This could be another case of closing down walking tracks by stealth. This is one of the best if not the best walks in the Yarra Ranges National Park and less time and money should have been spent on the new signs, which are spreading like rabbits, and more on keeping the walking tracks open.

As you walk along these walking tracks there are a number of things hidden away in the bush. Near Bartons Lookout and Cora Lynn Waterfalls is the overgrown site of Hargreaves Hotel, one of a number that was on the Yarra track which went from Healesville to Woods Point. The approximate Australian Map Grid coordinates for Hargreaves Hotel site are Northing 5842300 and Easting 401100 and it is not located in the closed catchment area.

Near the parking lot on the Marysville to Woods Point road see if you can find the Victoria University of Technology Leaf Litter experiment.

Near to Cumberland Falls is an old gold mine at Australian Map Grid coordinates of approximately Northing 5841200 and Easting 402900. The mine was known as Kirwen's Reward and there is still a cyanide tank, pumphouse shed, old car body and an old hut at the site.

#### Dom Dom Saddle to Mt. Donna Buang

This is a walk of more than 20 kilometres basically along the mountain tops between these two places. No water is available along this walk so stock up before leaving. There is a grass helicopter landing area along the way. There is ample parking at both ends including toilets. At the summit of Mt. Donna Buang a gate is locked in the late afternoon so be careful to park below the gate. A problem with leaving a car at one end is security, as isolated cars may be at risk of break in or theft.

#### Graceburn Weir

This walk starts on the eastern side of the Maroondah highway just outside Healesville when heading towards Fernshaw. There is adequate parking for up to 10 cars. A small gate must be opened at the highway. The track follows the Graceburn aqueduct for a couple of kilometres.

There is a pleasant picnic area and toilets at the weir, set amongst a number of introduced trees. The water coming from this creek is probably the best of all the catchments because there is no public sealed or unsealed road above the weir. The area above the weir only has a few management tracks which are rarely used. I always find it interesting when Melbourne's closed catchments are talked of in the media, when this small catchment is really the only one. The water from Graceburn goes under the Black Spur road to Maroondah Reservoir. The water coming into the Maroondah Reservoir must have some pollution from all the cars and trucks that use the Black Spur. It is only a matter of time before a chemical or fuel truck crashes on the winding road and the runoff will find its way into Maroondah Reservoir.

Graceburn receives far fewer visitors than its much larger counterpart down the road. This reservoir is available for access 24 hours a day and even at night time would make a good walk with a little bit of spotlighting. The walking track is also one of the few suitable for wheelchairs.

#### Keppel Lookout

According to the Draft Management Plan for the Yarra Ranges National Park this walking track is within the park, but I have yet to find it. I however assume that this refers to the walk to Keppel Falls.

Keppel Falls is a short walk on the north side of Lady Talbot Forest Drive. This walk is really good when the days are getting hotter. The falls are at their most spectacular after heavy rainfall.

Years ago the walk to Keppel Falls continued on all the way to the Beeches walk.

#### Lake Mountain

Parks Victoria have a pamphlet on Lake Mountain available.

#### Morleys Track

Fernshaw is at the start of this walk. Where there used to be a village there is only a picnic area. The walk commences at the opposite end of Fernshaw reserve to that which you drove in. The walking track is always to the north of Watts River and after a period of light up and down gradients the walk goes for some time along fairly level ground and crosses a few creeks. When the last creek is crossed the walk becomes steeper and eventually meets up with the Dom Dom Saddle to Mt Donna Buang Track at Carters gap.

In June 2000 Peter Wheaton and his son Jamie became lost in this area, near the base of Mt. Juliet. It was reported that Mr Wheaton was close to death after two nights in the bush. Luckily they were spotted by a police search helicopter.

During much of 2001 and 2002 the Fernshaw picnic ground has been closed due to leakage problems with the toilets. The polluted water was entering the Watts river and then Melbourne's water supply. The walking track is still open and all you need to do is park at the locked gates outside the entry to Fernshaw.

#### Mt Donna Buang to Mt Boobyalla

This is an enjoyable walk through some rainforest areas. The walk starts to the north of the Mt. Donna Buang Lookout tower. The walk starts by heading downhill, fairly steeply, but then starts to level out. When undertaking this walk in early 2000 I found some of the new signs confusing so remember the way you walked. The area to the North West of

Mt. Boobyalla contains some giant Mountain Ash trees that are several hundred years old.

#### Mt Donna Buang to Cement Creek

This is a very steep and slippery walk. Keep a lookout for old timber milling equipment just off the track. There are also a couple of old huts located at the bottom end of the track near the Warburton to Mt. Donna Buang road. The track starts at the Mt Donna Buang lookout tower and is well signposted. You may also start the walk just up the road from the Rainforest Gallery.

#### Mt Juliet

This walk starts at the Maroondah Highway just to the south of Fernshaw. The walking track starts at road three. There is parking for only a few cars at this point. The track stays almost level for a short while and then gets steeper and steeper. At the summit there is a large rock cairn, 3.6 m high which was erected in the 19 th century as part of a geodetic network for Victoria. Similar cairns to this one are located at Mt. Macedon and Mt. Baw Baw.

On Saturday the 3 rd of June 2000, Robyn Bell, Pascale Osanz and Cathy Scott became lost on Mount Juliet in heavy snow. Thanks to the Police and Melbourne Water catchment security officer Neil Ockwell they were found and returned safely. More details of the search for the lost bushwalkers can be obtained on page 15 of Melbourne Water's Magazine, The Source.

#### Mt Riddell

This walk starts just past the Healesville rubbish tip at a very solid looking locked gate. The walk is adequately signposted and goes through what is called a catchment buffer area. There are some excellent views of the Watts Valley and the Maroondah Reservoir available at the vantage points along the way. Keep a lookout for some of the large rocks along the way and watch as the forest adjoining the track changes from dry in the lower areas to wet higher up. I found this walk really hard on the feet, because of the material that had been used to construct the road.

#### Mt St. Leonard

This is a short walk to the Lookout tower at Mt. St. Leonard. At the summit there are fantastic views of Melbourne and the Yarra Valley. Some of the views are blocked out by the fire/communications tower and tree regrowth.

#### Mt St. Leonard to Dom Dom Saddle

This walk follows the ridge line between these two points. Features of interest are some giant Mountain Ash, a small patch of rainforest and although not indicated by any signage, the North Maroondah experiment. The North Maroondah experimental area was started by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works ( now Melbourne Water ) and research is now undertaken in this area by the Cooperative Research Centre for Catchment Hydrology who have produced a number of recent reports about the area. The forestry and hydrology research carried out in this area is one of the largest in size in Australia, but you would never know it as you walk through it. This is a walk that shows in your face logging where clearcutting has been carried out right up to the National Park boundary. This walk is suitable for all seasons as the track is very wide ( it



forms a firebreak ) and has many suitable areas where you can be picked up by a car. From the Mt. St. Leonard side the track can be followed by car ( a 4wd is strongly recommended ) for many kilometres.

Mt St. Leonard to Donnellys Weir.

I find that this walk is best started at Donnellys Weir. There is adequate parking for about 20 cars at the weir. A small creek must be driven through to reach the carpark. It should also be noted that the entry gates are closed at the time indicated. Cars may also be parked at the creek crossing, there being enough room for several cars.

At the car park look for the plaque indicating the start/finish of the Bicentennial National Trail. A short walk brings you to the picnic area at the Weir. This area is undercover so it is good even on a rainy day.

The walk to Mt. St. Leonard is adequately signposted and begins at the picnic area. There is no water along this walk so fill up at Donnellys Creek. The walk followed a good roadway and at times leaves the roadway briefly.

Keep a lookout for people who are starting or have just finished the 5,000 km trek along the trail.

An interesting feature of this walk is the remains of what was known as the road 11 experiment. All that remained in late 1998 was a hole in the ground and some information about the experiment. The aim of the research was to determine how much soil was washed away from the dirt roads relative to their use and maintenance. It was found that the less the road was used and maintained the less the road material would be eroded and find its way into the creeks and then eventually into Melbourne's drinking water. These results should be able to be extrapolated to the rest of the catchments.

Along the walk there are a couple of Vantage Points which give good views of Mt. Monda and the Donnellys Valley. At the base of Mt. St. Leonard the walk gets considerably steep and if you do not want to walk all the way to the summit this is a good turn back point.

Phantom Falls

This waterfall is located just off the Lady Talbot Forest Drive, on its northern side. The walk up to the falls is very steep in places. There is a very pleasant picnic area at the falls, with seating for four people. No better place can be found on a hot day.

Warburton to Mt. Victoria

This walk starts at Martyr road on the north side of the Yarra River at Warburton. This is a very strenuous walk and in wet and cold weather I would advise people not to undertake it. On the times I have walked it over the years there have been a number of large fallen trees across the track, which can be difficult to navigate over or around. On one walk in January 1999 I encountered some illegal deer hunters along the walk.

Following Martyr road to the top the track becomes narrower and goes uphill and downhill briefly and then steadily uphill. When the intersection with the Warburton-Mt. Donna Buang road is reached you should cross the road and go through the gate on the other side. This short 10 minute walk will bring you to the two transmission towers on the summit of Mt. Victoria.

There is no view from the top of Mt. Victoria.

## Walks in the Closed Catchments

The following are stories of walks that could be undertaken in areas that have now become closed to the public or have become overgrown. They are included here for their historical interest.

People who are interested in recent information about the closed catchments could put their name down on the free mailing list for Melbourne Water's magazine The Source ( previously called Mainstream ). The Source from time to time has short articles about the wilderness catchments. The ISSN is 1443-704X.

Parks Victoria also put out a regular update called Canopy which also from time to time has articles relevant to the Yarra Ranges National Park. To get put on the mailing list write to Parks Victoria, Private Bag 8, Kew, 3101 or fax on (03) 98169876. Or try Parks Victoria at 378 Cotham Road, Kew, 3101. Tele phone Kate Glenie Corporate Communications (03) 9816 7009 or email kglenie@parks.vic.gov.au. The ISSN for Canopy is 1329-9239.

The Acheron Valley and Marysville including the now overgrown Edgar track.

An Easter Outing.

By R.H. Croll in 1928.

I am a good horse to travel, but not by choice a roadster.- Thoreau.

Why this jolly mountain creek should have suggested to anyone the melancholy stream of the underworld from which it derives its name is a mystery. Perhaps the explanation is that each is a place of shades. The upper reaches of our Acheron are certainly shady enough, but the shades are those of gracious timbers, and the sunlight is not wholly barred. It is only the upper reaches which concern us on this trip, an ideal outing for the five holidays of a fine Easter. The portion is from Narbethong up to practically the river's source in the hills which divide the Goulburn waters from those of the Yarra. In such a rich and well watered country the tracks are soon obliterated if not looked after. Neglect has spoilt altogether what is known as the Edgar track, which runs from the hairpin bend at Cement Creek, near Warburton, over the mountains to Marysville. As portion of this track must be followed on the present excursion, none but the sturdy should attempt it.

Jumping Off at Healesville.

Carry a sleeping bag and a couple of days' food to the Healesville train on Thursday evening, the Thursday before Good Friday. It may be 8 or 9 o'clock when you reach Healesville, not too late to drive the 14 miles to Narbethong if you wish to conserve time. A specially chartered conveyance will not cost much individually if there is a party. Alternatively spend the night in Healesville (there are plenty of good camps and plenty of other accommodation), or leave town on Good Friday morning. I shall assume that you start your walk from Healesville on the Friday morning. First arrange for your swags to go on the coach to Narbethong, keeping out a billy and enough food for the midday meal. You have 14 miles of picturesque road to cover before you turn from the broad highway and court the shy and more seductive bushland track. En route you can lunch where the Watts crosses the road, and a fine linden and

some other deciduous trees mark the site of the old time Fernshaw, seven miles from Healesville. Immediately you find the famous Blacks' Spur rising before you. It is worth a trip in itself. Were the hill twice as long, and the grade twice as bad, you must still admire. And along the top and going down the other side are equally good. There is an hotel at Narbethong, so you have the choice of sleeping indoors or of making a camp under the shelter of the trees near the little creek.

Up the Acheron.

As you face towards Marysville a paling splitter's track goes off to the right at a cutting not far past the hotel. Take it for half a mile, then follow a turnoff again to the right, keeping the top of the ridge for about three miles. The track drops abruptly there, and is merged in a dray road, to which you must keep for the whole length of the valley. It will introduce you to many beautiful things. Very dense is the bush through which it winds, and it crosses the Acheron charmingly several times. Despite the timber getters whose road you are using, many noble trees remain. One big fellow, standing on three buttresses, has a girth of 50 feet. If, as is likely, these gums are in flower, their waving branches will be alive with wattle birds and other honey eaters, chasing one another and shouting and calling. You cannot miss the way, the only tracks coming in being little pads made by the "small deer" of the bush on their way to the water. All the while you have been rising gently. At 12 miles you strike a very steep timber slide, up which you must climb to about half way to get to the splitters' hut, where your day ends. The hut is off to the right some 200 yards. A small flat there makes a handy camp; the water is just below in a bed of tangled fern, musk, mintbush, hazel, and dogwood. From the slope above rise numberless clean stemmed giants with never a branch for 100 feet or more. Presently their tops will be full of stars, and you will lie and watch the eternal procession until sleep blots out all material things.

The Edgar Track.

There is a longer journey before you today (Sunday), so make an early start. It is not that the milage is so great (it is probably 20 miles into Marysville), but the way is more difficult. You have a choice of routes in the beginning. One is to go back on your tracks for a mile, where you turn to your left and follow up the Warburton pad (about south) until it strikes another going east or north east at the junction where are several signposts. That is the Edgar track making for Marysville. The alternative is to follow up the creek, which has been singing all night below your camp (it is slow going with the tangle of scrub and the decaying logs which break beneath your feet) until in a long mile you find the Splitters' Falls busy in a sort of green twilight. They are pleasant, but do not call for much notice. Work east, by compass, up the slope above them, and you will soon cut the Edgar track. The chances are that you will find it in a very bad state of neglect, almost completely blocked in places. Turn along it to the left. The height gives you good views down the Acheron Valley, full of green timber, and presently you will observe that you have got amongst the Woollybutts (*Eucalyptus Delegatensis*), a sure sign of elevation, for they mark the last stage before the snow gum. You cross an attractive saddle, rounding the end of the Poley Range (4250 feet) as you do so. Now your outlook is east to some distant ranges, and the heads of numerous small creeks are passed, each making for the O'Shannassy River and so to the Yarra. The way becomes closely walled with bush, and if you go quietly you may see one of the lyrebirds that are calling from it. You skirt Mt. Strickland's 4000 feet, and just before reaching Mount Bismarck the track divides. That to the right heads for Paradise Plains; take the left hand way, ascend to Keppell's Lookout when you come to the notice board, and by steady dropping you will be in Marysville by nightfall. There are camping

places in abundance, as well as boarding houses and an hotel. Stores may be renewed here.

Homeward.

Monday morning could be devoted to visiting the Steavenson Falls and returning to make the eight miles of road to Narbethong, where the night could be spent, leaving an easy stroll over the Spur for Tuesday. Or a full day could be put in along the Taggerty River, up through the forest of Arden to the Meeting of the waters and Keppell's Falls, a seven mile walk, and the night passed in Marysville. In that case the swags could be left for the Tuesday's coach, and flying light, the 23 miles to Healesville would not be difficult. I cannot at this stage, dwell upon the attractions of Marysville, a beautiful little township at any time, but especially so in the autumn, when old world trees in the street are changing colour. It may be possible later to give details of some of the best outings.

The Baw Baw Track.

(Usually an Easter Outing)

O nurse of many happy streams,  
And mother of our infant Yarra.

The following article was written by R.H. Croll in his 1928 book 'The open road in Victoria'.

This is the track on which so many novices metaphorically lay their bones. For some reason it has caught the popular fancy, with the result that the budding walker, in all the discomfort of improper equipment, frequently makes it his first and last, essay with the swag. He brings back a tale of trying tracks, of steep gradients, and bleak uplands, often in curious contrast with the accounts of more seasoned trampers. The truth is that few of the 50 miles between Walsh's Creek (McVeigh's) on the Upper Yarra and the railhead at Walhalla - the 50 miles that constitute the so called "Baw Baw Track" - are easy miles, but they are well within the compass of any pedestrian who is capable of carrying a 30 pound pack up a fairly graded hill, or has means to hire a packhorse to do it for him. In other words, the way is open to all who are young, and to any whose maturity has really benefited by experience of such outings. It is time, indeed, that someone spoke plainly regarding the nonsense so commonly printed that the swag is a destroyer of all pleasure on a country tour. I bear fardels as unwillingly as the next man, and I recognise the obvious fact that it is easier and more enjoyable to walk free than loaded, but I protest that the pains of carrying one's bed on board are very small change ( in this world everything has its price ) for the perfect liberty so gained, and that no one need divorce himself from pleasure in doing so.

The Baw Baw track is so named because at its most picturesque stage it traverses the Baw Baw plateau and gives easy access, by a side walk of about one mile and a quarter, to the 5130 feet summit of Mt. Baw Baw itself. Three natural divisions mark the route, the first being the stage up the Yarra Valley - a long - slow rise, the next the irregular, but relatively level going of the uplands, the third the rapid descent into Walhalla. With the commencement of the bridle track at McVeigh's the way is truly the walker's. For nearly 16 miles it is a sidling pad winding just above and always within sight, or at least sound, of the Yarra, here a babbling stream running at the foot of a steadily deepening valley. Higher and higher grows the hills, well clothed particularly on the right bank, with tall timber and luxuriant shrubs. The slopes above the river look primeval and untrodden. But the trail is an old one, as old as the early diggers, left little even of this hilly country unexplored in their

search for gold. A reminder of the period is the unusual blaze on the timber - a T. so signify the Tanjil track. Just before the 15 mile post, shown in red on a tree, two huts come into picture. Each is of iron, and each is well constructed to meet the needs of tourists, it being understood that these bring their own food and bedding. The newer structure has a cement chimney and a cement floor, a couple of large windows, a table, a form, and some boxes for seats, half a dozen bilies, a frying pan, a bucket, an axe, a broom, four stretchers, with spring mattresses ( and there are more in the neighbouring hut ) and about a dozen mugs and plates. There are two rooms available for visitors, the space over all being about 50 feet by 15 feet. The old hut is much smaller, but is weatherproof, and atleast a shelter in rough weather.

On Falls Creek, which joins the main stream at this point, six picturesque waterfalls occur within a mile and a half of the camping ground. They are readily accessible, the track to the main fall ( the first ) being in good order and of an easy grade. The other five take a little more climbing to see. The second stage of the onward journey opens badly with a determined zig-zag, which joins the lower end of a mile long spur. As you climb, the Yarra Valley recedes on your left flank; below, on the right, are glimpses of the Falls Creek. The timber is large, mountain ash in the main, mingled with fine samples of silvertop, and later, woollybutt. In the season long lanes of Christmas bush are flowering here. Some groves of beech through which the track winds, suggest a stage setting of Fairyland in their still beauty. The variety is endless, now a group of giant gums, now beech or wattle groves, now a young forest, here a marshy spot, there a sparkling stream with its sands aglitter with "new chum gold," always and ever something to attract and hold the attention.

A map with text and photographs of the Baw Baw track also appeared in the early 1930s the following is the text which accompanied the map

#### Across the Baw Baws

An eminent art critic has declared that the outlook to a mountain is finer than the outlook from a mountain, because from the higher points, the values of perspective are lost. The lovers of wild scenery, natural colour, and wild life may test the matter for themselves on the tourist route, which has been conveniently if not exactly, styled "Across the Baw Baws." It commences at 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 pedestrians, three shelter houses have been built on the track, which traverses wild and unsettled country.

In these motes 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 typical of 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, land marks, and camping sites, there is no need of detail upon these points.

Travellers should study the map and the reference table thereon, and, if without a guide, regulate their movements so as to reach the shelter house before nightfall. For a walking tour every person should have a convenient pack or kit, containing necessary clothing, towel, food

supplies, knives, forks etc. Good strong boots and leggings 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 and have experience in travelling in snow country. The snow trip should be made to Talbot peak shelter house and return to Walhalla.

Warburton is 47.75 miles from Melbourne, and is the railway terminus from which tourists reach McVeigh's Hotel, at Walsh's Creek - the last habitation on the track to Walhalla. The township has a population of about 800, 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, and overlooking, for the greater part of the distance, the reaches and bends of the river, tumbling and foaming in its rapids for nearly the whole distance, seldom settling into the deep, still pools distinctive of its lower section.

In the early spring the ever curving stream is gloriously outlined with its fringes of golden wattle. McVeigh's Hotel

( twenty miles ), at the junction of the Yarra and Walsh's Creek, end conveniently the first stage of a journey which may best 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 McVeigh's 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 McVeigh's on to the Falls, and these fish increase so rapidly in size, under favourable conditions, that sport is already good.

Lovers of the wildlife of the bush will find this section of the Yarra typically interesting, for here they first get touch of the lyrebird, 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 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 to which the tourist may give an admiring glance and then pass on. The birds 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 upon the crest of Mt. 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 a bridge on one of the branches of the Gippsland stream was long known as "The Bridge on the Yarra."

The contrast of the 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. Tough 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.

Annie Yoffa, a solo female walker also undertook the walk from Warburton to Walhalla around 1928. Annie described herself as the first solo female bushwalker to complete the walk. She may also have been the only solo female to have ever undertaken this walk, as much of it was destroyed by the Black Friday bushfires of January 1939. Annie studied at Cornell University in the United States of America and was a psychiatrist, she was hacked to death by a religious fanatic, in the Basin, when she was in her late 60s. The area which covers the Upper Yarra catchment was closed to the public during the 1939 to 1945 second world war. After WWII the building of the Upper Yarra Dam commenced and the Upper Yarra section of her walk was permanently closed to the public. The following is a description she gave of the walk between Warburton to McVeigh's Hotel, where she over nighted, and the eastern edge of the Upper Yarra catchment where she became lost. Annie's book was titled 'The real thing, adventures in the Australian bush.

"The very next morning, broad-rimmed hat on head, khaki knapsack on back, hooked stick in hand, I set out for the station.

Above me a sky, full of dark gray clouds, foretold unpleasant weather; while all around me the weeping heavens ushered in a very gloomy day. Verily, the gods had taken me seriously, and had granted my half uttered prayer, sending me down not only a good shower, but a most dismal promise of a persistent one. Here was, indeed, reason enough to give up the intended hike, but my mood had changed. In the morning light my nocturnal doubts and fears vanished; my self-confidence, and self-reliance returned; and I was keener than ever on tackling the bush, all alone, even with the elements against me.

Consequently, I began to rush down the wet street, reaching the corner ten minutes before the tram did, and arriving at the station a good twenty minutes ere the train left it.

The next three hours nothing happened. The train slowed down, pulled up; passengers descended, passengers ascended; a shrill whistle rent the air; the train jerked out, puffed on, only to slow down again a few minutes later. Tired of the never ending stops, I brought out my book and was soon quite oblivious to the passage of time and the stoppage of the train.

A general movement in the carriage roused me, suddenly, from my absorption , We had reached the last stop. We were at Warburton.

Hurriedly stuffing away my book, I slung the heavy knapsack on my shoulders, crossed the railway tracks, and began to ascend the only road I could see. Here, at least, there was no danger of taking a false turning.

For the first mile and a half, I could not keep my eyes off the everchanging scene beneath me. Through a semi-transparent veil of falling droplets, Warburton, with its scattered houses creeping on the hill-slopes, and nestling on the banks of the meandering willow-framed river, encircled by an ever widening ring of tree-clad, misty mountains looked most picturesque.

Gradually, the houses along the road, began to disappear. Passing the last one, I casually asked a woman leaning at the gate if I was very far from McVeigh's Hotel. To my great surprise and still greater disgust, she assured me there is no hotel on the Healesville road.

As she could not give me the information I needed, I carefully lowered the heavy pack from my already aching shoulders and pulled out the map. Staring me in the face was a clear sentence, "Turn up Wood's Point road for McVeigh's Hotel which is nineteen miles from Warburton."

Unable herself to direct me to Wood's Point road, she called over her husband, who, strange to say, surpassed his better-half in curiosity.

"Where are you bound for, Miss?" asked he, his eyes on my pack.

"I am going to Walhalla," I answered rather in dubious tones, smarting under my first mishap.

"Where!! Do you know that you have to travel over very rough country? It takes days and nights, too; and there are no hotels nor any kind of houses on the way. You will be alone in the bush. It is fifty two miles of wild country."

"Yes, I know all this."

Both looked as if they doubted my sanity, so I added, "You see, I am doing this trip on a bet."

As I had anticipated, this satisfied them.

"To get to Wood's Point road, you turn back, Miss, the way you came; and, after crossing the bridge that you passed over on coming here, you turn to the left; you can't miss it, there is no other road there." And, without a twinkle in his eye, he added in that monotonous slow country drawl of his, "You'll get to Warburton alright, but I ain't so sure about your reachin' Walhalla."

This flash of dry humor was so unexpected that I burst into a hearty laugh and started down the road at top speed.

It was already past twelve, and I now had one and a half miles more to cover than I had started out with. Still, what was a mile more or less in nineteen. Moreover, the first mistake was really a blessing in disguise; a warning to consult the map at every turn, despite my natural antipathy to maps in general.

I was just about beginning to see the joke of the thing, when the sun flashed between a couple of clouds, and like a shot I focussed my camera, and snapped a moment's local color, a giant centipede wriggling, and puffing a little above the base of a mountain range, right over the river; a miniature timber train, plying its trade, on the mountain side, connecting the bush to the city.

Half a mile more, and I crossed the bridge.

Again in the best of spirits, I looked around for the road I had missed. I was on the point of asking a passer-by, when I noticed a break in the hillside. I walked over. On a gray pole, resembling the many trunks that covered the hills, was a partially obliterated notice, pointing towards Walsh creek.

Having made sure that this was the right road, I spread out my map, in the rain and the wind, checking every item of information. One thing was



certain, if I got lost it would not be for want of spreading out the unwieldy map.

Honesty compels me to say that the break between the mountains should never have been dignified by the name road, being nothing more than a passage between two spurs that failed to meet; at most, wide enough for a couple of hikers and a single car abreast. Nevertheless, no sooner had I entered, when I realized that I was not only on the right road, but on the path to an avian paradise. The more I walked the more enchanted was I by the tremulous, throbbing life abounding all around me.

Every branch, nay, every twig was alive with invisible virtuosos. Exquisite notes filled the air everywhere. Countless gurgling brooks and a murmuring river, now shining like magic mirrors reflecting a thousand shadowy branches, now glowing weirdly in semi-darkness like enchanted pools; again hidden in luxuriant canopies of silver green ferns or golden green wattles, scintillating with a million rain drops, fondled by the rays of a half veiled sun in a cloudy setting, formed the accompaniment to myriads of rare tones, melodies, calls, thrills, chirpings, warblings, echoings, pleadings, respondings: a world of silver throated songsters creating a gorgeous musical ensemble a colossal, a sublime bush symphony.

I must have lost myself in the magnificent harmonies, for a sudden movement in my path seemed to rouse me as from a dream. Indeed for a few moments I doubted whether I was really awake or dreaming.

Hearing a spontaneous flutter in front of me, I looked down and doubted my senses. Half a dozen dark birds, brownish or grayish black, I am not sure which, about the size of large pigeons or small fowls, rose in the air, a few feet ahead of me; and, to my utmost surprise, staged an extraordinary spectacle before my startled eyes. With a single motion they underwent a complete transformation; half a dozen fans flashed open as one; and pure shimmering white edged with a delicate, narrow border of black hovered in the air, and gradually vanished, flying very low. Hardly were these out of sight, when three more rose almost in front of me, performing under my eyes the same rare feat of changing from black to white. Next a belated couple, and finally a single one repeated the beautiful, though strange performance, and I was able to convince myself that the apparent miracle was accomplished by the bird opening and displaying its tail in its full glory.

So striking was the maneuver, however, that I made up my mind to inquire at the first opportunity the name of the bird that could change itself a few feet from the ground, from a dull, uninteresting dark to a beautiful pure white, edged with black. Although quite ignorant as to who the black-white magicians of the air were, I was yet delighted that the bush had sent me this gorgeous reception committee, its magnificent full-plumaged ballet.

Continuing my walk, I was again lost in the marvelous fullness of life around me.

One species of bush life, however, threatened to destroy my equanimity. The flies were far too numerous, far too greedy, and far too persevering. Fortunately, I realized before long, that after all I was the intruder in their domains, and that it was only just that I conform to their provincial customs and put up with their clinging hospitality, and over zealous reception. Having reached this just conclusion, I stopped brandishing my stick, letting as many of them rest on my shoulders and back as could find standing room.

Hour followed hour, as I drunk my fill of the beauties around me. Crossing over the slippery stones, of numerous lovely streamlets hidden by jealous ferns, forming verdant canopies at every curve and angle, I became aware of another kind of thirst. I stooped quickly at the very next miniature fountain, sure of getting a nice, cool, refreshing drink. The next minute I drew back in disgust, however, I had almost swallowed an aquarium. The transparent, clear, inviting bubbling brooklet was

swarming with tiny, green, transparent tadpoles that I could see, and probably countless other water-dwellers that I could not see. Well, it was a good thing that I had looked, or I might have gone on drinking such water throughout the hike. Fortunately, the sight of the sleek community had quenched my thirst; and hitching the very heavy pack on my very aching shoulders, I resume the walk.

I must have covered about fifteen miles, and was beginning to feel somewhat tired, when a dilapidated coach with an ignoble pair drew up near me, and I was offered a couple of miles lift. Gladly accepting, I somehow managed to scramble in, pack and all.

Curiously I contemplated the superannuated pair of a disappearing order, a shabby white the one, a rusty red the other, and pitiful scarecrows both. Suddenly, I remembered something, my bird problem, and I turned to the bronzed, desiccated, middle-aged rustic at my side, for enlightenment.

"Can you tell me the name of the black birds that turn white as they rise in the air?"

"No, Miss, I am afraid I can't."

"You must have a million different kinds of birds here judging from the variety of calls."

"No, we haven't so many birds here, but it is the lyre-bird; he is a wonder. He imitates every bird under the sun. He is some mimic alright."

"What is he like, small or big?"

"The female is like the ordinary fowl, dark and plain, but the male is a beauty. He has a wonderful tail, like a lyre when he spreads it out. Only one never seldom sees him. Some people have lived here all their life and have never seen one."

Hurriedly and most vividly I described the reception committee to him. For the first time, I saw a country man's features liven up and heard warmth in his usually lifeless voice.

"By Jove, Miss, you have seen a rare sight. I never heard tell of many lyre-birds being together. You know. they lay only one egg a year, and they are very scarce. You were very lucky. Where did you see them? You must have walked very quietly not to have frightened them away."

"Yes, I was walking quietly on the grass, and they rose up from the bushes right in front of me. It was a beautiful sight."

Right then we reached a crossing and the driver pulled up.

"I am sorry, Miss, I turn off here; I have to deliver some letters. Good luck to you, I hope you reach Walhalla alright."

Somewhat rested, I resumed the now lighter pack and the walk.

When I looked at my watch, I was surprised to find that it was already four. Still having eight miles between me and the hotel, I began to hurry more and observe less. Nevertheless, I could not help stopping from time to time, to admire the whispering waterfalls, the luxuriant foliage, the green hills, the misty mountain ranges, and the muttering river. If anything, the continuous rain enhanced the beauty of the scenery, by cleansing the woods.

Fresh, bright, rejuvenated, pulsating life was everywhere.

Quite unexpectedly, I came upon half a dozen houses around a noisy creek, cradled in a ring of verdant mountains. Here I learnt that I was six miles from Walsh creek, and my road-side inn.

Somehow, I managed to cover four miles, the last one more or less painfully. I had not anticipated a few miles walk on pebbles. Why the council had chosen to repair the road, just when I decided to cross it, seemed a mystery to me. There was nothing for it, however, but to rest once more at the roadside.

How I wished I had the power to telescope space, or even to prevent that knapsack of mine from getting heavier in direct ratio to the miles I covered. Having rested a quarter of a hour, I rose up wearily, and started to walk in the shrubs, dodging a truck that was rattling by. A

moment later I was on the front seat with the driver, and Mephistopheles, in the guise of a four-footed black mongrel. For a long time we jolted, and tossed on the cobbles, with Mephistopheles dancing jigs on various parts of my thigh. There were moments when I was not quite sure whether I had not chosen the worse of two evils.

For the whole two miles, despite several attempts on my part to make conversation, the driver was dumb. The only active parts on the bumping vehicle were the four paws of my canine fellow-passenger, seeking, forever seeking a steady spot in the swaying medium. At last we stopped before a building, and even then the driver remained dumb.

I waited a while and then burst out rather peeved, "is this the hotel?"

He looked at me, like a wooden image, and after a long pause dragged out a slow "Yes this is the hotel."

I hurried down, engaged a room; surprised the maid by stepping out of my wet woolen costume, and appearing in the cool summer frock I was wearing beneath. After a good wash, I was sufficiently refreshed to join half a dozen guests in the dining room.

Too tired to talk, I silently polished off the two course dinner, helping myself liberally to the fresh cream, and the nice jam of which there was aplenty. At least, half a dozen times, I sent the waitress back to replenish first my milk glass, and then my water glass; and, between the long droughts of cooling liquid I satisfied partly the curiosity of my dining companions, telling them whence I hailed, whither I was bound for, when I intended to leave the inn, and that I was not afraid.

In reply to why I was taking the trip alone, I sprang the bet fabrication anew. This seemed to make my action quite normal. One realist looked up rather interested "How much is the bet?" he asked eagerly. Taken by surprise, I answered thoughtfully, "The bet is whether I could do it on my own or not."

Here the light died out from his eyes; he was no longer interested.

"Close on seven the following morning, having polished off the cream, jam, and milk on the breakfast table, having paid my bill of three times three shillings, and having hoisted my pack on my rested shoulders, I left the hotel and began to climb the narrow path on the left of the creek, leading to the hut of the Upper Yarra, my next night's abode.

It was a glorious morning, with a brilliant sun painting a wilderness of fluffy, benevolent clouds overhead, in a million tints of silver gray, and gold; and suffusing a huge ring of befoliated mountain ranges, fading in the distance, with a vivid, dazzling brightness. Already far beneath me, nestled a white speck near shimmering streak, the hotel on Walsh creek. It needed no barometric readings to forecast a delightful day of sunshine and breezes, with Apollo and not Jupiter in charge of the weather.

The more I climbed, the more extensive, and the more fascinating became the panorama. Ranges after ranges, beyond, and over ranges of tree clad heights, shading from the darkest green, through an infinite variety to hues of the palest of blue, spread as far as eye could see, framing countless exquisite valleys carpeted with living verdant foliage. On all sides were lovely ferns, some, at least, thrice the height of normal man, yet looking like pigmies beside the gigantic gums and wattles that towered in the air. Water was everywhere in the form of streams, brooks, creeks, and miniature falls; but alas, in all the emerald, gelatinous tadpole was bathing in over whelming numbers.

Towards noon the sun was becoming hotter and hotter, my pack heavier and heavier, and my thirst even more distressing. The numerous gullies shaded by a multitude of green, live lace, gigantic umbrellas, in through, and over which the zigzagging path was leading me; cool, moist, and slippery were beginning to lose their charm and to mock my distress. The countless, delightful bowers, shaded by exuberant foliage of every

description, dripping with liquid drops, were beginning to madden me. Would this moist, luxuriant carnival of foliage never end!

Resolutely, I lowered my pack on a fallen trunk of a rushing stream. Tadpoles notwithstanding, I would drink. The cool, delicious liquid made me forget in a moment the emerald population, and I drank until I could drink no more. What a fool I had been, carrying into the bush the refinements of city taste. I learnt a very good lesson and I paid for it.

Having quenched my thirst, I realized that I was hungry. A few steps brought me to one of the many tree trunks that the fire of nineteen twenty six had laid low, and I sat down for a four course dinner; bread, eggs, cheese, and chocolate. Again at peace with myself and the world, and in perfect harmony with my surroundings, I stretched myself out on the trunk hoping by complete relaxation to ease the pain in my now swollen shoulders. To my great consternation, I was beginning to develop an active, blind hatred against the knapsack. I simply detested to carry it; only the fear of starvation restrained me from leaving it behind.

Half an hour's rest, and I was again walking, pack and all, forcing my way through the shrub covered path; trying my best to dodge the intrepid, almost invisible lizards. How these tiny reptiles made me jump when I first saw them transformed from motionless twigs into terror driven racers. Most of my admiration for protective coloration threatened to vanish on hearing their repeatedly interrupted rustling through the shrubs. Then they began to dart across the path, and after I had assured myself they were not poisonous snakes, but affrighted lizards, I continued to walk, quite reconciled, once more, to the laws of nature, and marveling at the great number of reptiles that were forever rushing by me. They outnumbered the tadpoles and the flies, and that is going some.

Although I had become philosophically resigned to the flies, there were moments when I could have exterminated the whole innocent species, because of a few defaulters in their midst. These were the giants of the race, atleast half an inch in length, who had discovered to my sorrow, when I was most vulnerable and took full advantage of it. No sooner did I focus my camera, when they began their treacherous work. With each snap of the camera, they flew off, leaving behind a painful sting, and an angry feeling of balked revenge. Since I focussed, at least, a dozen times at various spots before capturing a choice view, their opportunities were many, and so were their stings.

Still at war with the blood thirsty diptera, I came upon two hoboos, or tramps around a fire, boiling tea. From them I learnt that I was just half way; and still had eight miles to cover. To their undisguised surprise, I took the information with a pleased smile, continuing the walk I had not interrupted, and which I was just beginning to really enjoy. The lizards no longer frightened me; thirst no longer tormented me; the whistling whips that rent the air, I had made sure were caused not by hidden hunters, but by small gray birds; I had become part of the bush, vibrant with life and song; I was in tune with nature at its very best.

Perhaps it was the superabundance of life on all sides, insects, reptiles, birds, weeds, ferns, gums; the terrific struggle for existence, the colossal competition for living room, that was all around me, which called up a sudden feeling of admiration for the genius of Darwin, who could prove a single fundamental principle in such chaos. The minute lizard lead me back in fancy to his ancient ancestor, the mammoth scale armoured reptile, who made the earth tremble whenever he moved. How puny, prehistoric Adam must have quaked each time a Dinosaur stretched himself. Even the elements were for him fiends and demons. Here I almost felt a personal gratitude to old Thales for having guessed the natural cause of phenomena. For him Parmenides was but a step, how could he with eternal change conceive an unchanging reality. Nevertheless, Spinoza's pantheism

seemed very real in the bush with all the myriads of sounds fused in a complete whole. The rustling of the leaves, the gurgling of the brooks, the whistling of the birds, the buzzing of the insects had all merged into one, the soul of the bush.

Thus promenading in imagination through the ages, I know not how long I walked, when I stopped dead with a sharp gasp, my stick suspended in the air, my eyes glued on the ground a few inches in front of my left foot, my mind a blank. The next moment a horrified, broken whisper escaped my lips, "A snake!"

Even as the power to think returned to me still standing rooted to the spot, the five motionless, black coils, on which my eyes were riveted, straightened out successively and, almost touching my toes, a thirty six inch snake, at least an inch wide, undulated on its white belly into its natural habitat, rustling frantically through the dense bushes.

What an abject coward I was. Even the snake had recovered himself, from the shock of the unexpected, more quickly than I, and had sought safety in flight, while I stood fixed to the ground.

A few moments later, thoroughly disgusted with myself, I started to walk, and with a single blow of my stick snapped in two the very first branch in my path. This delayed reaction failed, however, to reestablish either my self respect or my equilibrium. To think that the mere sight of a few, dark, motionless coils could paralyze me with fear; and I was one to scoff at the superstition of others. Could I but understand why I was still terror stricken every time the bushes rustled, and why, persistently, all the twigs and branches in my path continued to turn into serpents. The bush had now lost all its beauty for me. Danger, imminent and threatening lurked at every step. I looked at my watch; it was only three thirty.

An eternity I walked, my eyes searching every inch of ground before me, and my ears keyed up to every sound around me. Then very gradually, the sinister forebodings that haunted me began to disappear. By four o'clock I was again completely indifferent to the countless noises in the overgrown, shrub covered path, and eagerly seeking a spot I could capture with my camera, a souvenir of the fire ravaged bush.

For now the scenery had changed. Huge trees, or rather, the blackened remains of what were once trees, lay scattered like a fallen army, singly and in groups on all sides. Charred veterans, scores of feet in circumference and a couple of hundred feet in height, still towered in the air, mockingly displaying a few green leaves on aborted branches, encircling like wreaths their dead or dying trunks. More or less successfully, nature seemed trying to reclaim the beauty of the forest, by hiding scorched scars of thousands of veterans, with green leafy creepers of every description.

One huge valley that must have been guarded by towering beeches and wattles, and shaded by luxuriant ferns, before the great enemy of the bush blazed forth its lurid, flaming, triumphant race of death and destruction through the thriving, green forest, was now covered with wild, yellow flowers forming in the fading light, a gorgeous shroud of bright gold, over the carbonized giants of old.

Towards six, I had to admit to myself that I was dead tired. The evening shadows were beginning to fall; my feet were beginning to sag, feeling as if they were relieving old Atlas at his weary post; and everywhere, as far as eye could see, were the singed ghosts fallen, and doomed of the conquered forest; and nowhere, as far as eye could see, was there a hut, or the ghost of one.

At six thirty, however, turning automatically another of the countless spurs of the winding path, I stopped in sheer delight. Before me a scene that only fairyland could reveal.

I was right above a vale of tarnished gold, with the most delicate of foliage, in fascinating overabundance, draping white giants whose tops

reached the very summits; a dream of fine, beautifully interwoven twigs bearing real, and not magic leaves, as dainty as the choicest of venetian lace; and right in the midst of this riot of delicate hues, bathed by the parting rays of the vanishing sun, and clinging to the mountain side, I spied a real red hut.

Fifteen minutes later, letting my pack slide gently from my shoulders, I sank on the door step of the "Upper Falls" hut with thousands of miles of valleys and summits of forest all around me; with millions of boisterous jack daws raising the devil's own racket in the air above me, and Pan and his klan only know, with how many snakes in the ground under me.

For an hour or more, I continued to lean against the door, dreamily grazing on the scene before me.

On my right, the setting sun just disappearing behind the tree fringed summits; on my left, the rising moon, accompanied by the evening star, just peeping over the irregular mountain crest; between them, the fairy valley now changed to luminous ivory; and above them, the borrowed rays of the one and the fading rays of the other performing an invisible dance on a parade of rapidly moving, magnificent clouds, screened by live, dark lace delicately silhouetted on a background of flaming copper, shading off to the palest of pink, the ensemble making a picture of such ravishing beauty that I completely failed to note the flight of time.

When darkness had swallowed the gayest part of this fascinating spectacle, transforming it into something softer, less striking, yet withal even more entrancing, a vision of the big night, a nocturne in phantom blacks and moonshine whites, I roused myself as from a trance, entered the hut, found a couple of clean tins on a wooden bench, and hurried down the creek for water.

Returning to the hut, by the light of an almost full moon, and to the tumultuous jazz band discord of a thousand querulous jackdaws, I ate my cold three course dinner. The fresh cold water, the stale dry bread, and the nut chocolate dessert made a repast I little relished. With a fleeting image of the fine dinner they were all having at home, I again leaned against the doorpost; and thus another hour passed.

About nine, feeling rather refreshed, I decided to take a picture of the moon between the leafy tree. Unfortunately, the trees and the moon were not moving in the same system of relativity, and the latter kept playing hide and seek so rapidly between the former, that I finally got tired of focussing and refocussing on Luna between the leaves and gave up.

Finding a rough seat in the hut, however, I carried it out; and after several attempts succeeded in focussing on a view of bushland that would have put to shame the greatest etching on earth. Having timed it for an hour, I sat down to keep guard; lest a fox or any other prowler of the night come and upset the mechanical artist etching by moonlight. So very slowly did the moments crawl, however, and so very unsatiable did the mosquitoes seem, that thirty minutes later my patience exhausted, I closed the aperture and retired into the hut.

On entering this tiny man made structure, my first impulse was to get out quickly into the fresh air; the unlimited spaces, and the open, clear sky. How I should have loved to have slept with that starry dome for a roof, and the myriads of trees for companionship; but I felt that with the hut near me, I would be tempting providence if I slept in the open, and there was that ultimatum from snakedom. Not that I was sure that the hut, being official ground was free from serpents; but the very fact that a hut had been erected meant that some danger lurked without the wooden planks. With a feeling of regret, however, I bolted the door, for that meant locking out the fragrant air, and after the vast spaces, the close atmosphere in the weatherboard enclosure was stifling. Undecided, I looked around me. Three rooms were at my disposal, any one of which I

could turn into a bedroom chamber. To be sure rules had been formulated and proclaimed as "Gentlemen," on the door on the left, and "Ladies," on the door to the right; still I could please myself, as no one was there to enforce rules. After glancing at the two raised stretchers in the men's room, and at the two upright ones in the common room, with its huge fireplace and large pile of wood, I decided to sleep in the ladies' room, because it was the cleaner, having apparently never been used before. Atleast, not one of the four or five stretchers in it was put up. Without a moment's hesitation, I decided to put one up, a momento of the erstwhile visit of a member of the weaker sex, but I was to learn better. The stretchers were made to be put together either by a dragon with many arms, or by atleast, two bipeds with a pair each.

I had never tried before to put up a stretcher with legs that fold up like a trap. How I labored, and how I failed. First, I tried putting on one end, but the moment I half lifted the other end, the whole thing collapsed with an unholy clatter. Next, I tried to turn the completed ensemble; having fitted the four legs into the canvas upside down, but on the very point of success it all flew apart. Undaunted, I tried another stretcher, and still another always with the same sorry result. Finally, I almost caught my hand in the trap that snapped together viciously; a vision of a septic finger or two in the bush, with no other antiseptic than oil of eucalyptus, made me give up the attempt, and I decided to spend the night in the "Gentlemen's" room. Nevertheless, I was fully determined that one hut of the three should have an erect stretcher in the ladies room, no matter how long it would take me to put one up, or how many fingers it might cost me; but I left it for the last hut, when neither fingers nor time would be very important.

Having closed the single window, latched the door, brushed off the cigarette ashes from one of the stretchers, folded up and placed my costume for a cushion, wrapped myself up in the blanket, and curled up on the hard, hard canvas, I tried to fall asleep. In vain, it was too cold, and the cries of the bush, unfamiliar, and strange held my attention.

Every now and then something struck the roof or walls with terrific force, and flung itself or was flung against the door with tremendous momentum. Here and there a queer noise, neither avian nor human disturbed the troubled night. The jackdaws continued to quarrel and to scold without, and the insects to hum and buzz within.

Suddenly, a glowing, round, yellow eye appeared in the wall opposite me, followed by a couple more. For one moment, I was startled, the next I realized that it was the moon beams peeping through the many round holes. Between the two moments, spiritualism seemed quite a probability to me. Nor had I laid the ghost of spiritualism at once.

For some time, I had been admiring a magnificent landscape view on the wall, that had taken the place of the window. In the foreground stood a beautiful tree with leaves carved in moonlight, and the background was filled in with many trees getting smaller and smaller as they reached a distant, faintly outlined mountain. The view was so realistically portrayed, that it seemed as if the master artist had actually taken part of the bush and inclosed it within the window frame, making a unique, live tableau. A belligerent mosquito attracted my attention when I looked again; I could hardly believe my eyes. The beautiful tree had disappeared; three small ones now stood in its place, making as beautiful but quite a different picture. Another, or the same mosquito, got busy again. When I glanced at the window, I found that the small trees had moved to the right, and the big tree appeared at the left. This was magic a la bush with a vengeance. The moving landscape was beautiful beyond words, but I was feeling none too easy at the frequent transformations. Could it be the spirits of the millions of trees gone up in sacrifice to old father Vulcan, that were dancing the midnight reve? Just then, I happened to move, and in a thrice solved the uncanny riddle. In the tiny

hut, in the vast bush, I had reconstructed the pre Copernican situation; my own actual movements made the apparent movements in the trees: I had drawn a wrong conclusion and paid the inexorable price of ignorance.

Now that I had explained away everything, I could have slept, but the intense cold drove sleep away. So I took out the twelve hours of light stored in my electric battery, and the thousand years of darkness stored in my book, and conquered the cold. Watching the cruel peasant sap in his drunken frenzy, every ion of spirituality, nay, of humanity from his wife and children; following the gradual awakening of benumbed, poisoned souls blindly groping for light and hope; rejoicing with gradually emancipated spirits in the triumph of their great sacrifices, in their heroic strivings towards a nobler social life, I was transported beyond the realm of physical discomforts.

At one, I closed my book, my light, and my eyes, and was soon fast asleep.

Suddenly I woke up. It was still quite dark, and I was stiff with the freezing cold that filled the empty room. I looked at my watch. It was almost four.

What should I do?

It was certainly too early to get up. It was positively too late to make a fire. To be sure, I still had the book, but with the long walks ahead of me, I felt that I should sleep atleast two more hours, besides I wished to conserve the light, for there was every possibility of my getting lost in the bush, notwithstanding my self confidence. I twisted on the light. Besides myself, the many insects, the extra stretcher, and the knapsack, there was nothing else in the room. Then I had an idea.

I got up, and donned my hiking costume skirt and coat, thanking my good genius that it was pure, honest, one hundred per cent Australian wool; placed my knapsack under my head, glad for once that it was well stuffed; pulled the blanket completely over me; and much more comfortable, though still shivering a little, I fell asleep.

When next I woke, the room was flooded with sunshine; the night was no more; the mosquitoes had vanished, the food in my knapsack was probably all crushed; but all was well with the world.

My first thought was that I had slept in, but to my great relief both hands of my watch pointed just beyond six. Off the stretcher in a single bound, I began to hustle.

With towel and soap in one hand and an empty tin can in the other, I hurried down the creek. In sheer amazement, I gazed on the countless ferns packed closely together, nestling beneath the towering mountain ash, covered with exquisite miniature leaves, and on a wooden bridge continuing the winding path, over the crystal water, towards the mountains of the moon. I must have tired indeed, the night before, to have seen in this delightful spot nothing but shallow water, slippery pebbles, and an army of unwelcome tadpoles.

Returning to the hut, I consumed, in the open, my meagre breakfast, feasting my full on the now changed scene around me.

Bathed by the penetrating sunlight more and more distant, pale, and still paler summits stood out, framing the dark ring of green clad mountains that encircled the bronze, gossamer draped valley. Through the tops of the mountain giants, gum, ash, and beech raced an endless array of magnificently illuminated clouds, lined by the hidden sun, with dazzling silver, forming an ever changing display of misty foam and brilliant lights.

Without the least doubt, a bright, sunny, rainless day was ahead of me. With a fervent prayer of thanks to old Jupiter for holding back his thunder, I shouldered the knapsack, took up stick and tin can in one hand, camera in the other, and very light of heart resumed the path.

As I walked the surrounding began to change. Gradually, green, live trees obliterated all vestige of the great bush tragedy, and soon not a



single charred ghost remained to mar the splendor of the forest. Before long I was faced with a problem, the single path divided into two, one leading to the summit, the other straight ahead. Though fully aware that the straight path often leads to nowhere, yet influenced by the eloquent pressure of the knapsack on my sensitive shoulders, I turned into it.

Nor was I sorry for once I had followed the path of least resistance, it was leading me straight into a fern festival. Millions of them were there, bright green, widely spread, climbing everywhere, reaching the very summits, and covering everything with an emerald, embroidered, satin carpet.

Soon, however, I began to doubt the wisdom of my choice, for the path was becoming even more treacherous. Looking down I was startled to find that I was walking on a ledge over a gaping precipice. Prickly growths of every description, thickly overhanging the narrow path made progress difficult and dangerous. In parts, I had to fight my way through dense, resistant overgrowths, often clinging to the thorny shrubs to save myself from instant precipitation into the yawning chasm below. Finally, there was no path, and I walked on the slope between the bushes until I reached a cleared area that proved even more dangerous than the rest, being mainly of shifting pebbles and rotting roots.

Gradually but surely the conviction was forcing itself upon me that I had chosen the wrong path and that I would have to retrace my footsteps and pick up the right path at the parting of the ways. Nevertheless, I continued to move cautiously forward hoping against hope to pick up the path further on, and then I stopped. I had stumbled upon the gem of the bush, the gorge or canyon of the falls.

A narrow liquid veil, several hundred feet long, sparkling with a million brilliant droplets, thundering down into the darkness a thousand feet below; half a dozen foaming and spraying cascades scattered on the rocks at various levels, breaking into miniature fountains, and prismatically tinted fluid clusters, held me spellbound.

As I continued to walk, the roar of the falling waters became even more deafening resembling the thunder of the Canadian horse shoe, and soon I came to a dead stop. I was right on the giant fall racing madly over a mammoth rock as smooth as glass.

Turning to retrace my footsteps, I paused in sheer delight, fairly intoxicated with the perfect wilderness, and superb grandeur of the scene.

A sky of saturated blue; an amphitheatre of towering fern bedecked heights; a magnificent sparkling veil flanked by scintillating crystal bouquets, perpetually performing on a mammoth stage, facing a break in the befoliated rocks revealing tiers of distant mountain summits, the furthest a clear opal lost in the azure sky; what more gorgeous a casket could the bush have chosen for its best treasures, and is it any wonder that it guards it so well by obliterating all paths to it and making intrusion almost impossible.

It was just nine, when I reached once more the meeting point of the three paths. In the short interval of a century of minutes, I had visited the gem of the bush.

Now I began to climb. On my right was the verdant amphitheatre with its rocks and falls; on my left, several hundred feet below, was the shimmering meandering river, cradled by mountain ranges with summits lost in the blue sky; and everywhere beneath the beech, between the gums, under the ash, through the braken, crept the bright green, open work, gigantic umbrellas touching the mountain tops. Watching the constantly enlarging vistas of undulations, foliage, and harmonious colours, I kept on, rising ever rising, without paying much heed to the passage of time. Suddenly, looking on the right, I stopped in amazement.

It seemed hours and hours, since I had left the canyon of the falls, yet I was actually standing right above a wonderful, narrow, snow white

band, adorning the center of a huge rock, a white moving miracle in a live, giant green bowl. Was I looking at the gem of the bush in its complete rare setting, or was this another of nature's wonders?

According to my watch, it was already eleven. I had walked slowly, for climbing was stiff work. I could hardly imagine that it had taken two hours to cover so little ground. At this rate of walking, I would be lucky if I would reach the hut by five, the time when the evening shadows begin to fall in the thickly befoliated forest with its weeping bowers, and its whispering gullies. I began to put on a little more speed, but I soon had to ease up. Somehow I was very tired and compelled to take frequent rests.

Gradually, even the flora began to change, the trees here and there reaching tremendous heights, making the giants of the lower regions look like pygmies, and now the occasional ferns appear like shrubs. As I continued to walk, more and more of the super trees appeared, and the relatively dwarfed giants with their luxuriant foliage began to vanish, taking with them the joyous, exhilarating sounds of the avian musicians.

Right here, I began to lose my bearings, and to be faced with problems.

In 1907 Sir J.K. Jensen, a member of the Melbourne Walking Club also undertook the walk from Warburton to Walhalla. The following is a description of part of that walk related to what is now in the Yarra Ranges National Park.

"My first extended walking tour was over the Baw Baw Mountains in February, 1907. Huts had not been erected, there was practically no track other than remains of the old mining track, with an occasional ancient triangular blaze mark overgrown with bark. As far as my information goes we were the first tourists to traverse by foot the now well known Baw Baw track.

We would not be bothered with equipment - it was only 51 miles between hotels, "to sleep out for one night was nothing" - and so with military haversacks containing a few necessities we set off intending to get food on the way. We had no information and no map. We were young and had confidence in ourselves. Those were the days!

We left the train at Launching Place and walked to Warburton - vastly different now from 25 years ago. The next day we took the road to McVeigh's, and experienced for the first time the sumptuous hospitality of that resort. At tea five courses were served, and we thought of that meal more than once during the following days.

The next morning we started off with some sandwiches in our haversack; these were intended for lunch, tea, and breakfast the following morning. We would be at Walhalla for lunch on the second day! "It was only 51 miles," we said, "and we can do that easily in a day and a half."

We reached Contention Gully at lunch time. The Quartz battery was working at the time, but nobody knew anything of the country beyond. The hot day conduced to a steady pace only, and we had no idea of the mileage. We did not realise, therefore, that we had not got very far when we reached the Falls Creek about tea time. We decided to camp there, and as we had just killed a snake we camped on an island in the middle of the stream. In 1923 that island was gone, and there was only one channel, but in 1907 there were two channels divided by about 15 feet of a beautiful little island.

We lit a large fire and ate most of our sandwiches. There was not much left for breakfast, but "we would be in Walhalla for lunch!" We had no covering except a few sheets of brown paper, and it was a miserable night.

We ate our scanty breakfast and moved off. On the inadequate food the heavy climb out of Falls Creek was not particularly cheering, but we plugged on. About half way up our interest and hunger were excited by the bones of a rib of beef. The explanation for this came some days later.

The Tourist guidebook Picturesque Victoria, November 1912 also had a description of the Warburton to Walhalla walk as follows.

The Warburton-Walhalla trip via the Yarra Falls and Mount Baw Baw.

The recutting and repairing of the track between the above mentioned points, and the building of rest houses at suitable distances en route, has made available for the tourist traffic a round trip through one of the most magnificent mountain districts of Victoria. The distance from Warburton to Walhalla is 71 miles, and the total milage of the trip, Melbourne to Melbourne, is 225, made up as follows:-

Melbourne to Warburton (rail)	48 miles
Warburton to McVeigh's (coach)	20 miles
McVeigh's to Walhalla (horse or on foot)	51 miles
Walhalla to Melbourne (rail)	106 miles

The morning train from Melbourne daily connects tri weekly with the coach from Wood's Point, leaving the township shortly after the arrival of the train, and by this coach tourists may travel as far as McVeigh's Hotel at Walsh's Creek, where they are due to arrive at 3.15 p.m. The coach road skirts the course of the Yarra the whole way to the hotel, crossing a number of tributary streams, the most important of which are Big Pat's Creek and Mc Mahon's Creek.

Shortly after leaving Warburton the bush grows more dense, and some beautiful glimpses of bush and river scenery are obtained en route. At McMahan's Creek the last post office and store up the Yarra is passed, 61 miles from town and about 6 miles farther on is Reefton, once a busy mining centre, but now almost deserted. Owing to the poorness of the soil, the trees here are only of moderate size, but in season the pink and white native heath blooms freely. It is not a lengthy run from Reefton to McVeigh's, and here a bridge crosses the Yarra, which is at this point a rushing shallow stream about 30 feet wide. This hotel, with its excellent accommodation and reasonable tariff, forms a splendid headquarters from which to explore the beauty of the surrounding district during a few days' stay. It lies 1000 ft. above sea level.

At the hotel, horses may, if desired, be procured for the trip across the ranges. The track after leaving McVeigh's winds along the southern bank of the Yarra - now almost level with the water's edge, and anon rising several hundred feet to cross a projecting spur. At Alderman's Creek, 3 miles out, a track branches through some of the finest timber country in the State - from one giant alone, felled in the bush, 10,000 6 ft. palings were obtained. Five miles farther, Contention Creek is reached, and a noticeable feature is a quartz battery driven by the power derived from the water wheel on the creek, where gold mining is in progress. Shortly after leaving Contention Creek the first myrtles, or beeches, are seen. The track runs through very picturesque country right on to the first rest house, 14 miles from the hotel, and about 10 chains from the track. At this point are the splendid falls on the Falls Creek, close to the junction with the Yarra. The track is, owing to the steepness of the hillsides, a difficult one to follow to the head of the falls; but the exertion is well repaid by the sight of the descending water, which drops in a succession of leaps to a total depth of about 750 feet. The creek on which these falls occur rises on the northern slope of Mount Baw Baw, and is at this part a stream of considerable volume. The spur above the falls rises to a height of 3000 feet., and farther along the track, leading on to the Thompson River and Mount Baw Baw, the general elevation of the plateau is 5000 ft. The night can be comfortably

spent in the shelter of the rest house, where wire mattresses stretchers have been provided, and cooking utensils, etc. etc., stocked for the use of wayfarers. In this rest house are six of the stretchers; the next has four and the one nearest Walhalla six also. The utensils provided include billies, pannikins, a fryingpan, and a couple of buckets for the carrying of water. It is requested.

May the Minister in his dreams kindly remember the Yarra Track and assist to bring back some of its departed glories by a voice to put it in order.

1896

Marysville

[From our own correspondent]

Nov 21st

The settlement of the question of the Yarra Track and Warburton's one sided notion has caused great satisfaction to the mine holders and independent diggers of the "up the road" branch of the community, and they think it is a blessing to get out of the clutches of an autocratic shire into one that has the good of the ratepayers at heart and will further their interests by keeping in repair the roads and etc., that pass through their plot in Victoria.

The "Golden Bower and Star" case is to be heard some time in February or March 1897, so that the acknowledged true reef of the district is to remain idle whilst the Melbourne sharks and wits get their share.

The owner of the Olive, on Bear's Creek, Mr. Preacher, is ill in Melbourne and it is feared that when in his present weak state the "smart men about town" will try their by no means prentice hands" on him.

The Santa Claus, Bear's Creek - Mr. Ely is still engaged driving tunnel and has cut several leaders carrying good prospects. The depth is 257 feet, and has cut a sandstone wall supposed to be a footwall of dyke. Water is making freely in the face, which is a sign that the lode is very close. This is the lease on which the prospector, Mr. Ely, can show from one to four ounce prospects in the trenches on the surface.

The British Mount Morgan is sinking shaft. This claim is about a quarter of a mile north of the Victorian Mount Morgan.

Mr. McKechnie, prospector of the Victorian Mount Morgan, has another good show on Briton Creek. He took up an abandoned lease, the Briton, anclose to the source of the river. Acting on the advice of Mr. Gregory and Professor Kernot, we determined to follow the later plan.

Our party numbered six, viz.; - Messrs. Frost (leader), Ashworth, Best, Lyell, Searle, and Spencer, with Fred. Kirby in charge of stores and horses, of which we had two. We thus included in our number botanical and reptilian, insect, bird, and general collectors, and were fully prepared for hard work and good finds, if only the weather should prove favourable. We may say at once that, even if special arrangements for our discomfort had been made, it could scarcely have been worse during the greater portion of the time, and that owing to this, collecting was well-nigh impossible in just the part of the district in which we hoped for most. Here also we must mention our indebtedness to our assistant, Fred. Kirby, who spared himself no trouble - often under very trying circumstances - to make the trip a success, and whose assistance any future party of this Club will be fortunate in securing. We had sent our luggage on by road the day before we left Melbourne intending to catch it up at Marysville, and thence to take the dray on as far as we could before having recourse to packing.

On Friday, 21st November, we took the early train to Healesville, one member of the party having preceded us. The coach drive from the latter

place to Marysville is well known, and there can be few more beautiful roads in Victoria than that leading from Fernshaw over the Black Spur.

By the roadside between Healesville and Fernshaw, with the exception of the *Pultenaea* in flower, there is little colour in the scrub, stray specimens of the Fringe Lily (*Arthropodium tuberosum*), *Dianella longifolia*, *Thelymitra longifolia*, and *Caladenia carnea* being noted. As the coach passes along we see, amongst birds, the Spotted Ground Thrush by no means infrequent in the scrub, the Sacred Kingfisher, the White-backed Magpie, Pennant's Parrakeet, the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, the Pallid Cuckoo, the Rufus-fronted Fantail, the Brown Hawk, and, of course, the Laughing Jackass. The hill butterfly, *Epinephile abeona*, is also noticed. Seven miles brings us to Fernshaw, or rather the site of Fernshaw, which is now a township of the past. Boyle's and Jefferson's are represented simply by the remnants of a solitary brick chimney, and we only pause long enough to change coaches before beginning to climb up the Black Spur. It is a lovely day, and from the coach top we look beyond the deep gully at our feet, filled with ferns and cotton-wood, hazel, musk, dog-wood, and sassafras, away to the ranges of the blue hills round about and beyond Mt. Juliet. As the gully thins out near the summit of the crest it becomes bordered with old and gnarled beech trees (*Fungus cunninghami*), and the road leads through a forest of large white gums, high up in the fork of one of which is perched a tree fern. On the northern slope the country becomes much poorer, with smaller gums and somewhat sparser scrub, until the comfortable Narbethong Hotel, kept by Mrs. Miller, is reached. During a short halt the moths *Agarista lewenii* and *latinus* and *Camptagramma correlata* are captured, and the caterpillars of the moth *Nola lugens* are noticed in a half-brown state, whilst those near Melbourne have already emerged. Then we start again for Marysville. Beyond the Acheron - a good stream of water flowing into the Goulburn Valley - the road rises for some miles. Two miles this side of Marysville the lonely and neglected cemetery, out in the wild bush, is passed, and then, looking down from the crest of the ridge, we can see through the trees the little township in the valley beneath, with the high hills in the Mt. Arnold district, away in the distance. Keppel's Hotel is of course our head quarters, and having an hour or two to spare we wander along the track leading to Stevenson Falls, which, owing to the recent rains are in splendid condition. There is little to note in the way of natural history, beyond the capture of a fine but unfortunately mutilated specimen of the extremely rare moth, *Arhodia tutosaria*. The evening is spent in making preparations, after the arrival of the stores, for a start in the morning, and by two of us in attempting to catch bears. The missile intended to bring down a bear cannons harmlessly off the latter, and brings down instead the head of one of our party, necessitating a little amateur surgery.

22ND NOVEMBER.- We leave some of our stores in the safe charge of Mrs. Keppel, and start out along the Wood's Point road, being assured that we shall never get anywhere near the Yarra Falls. At one time, when the Wood's Point diggings were in full working order, the road from Marysville was an important one, and well kept, but now it is falling into a bad state, and sees but little traffic. This is more to be regretted because it passes through beautiful scenery, and is in parts very picturesque. Just outside Marysville is Rubbly Hill, steep and well worthy of its name. The roadside is bright, in parts, with purple patches of *Tetratheca ciliata*, and everywhere shrubs of *Aotus villosa* are gay with orange-coloured masses of blossom, but perhaps the prettiest flower is that of a species of *Eriostemon*, white, with sometimes a tinge of pale pink. Occasionally we pass clumps of large white gums and blackwood, sometimes the blue gum is seen, but the most common forms are species *fissilis* and *melliodora*. The road passes up the ridge, keeping to the high ground, and runs at first almost due east towards Mt. Arnold. Some

four miles out of Marysville we find ourselves looking over a deep valley filled with acacias and the usual rich scrub, whilst up the opposite mountain side runs a remarkable sassafras gully. With the exception of just this cleft, triangular in form with its long-drawn-out apex reaching nearly to the hill top, the whole steep hillside is covered with gums, the sparse foliage of which forms a strong contrast to that of the closely packed sassafras tree, with their dense and bright green mass of leaves - each tree of the typical cone shape. The road turns sharply and crosses the head of the valley; as it does so we once more get into the region of beech trees, which border all the valleys falling away to the north and south of the ridge along which we are passing. Another mile brings us to a sharp turn in the road, known as Tommy's Bend, just beyond which we halt for the midday rest.

Along the road collecting had begun as soon as Marysville was left. Two specimens of the Pink-breasted Robin were taken and the Coach-whip Bird, the Brown Tree Creeper, the Siriated Acanthiza, and the Bronze Cuckoo noted.

So far as insects were concerned the weather - it is too cold - is not too promising. The flowering shrubs of *Aotus* and *Pultenaea* yield nothing to the umbrella except a few specimens of a red-coloured *Corculio* (*Rhinotia*, sp.) Numerous upturned logs yield little, but under the bark of the trees we meet with somewhat better success. The best capture made is that of two specimens of the rare Leucanid beetle, *Ceratognathus westwoodii*. A very fine dipterous fly is also secured, name unknown, with a body of black and yellow, and posterior legs fully three inches in length. Amongst butterflies, *Xenica hobartia* and *Lycoena erinus* are secured, and amongst moths *Symmoea herodiella*.

The road where we have halted is of a broken down corduroy nature and runs through the belt of beech trees bordering the small stream by its side. A short distance further on we pass down a sharp descent, cross a clear stream of water, and begin the ascent of what is locally known as Mount Arnold. This forms a long gradual rise for some three or four miles, in nowise worthy of the name of "mountain."

On the flat, by the water's edge, we find under logs specimens of the land planarians, *Geoplana alba* and *spenceri*.

To our left as we ascend the hill lies a deep gully alive with Lyre Birds. In the scrub *Acanthizas* and Pennant's Parrakeets are flying about, and the flowers *Pultenaeas*, *Aotus*, *Daviesia*, *Tetratheca*, and *Eriostemon* are common - white, yellow, and purple being the characteristic colours here and everywhere - yellow much the commonest. Throughout the whole trip we scarcely see a red flower, not meeting even with a single specimen of the orchid *Dipodium punctatum*. When once the crest is reached the road begins to descend rapidly into the valley of the Cumberland Creek, and just over the crest we stop to photograph what is undoubtedly the finest piece of the road. On the left side the hill runs up covered with a dense growth of tree ferns, above which again tower the white gums. Just in this spot is what is known as the "Queen's Hut," a log-house for the accommodation of roadmen. A more picturesque spot could not have been chosen.

From this part of the road follows the top of the ridge of the Dividing Range running in a general south-easterly direction, and forming the boundary line between the county of Evelyn on the south and Wonnangatta on the north. Half our party makes a detour to see and photograph the Cumberland Falls, lying on the south side of the road. There is unfortunately no track made to them; and, with our cameras, we go through the scrub where the wood-splitters have been at work, and then, with strong assistance from the force of gravity, manage to get to the bottom of the deep gorge, down the head of which the falls tumble. The trees meet overhead, keeping the valley dark and cool, and the falls, with their setting of tree ferns, are certainly more beautiful than those of

the Stevenson River, though anyone takes the trouble to go and see them. To get a photograph the camera must be balanced on a fallen log, the operator finding footing where he can. Even when balancing is satisfactorily done there remains the difficulty of taking anything like an adequate view of a scene where the tree ferns wave gaily about in the darkness of the foreground, whilst behind them is a falling mass of water, the upper part of which, some distance away in a slanting direction, is brightly illuminated with sunlight. The photographs taken by no means do justice to the scene, which is really a beautiful one.

Daylight is falling fast as we reach the top of the gorge and regain the road. A small clearing in the trees gives us a view in the sunset across the Cumberland and away to the main valley of the Yarra, down towards which all the hill-ranges dip, every one clothed to its summit with dense forest. Some three miles further on, close to where the Yarra track passes southward to Reefton, we find the tent put up and are soon enjoying our evening meal and rest.

23RD NOVEMBER.- We are up early (4a.m.), being anxious to press on as far as possible and to reach the Traveller's rest by evening, close to which the Tanjil track passes off. The road is in very bad condition, suitable only for bullock teams and drivers with the necessary vocabulary at their command. First we have to fill up especially deep ruts with logs, and then watch anxiously to see whether the horses can manage to pull the drays through a nasty bit of bog. A short distance, which has taken some length of time to traverse, brings us to an open piece of ground with a closed-up house, which was once known as the "Scandinavians," the custom of which must have completely fallen off as Wood's Point declined. After consultation, we decide that it will be much the quicker way for us to leave the dray behind and to pack on; so, choosing a sheltered spot among the ferns, we stow away what we can spare, trusting to find the things safe on our return. This occupies some time, and it is past midday when we begin to trap again. Pennant's Parrakeets and Pink and Yellow-breasted Robins are frequently seen, and Mountain Thrushes and Striated and Spotted Pardalotes not uncommon, whilst the valleys resound with the notes of the Lyre Bird, and the Gang Gang Cockatoos call harshly to one another in the tops of the trees. We cross the heads of many gullies, the creeks in which fall away northwards towards the Goulburn or southwards to the Yarra; and, where the forest opens out a little, we get fine views of the near and distant ranges. The scrub is very thick, and on the flowering asters the fine butterfly, *Papilio macleayanus*, is captured. A number of fine specimens of both sexes of *Xenica hobartia* are captured. This is by no means a common butterfly, and we are fortunate in securing for the first time the male, the capture of which has not before been recorded. A pair has since been given to the National Museum. The shrubs are much the same as before, with here and there specimens of *Banksia collina* and *australis*. Amongst flower, those of species of *Pimelia*, *Daviesia*, *Hibbertia*, *Stackhousia*, *Wahlenbergia*, and one or two *Helichrysums*, are common, with little daisy-like *Brachycome*, whilst only a very few small and stunted specimens of *Epacris impressa* are seen. The absence of *Epacris* is noticeable everywhere along the track beyond Marysville. The prevailing colour, as usual, is yellow, relieved by patches of white *Eriostemon*, purple *Tetradlea*, and here and there the deep blue of *Comesperma volubile*.

There is little of special interest along the road until, about five o'clock, we come in sight of what was formerly known as the Royal Mail, but now as the Yarra Track Hotel. To this, a most comfortable wayside house, we shall return again; but at present our aim, though it is rather late, is to press on whilst daylight lasts; and after, with some difficulty, persuading one or two of our members to leave its comfortable shelter, we tramp on. There are still seven miles between us and the Travellers' Rest, and night falls before we have done much more than half

the distance. A sharp turn in the road brings us, about nine o'clock, to the top of a steep descent leading down to a stretch of somewhat level ground, in the centre of which we can see one solitary light twinkling, indicating that we are at our journey's end. We choose the best place available for a camp, and just have the tent up and supper ready when the rain begins to fall - a rain which it is just as well for us that we cannot tell that it is destined to continue for some days.

24TH NOVEMBER.- The morning breaks dark and misty, with a suspicious drizzle; towards 8, we start, it clears up slightly, and we hope for better things. Mr. and Mrs. Fehrig - a somewhat remarkable couple, the keepers of the so-called Travellers' Rest - come down to see us off. Two of our number are destined to see them again in the course of a few short hours. For three miles we keep to the road, save for the necessary detour through the bush, where a great freshly fallen gum tree completely blocks the road. At first the road leads round the head of a gully with beech trees, but then turns northward and crosses two or three ridges covered with poor gum trees and with scrub composed most largely of mountain ash (*Panax dendroides*), amongst which grow fine specimens of silver wattle. It is raining hard, and the country looks very dreary and forsaken when we emerge from the woods into an open part where the ground is covered with numberless fallen trees. Here the tanjil track turns off southwards along the ridge forming the watershed between the Thompson River on the east, in Tanjil County, and the Yarra on the west, in Evelyn County. The track was made by Government surveyors some years ago, and consists of a clearing twelve yards wide through the forest; gradually it has become blocked up by fallen timber and scrub never having since been cleared, and being now never used. It is, as we found, quite impracticable for horses, save for a short distance. Great trees have fallen in thick patches across the track, the scrub on either side and, in fact, often along the track is very dense, and to take a horse along would necessitate the constant cutting of new tracks round fallen timber, large detours having to be made.

We halt for a time and then pass into the scrub. The woods for the first part are composed of white gum and stringybark, with numerous small blue gum saplings in the scrub, but curiously not a single fully grown tree of this species was to be seen. Gradually the scrub closed in around us, and in torrents of rain we were climbing over logs and pushing our way through *Bursarias*, *Panax* shrubs, and *Asters* of various kinds. After a mile, and making several detours with the horses, we have to halt and cut through a fallen tree where the scrub and timber is too thick to force a way round them. We are drenched to the skin, and then after another mile find ourselves at the entrance to a gully blocked by the huge trunk of a fallen white gum. It is pretty miserable, and we clamber on to the trunk to try and see above the scrub where our track leads to. Two of our party, not seeing much chance of collecting in such a district, and under such climatic conditions, decide to turn back and seek shelter under the hospitable roof of Mr. and Mrs. Fehrig. Four of us, intent on somehow getting to the Falls, determine to go on, and pushing our way through the gully - attacked by numerous leeches - we mount a rise, and after a mile of hard work are glad to camp in a small open spot. The ground is thick with *Lomaria procera*, but, after cutting the scrub down, we put the tent up and attempt to light a fire. The rain seems to have penetrated to the interior of the logs, and it takes us two hours to get a good fire going; and then, for a short interval, it clears up, and we feel better. It is only for a short time, however, and then the rain comes down in torrents, and all night long pours down upon the tent.

25TH NOVEMBER.- We wake early to find it still drenching wet. Our billies and pannikins are arranged with care to intercept the main streams falling from the roof, and, surrounded by a sea of mud, we make ourselves as comfortable as we can - two of us smoking, two of us sleeping, and



waking only when summoned to meals. It is useless attempting to go out, so we make the best of it, and are by no means entirely miserable. Kirby's time is occupied in valiant struggles to keep the fire going, in which, much to our comfort and his own discomfort, he is successful. Work done, nil.

26TH NOVEMBER.- All through the night it had rained, and the morning breaks with little promise of anything better. We do not care to face the tramp to the Falls, for we saw that it was useless to take the horses any further, in such weather, and so determine to stay in camp another day to wait patiently for the morrow. Towards midday, to our joy, it clears up. We spend the time collecting in the scrub round about. The ash trees here and everywhere about the track have their leaves matted together by the webs of a tortix moth. The caterpillar is a large green and black one, and a number are taken home. Owing to inability, however, to obtain the food plant, only one has since emerged, and the imago proves to be a large red-brown moth with a double white line across each wing, and is as yet unnamed. Under fallen logs and the bark of the trees we are successful in finding numerous specimens of land planarians. The most common form is *Geoplana spenceri*. Next in abundance is a new species *G. dendyi*. The animal measures, at its greatest length, some 5 inches, and in width 0.25 inch. Its upper surface is usually of dark green colour, and its ventral somewhat lighter, with patches of blue along the median line, varying in extent in different animals. The tip has the orange colour typical of land planarians, whilst along the back run two light yellowish lines, separated from each other by a narrow median line and ground colour. The body when at rest has, in traverse section, a characteristic triangular shape. The sides of the body are covered with blue-white spots, easily seen under the lens. This species is common in these parts, and occurs on the high ground from the source of the Yarra back to nearly Marysville, though it has not as yet been found in the Yarra valley, where *G. spenceri* is plentiful.

In this same part we find another new form, which is now called *G. ftosti*, after the leader of our party. When at rest it is somewhat flat and leaf-like. Its upper surface is of a dark brown or green colour, with a bluish "bloom" like that of a fruit. The ventral surface is a light yellow coloured, with brown speckles, absent along the median line, and along the back run, as in *G. dendyi*, from which, however, it can be clearly distinguished by its light ventral surface and flattened shape when at rest.

In the same part we find stray specimens of *G. wahlalloe*, *G. alba*, *G. mediolineata*, and *G. sulphurea* (now for the first time recorded from Victoria, having only previously been found in New South Wales), together with two examples of the rare and curious Nemertean. This is worm-like in shape, and about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in length, with a light yellow coloured body and a brown stripe along its back. It lives under the bark of trees, and has the power of putting out a curious white proboscis from the anterior tip. This is shot out with great rapidity, and is, doubtless of use in catching its prey; at the same time, it appears to serve partly as an organ of locomotion. We watched the creature shoot out its proboscis, and then, fixing the extremity, use this as a fixed point on which to draw the body forward, the proboscis meanwhile gradually passing back into its sheath.

A pair of large Darelli caterpillars are found under the bark of a dead silver wattle. One has since emerged (9th January), and proves to be a variety of the well-known *Loelia australasie*, though much smaller than those to be found in Melbourne.

Under the logs and bark we find the customary collection of spiders, beetles, centipedes, and myriapods, together with those curious spider-like forms, the Phalangidae. Scorpions are very rare. Not uncommon also is a species of earth-worm belonging, apparently, to genus *Megascolides*

(probably a new species), and hence allied to the Giant Gippsland earthworm. It measures at most 8 inches in length and 3/4 inch in width.

Of spiders, all along the track species of the following genera are common on open webs:- *Epeira*, *Gasteracantha*, *Tetragnatha*, and *Argiope*, whilst the pretty little red-jewelled *Arcys*, with *Tholia*, *Linypha*, and *Tharpyna*, come into the umbrella when shaking shrubs for coleoptera. *Amaurobius* and *Clubonia* are found in holes and crevices in the bark of trees, where they form a small ragged sort of web outside, with a tubular structure leading into their retreat. Species of *Thomisus*, *Drassus*, *Lampona*, *Voconia*, *Xysticus*, and *Philodromus* are frequent under loose bark.

Associated with *Mygale*, and sometimes *Latrodectus*, under logs, are various species of the spider-like *Phalangida*, of which we take examples of *Phalangida australis* and *Trioenobunus bicarinatus* (male and female).

During the rain we had seen a female of the little *Sombre Sericornis* several times in the bushes near our camp fire; our presence seemed to disturb her, and, when it is fine, we see that she has a nest close by with three young ones in. Our ornithologist receives strict instructions to let her alone. Close by also, the squeaking of a young magpie reveals the presence of its nest in a tall tree, and the nests of the White-shafted Fantail and Little Brown *Acanthiza* - the latter with three eggs - are taken close to camp.

Of reptiles a species of *Lygosoma* and *Hinulia quoyii* are common, and specimens of *Carlia melanopogon* are secured.

There is very little trace of mammalian life. Opossums are heard, but the only form taken is the marsupial rat, *Antechinus swainsoni*.

In the afternoon the scrub becomes comparatively dry and we take our camera down to a gully near at hand thick with tree ferns (*Dicksonia antarctica*) and beautiful specimens of beech trees. On the fern trunks grow the usual epiphytic ferns, such as *Polypodium australe*, *Asplenium laxum*, *Aspidium capense*, *Hymenophyllum tunbrigense* and *nitidum*, and *Trichomanes venosum*. The creek lies to the east of the ridge and runs southward to join the Thompson River.

The evening continues fine, and we are glad of the quiet time in camp and the opportunity of doing a little collecting and getting our things dry.

27TH NOVEMBER.- We are up early and leave camp at 5.30 a.m., Kirby remaining in charge. We have determined to tramp on as our time is short, and we shall not be able to camp nearer the Falls. It is thus necessary for us, for the country is rough, to carry as little as we can; accordingly we start with a very small amount of provisions, just enough to last us till we reach camp again (late that same evening we hope), and two of us with cameras. Between us and the point at which we turn off the Tanjil Track there lie only six or seven miles, and beyond that about five more to the Falls.

The ground as we pass along is covered mile after mile with the fern *Lomaria procera*, mixed in parts with *Blechnum cartilagineum*. The ferns are just high enough to hide the numberless fallen logs, and hence we stumble about and progress is slow. All along we are struck with the strong growth of the orchid *Caladenia carnea* and of the little violet, *Viola hederacea*. The former are all of a pure white variety, and there are often as many as five and even six flowers on the one stalk. After about three or four miles we mount a ridge on which the vegetation changes from that elsewhere along the track, and reminds those of us who have been in Croajingolong somewhat of that of Goon Murk in the Coast Range. There are no gum trees, their place being taken by the silver wattle, the boughs of which are frequently bent downwards like those of a spruce fir; perhaps, as suggested in the case of Goon Murk, it is the weight of the snow they must carry in the winter time which causes them when young to assume this form. The scrub is composed mainly of Asters,

*Prostanthera lasiantha*, the Pepper Tree, *Drimys aromatica*, and the shrub-like Native Fuchsia, *Correa lawrenciana*, which reaches a height of from fifteen to twenty feet, and is now in flower. On the ground we find *Styphelia macraei* and a species of *Schellhammera*, both of these again recalling Goon Murk. Further on we cross several ridges separated by valleys running eastwards to the Thompson, for our track keeps on the east side of the ridge separating the latter from the Yarra valley. The gullies contain a rich vegetation of ferns, *Dicksonias*, *Todeas*, *Davallias*, *Lomarias*, and *Pteris*, with *pittosporums*, blackwoods, sassafras, and beeches. Of birds, the Lyre Bird is plentiful, and two or three times we come across the Black Cockatoo.

After some six miles the country changes completely, and we find ourselves in a great beech forest. The change from gums is most refreshing, and the deep shade and flickering shadows, the trunks are all moss-covered, and the ground deep in ferns, call to mind an old English wood. There is little or no scrub, and the warm brown colour of the young shoots with which all the trees are covered, mingled with the deep green of the older foliage, give a depth and warmth of colour quite absent from the ordinary Victorian forest, and resembling more than anything else an English oak wood in spring time. It is curious to note that everywhere the trunks and branches of the beeches are characterized by a thick covering of mosses of various kinds, whilst the silver wattles are equally remarkable for a covering of lichens, even though the two trees grow next to one another, whilst a gum tree close by will be comparatively bare.

In the middle of the wood are the remnant's of an old surveyors' camp, occupied during the cutting of the track, and in the centre of the camp is a tree marked "To Matlock." This is the termination of the clearing, and to the east runs a blazed track across the Thompson River into the Tanjil district, while on the west Whitelaw's track leads to the Yarra Valley and on to Reefton. The track consists, for the most part, of blazes at considerable intervals, and, starting from the camp in an unexpected direction, is not easy to find at first. After some search, and by means of the compass and the directions given to us by Professor Kernot and Mr. Gregory, we strike the right one; several lines of blazes run out from the camp, passing up a high ridge to the south of the camp and then turning to the south-west. It has taken us about four hours to reach the spot, and before us there lie five more miles to the Falls, with only blazes to guide us. On the ridge we find ourselves in a forest of white gums. After a long, gradual ascent, during which it was rather difficult to follow the blazes, owing to the scrub and to the heavy timber having fallen across the line, we pass down a steep descent, where the ground is one mass of a species of *Adiantum*, and cross the first tributary of the Yarra. Then comes a steep hillside covered with silver wattle, on which the track is difficult to follow, and a gradual descent through a wood with many sassafras trees to the small second tributary of the Yarra. For the most part scrub is absent, and progress is only difficult and tiring on account of the ferns. Another ridge is crossed in a slanting direction, and then we come to the third largest tributary, which is already a considerable sized stream, though doubtless, at the present time, swollen out by the recent heavy rains. This stream, on which lie the Falls, can easily be recognized, as close by it, where the track crosses over a log, are three marked trees - one with the name Professor Kernot, another with F. N. C., and a third with the names of two others who have recently been there. It is now about noon, and we agree to meet at the same spot in two hours. The Falls lie some distance down the stream, and those of us with cameras hurry on to make the most of our time. We keep not far from the stream, which is bordered by a fringe of ferns and scrub, and in parts tumbles along noisily over rocks. In the scrub the Lyre Birds are numerous, some playing on their mounds;

but we are too anxious to make the Falls, which we can hear in the distance, to delay long to watch them. On a branch overhanging the water, however, the nest of a Pink-breasted Robin is taken, containing three eggs; this being the first time, we believe, on which eggs have been taken in Victoria. The butterflies *Xenica hobartia* and *Papilio macleayanus* are captured, and also the small Emerald Moth, *Asthena pulchraria*. After two miles we find ourselves suddenly at the head of a deep gorge, cut out amongst the mountains and gradually broadening out in shape like the letter V from the point at which we stand. The descent beneath our feet, at the apex of the gorge, goes down abruptly for at least 1,000 feet, with great granite rock masses projecting everywhere. Down this the water disappears in a series of great leaps. The scene is a fine one. Just as it comes to the edge of the gorge the stream is divided into two by a great block of granite. At the bottom of the first fall the two streams unite into a single one, which at once throws itself down in a mass of white spray for at least 150 feet; then comes a series of great leaps, the another large one, and so on until the bottom of the gorge is reached. From where we stand we can see the first few falls and hear the roaring of the water as it plunges from ledge to ledge, but cannot see the bottom of the gorge by reason of the dense vegetation clothing the mountain sides. Away in the distance the gorge opens out until it joins the main valley of the Yarra, hemmed in by range after range of hills - purple, blue, and grey, as they gradually fade away towards the horizon.

It is no easy matter to clamber with our cameras down the almost precipitous side of the gorge close to the waterfall; both hands are really needed to hold on to the rocks and trees during the descent. It is quite impossible also to get anything like a comprehensive view of the falls without getting some distance away on to one of the far hillsides and cutting down a few trees and plenty of scrub. Two or three times we try to fix our cameras on projecting rock ledges, but the spray drenches ourselves and the cameras in half a minute, and we are forced to beat a retreat. At best any view we can get in the very limited time at our disposal can only give some idea of perhaps one of the many leaps which altogether make up the Yarra Falls, and can give no idea whatever of the grandeur of their surroundings.

We make an attempt to measure the height, but in clambering round a big rock mass, the aneroid rolls into the stream, and in a very short space of time probably measures the total height, though it lies where we cannot read it. We cannot reach the bottom, but so far as we can judge, comparing it with the height of the Stevenson Falls which have been measured accurately, the lowest point we reach is fully 600 feet below the top, and we are nowhere near the bottom - apparently little more than half way. Professor Kernot estimated the height at 1,000 feet, and this may probably be taken as within the mark. Some day we hope to return with more time to spare, for there is comparatively little difficulty in getting there, granted good weather, time to spare, and an accurate knowledge of the track. We had execrable weather, a short time, and though good guidance in direction, naturally not so good an idea of the way as we now possess. Perhaps, however, we owe to the bad weather the opportunity of seeing the Falls at their very best, and so must not complain too much.

Our time is more than gone before we begin to think of getting up the gorge again. It was somewhat risky work getting down in a hurry; it is more than difficult to retrace our steps with rapidity, and somewhat tired out, we find, to our disappointment, that, instead of reaching the head of the Falls, we have certainly got to the top of the gorge, but somewhat behind the head, and in thick scrub with too much climbing grass to make progress easy or pleasant. To add to our misfortunes, we lose our way and follow up the wrong stream, and after retracing our steps and

being thoroughly tired out, are relieved to hear the guns fired by those at the rendezvous, where we arrive at 4 o'clock instead of half-past two.

Then commences the tramp back to camp. It is nearly seven by the time we make the old surveyors' camp, and after resting a short time under the beeches, we pass along the Tanjil track, determined to get on as far as we can in the daylight. Darkness comes on and finds us lost in the depth of a gully with no trace of the track amongst ferns, scrub, and fallen timber. There is nothing for it but either to light a fire and wait for the morning or attempt to go on in the moonlight. We determine to do the latter, and so, lighting a fire to warm ourselves, for it has grown damp and chilly, we sit down and wait till the moon rises. Fortunately it is a clear night and the moon nearly full, so after an hour's spell we start. Every two or three hundred yards or so we lose the track, and then one goes on to find a blaze, the rest following when he is successful. Spaces among the trees are deceptive in daylight, still more so in the comparative darkness, and we get along very slowly, stumbling over fern roots and against hidden logs innumerable. At length, close upon four o'clock in the morning, and just as the light is breaking, we make the camp, and after a good meal, and watching the sunrise, turn in for a few hours' rest.

28TH NOVEMBER.- We are up rather late - about ten o'clock - and strike camp at noon to retrace our steps to the Wood's Point road. Despite the rain we have grown to like the Tanjil camp, and leave it with regret. Fortunately it keeps fine whilst we make our way through the scrub. Nothing can be much more depressing than the latter in wet weather; it always seems to grow just the right height to soak your legs through and through, and to send showers of cold spray down your neck. As we pass along we note, amongst birds, in addition to those already named, the Wonga Wonga Pigeon, the Harmonious Shrike-Thrush, and the White-eyed Zosterops.

Of course, after an hour or two it begins to rain hard, and we can do little collecting, and trudge along the road till the Travellers' Rest is reached. Here Mr. and Mrs. Fehrig tell us that they entertained our two friends during the heavy rains whilst we were in camp, and that reluctantly they had left their hospitable roof, feeling it to be their duty to collect in the country where it would be impossible for us to stay for any length of time. Along the road we collect numerous specimens of the land planarians already mentioned, with the coleoptera and myriapoda commonly found beneath logs; and as evening comes on we are relieved to find our friends comfortably housed at the Yarra Track Hotel, where we were determined to spend the night rather than camp out in the wet. They also were relieved to see us return safely, for the heavy rains had delayed us for one or two days.

We are rather struck with the curious reticence of the two who stayed in the Travellers' Rest with regard to their enjoyment of the visit, but from remarks let fall every now and then we judge that neither the language of, nor the viands provided by, the host and hostess - the latter item consisting apparently mainly of sour kraut and gooseberry wine - were very enticing. Monday and Tuesday they had been forced to spend indoors, but on Wednesday, with promise of a little clearing in the weather and the memory of the two previous days strong upon them, they had, at the sound and sight of some remarkable culinary operation, turned and fled, never again to enter the door of Travellers' Rest. Once out of site of the latter they began to collect. Vary many logs were overturned on the way to the Yarra Track Hotel, and though under each were many specimens, yet these were, as usual, representative of only a very few genera and species, the most numerous being *Lissotus cancroides*, *Homalosoma dingo*, *Homalosoma* (sp.), *Notonomus* (two species), and *Carenum* (sp.) Owing to the heavy rains the flowering shrubs and gum saplings

yielded but poor results, almost the only thing shaken from them being Chrysomelas of the genus Paropsis.

The next day, Thursday, they went in the morning to see the Frank Falls on a stream about a mile away through the bush. The water descends in a single leap for some eighty feet from the mountain side into a deep and narrow gorge. With its luxuriant setting of tree ferns and the sunlight making rainbows in the spray, it forms a lovely sight, well worth the tramp through the scrub and the hard scramble up and down the precipitous sides of the gorge.

The bright sunlight and warmth of the day gave rise to hopes that in collecting the luck might have changed, but it was not so, and vigorous shakes of shrubs and saplings into the umbrella yielded nothing new. Nor was any better fortune experienced with the dry branches of fallen trees - only representatives of the same old genera were to be seen. Getting tired of these non-successful attempts, attention was again turned to the logs, but still in vain, and the day passed without any additions to the list of captures.

One of the most noticeable points, so far as the botany is concerned, was the great number of plants of the little orchid *Chiloglottis gunnii* - green and brown varieties. These are scattered all over the ground for a mile or two round about Shaw's Hotel. Usually the leaves lie prone, but in many cases the seeds have fallen under the edges of logs, when to get to the light the leaves have to grow upwards, and so assume a more or less upright position with stalks.

Friday was fine and warm, and the morning was spent in wandering the recently cut Yarra Track, which leads down from close by the Yarra Track Hotel to the river, where prospectors are at work. This track cuts the river much nearer to its source than the old Reefton one, though at present it is not continued on to the southern side. The same species of coleoptera as before mentioned were found, together with examples of *Papilio macleayanus* and *Xenica hobartia* amongst butterflies. The logs also yielded many specimens of planarians, the chief forms being *Geoplana alba*, *spenceri*, and *dendyi*, of which two blue-coloured specimens were found, and a single one of *G. macmahoni*.

We spend the evening resting, smoking, comparing notes, and arranging our photographic apparatus, and are by no means sorry to have a good shelter from the rain, which again falls in torrents. We can strongly recommend the Yarra Track Hotel as a most comfortable one to use as headquarters from which to explore the neighbourhood. The streams around falling down to the Yarra, some to the Goulburn valley, are rich in blackfish, and offer strong attractions to the followers of Izaak Walton. Of rambles through bush and scrub, up and down mountain sides, there are endless numbers for those who care to get away from beaten tracks, and granted fine weather and the right season - we were evidently a little too early - it must be a good collecting ground. As with the Keppels in Marysville, so with the Shaws at the Yarra Track, the traveller will find himself in excellent hands so far as catering and his general comfort is concerned.

29TH NOVEMBER.- We were sorry to leave, but were anxious to get back to the Scandinavians', some eleven miles nearer to Marysville and to collect in that part. Two of us are up early (4 a.m.), and out collecting. One of the most notable points is the great quantity of planarians under the logs, all or very nearly all, being of the dark varieties. The specimens of *G. alba* found were remarkably dark in colour - orange and grey - and it would appear as if the centre of distribution of *G. spenceri*, *dendyi*, and *frosti* must lie in this hill country. The yellow coloured species so common elsewhere, as at Macedon and parts of Gippsland, were here almost entirely absent, only two single specimens being found east of Marysville, despite continuous searchings under logs and the bark of very many trees. They feed on various forms of arthropods - crustaceans,

insects, and myriapods - which live under the logs and bark, and the numerous empty cases of these testify to their voracity. So voracious are they that our scarabee conceived a strong antipathy to what, lacking true vermian sympathies, he called "those sticky beasts." It is interesting to watch their method of capturing a strong insect like a beetle, which one would have thought would have been too much for them. One, whilst we were watching, inadvertently walked over the worm's body; at once it stuck to the slime which the beasts puts out in a comparatively short time, despite its wriggles, the planarian coiled its soft body round the beetle, whose legs and biting parts were glued together and then inserting its muscular proboscis which is put out from the middle of the under surface into one of the soft-jointed parts of the beetle, it is fed at leisure. Probably the planarian has enemies which feed upon it, but at present we do not know who these are, for it does not seem that birds will touch them; at any rate, when Dr. Dendy, elsewhere, tried to feed hens with them they declined to have anything to do with the planarians. The sticky secretion which covers their body is at once annoying to the palate of an animal like a bird, and serves to glue together the mandibles of any creature like a beetle or scolopendra which attempts to bite them. Most of them live in dark places but some crawl out into the open; those which do the latter, so far as we have seen, are the bright yellow ones which are so attractively coloured that if relished by birds they would be snapped up at once. Possibly this may come under the head of "warning colours."

Leaving the hotel we take the road traversed before, Kirby going on ahead to find the dray and take it to our camping ground. The warmth and sunlight have tempted the lizards to come out, we note amongst them *Hinulia quoyii* and a species of *Lygosoma*. The scrub, though bright with masses of blossom - *Pultenaeas*, *Aotus villosa*, *Tetratheca ciliata*, *Eriostemon* (sp.), *Goodenias*, *Goodia lotifolia*, *Daviesias*, and *Hibbertias* - still yields comparatively little in the way of insect life. Amongst butterflies *Xenica hobartia* is fairly numerous; and of moths *Philabota fascialis* and *Nyetemera amica* are taken.

In the scrub the Fire-tailed and Spotted-sided Finch are seen, together with the Wattled Honey-eater and that lovely little creature the Long-tailed Superb Warbler, of which we did not see many specimens during our trip. By the roadside a fine native bear (*Phascolaretos cinereus*) is seen climbing up a gum with a young one clinging to its back in the usual fashion, and as we approach the Scandinavians' the trees are alive with the gaily-coloured Pennant's Parrakeets, which swarm in this part, whilst very common also is the female of the Satin Bower Bird.

Arrived at the closed up accommodation house, we find Kirby there before us with the dray, and our things safe, but fairly well soaked with the heavy rains. We hoped - it was then midday - to have some hours' good collecting, but were doomed to disappointment. The wind comes up strongly, bringing great masses of black clouds and making tall gum trees sway about and creak in a suspicious way. Then the rain falls in torrents and we are glad to seek refuge in the old deserted house, which we sweep out and make as clean as possible. Collecting was out of the question, so we make up a huge fire and sit round it smoking and talking. An attempt is made to catch moths by lights and sugaring, but it is of no avail, and we turn in, once more hoping for fine weather in the morning.

30TH NOVEMBER.- We get up at 4.30 a.m. to find the shrubs near the house alive with Pennant's Parrakeets and Satin Bower Birds. Early in the morning it is fine, but about six the rain comes on and we can do nothing. Fortunately after midday it cleared up, but we have then to start for Marysville and thus the day which we had spent at the Scandinavians' was rendered fruitless, from a collecting point of view, by the wet weather. A pair of beautiful Gang Gang Cockatoos is secured, with the White-shafted Fantail and the Brown and White-throated Tree

Creepers. Having plenty of time to spare, we loiter on the road, both to enjoy the scenery, which is here very fine, and to search for animals. On the Marysville side of the Cumberland Creek we are fortunate in securing several specimens of the Leucanid beetle *Lissotus howittanus*; these were taken, of course, under logs, but only in this particular part; had any occurred in other portions of the district traversed, they would almost certainly have been noticed under some of the numberless logs upturned by one or another of the party. Strangely, also, the specimens taken were nearly all males, as is true of the examples of the other species of the same genus, *Lissotus cancroides*. It grows dark as we come down Rubbly Hill into Marysville, which is perhaps just as well, as the choice of our wardrobes is somewhat limited, and our clothes not so new or entire as when we left the hotel eight days before. We did ample justice to Mrs. Keppel's well-stocked table.

1ST DECEMBER.- Our party now begins to break up, some of us having to return to Melbourne; the rest spend an hour or two at Stevenson Falls photographing, and then turn homewards along the Healesville road. The weather is at last all that could be wished for, and makes the tramp delightful. Just after leaving Marysville our coleopterist shakes into his umbrella a large Geometer Moth, with drab upper wings and pink lower ones with a large blue-black spot underneath. This moth is unknown at the National Museum, but probably belongs to the genus *Chlenias*. A caterpillar, presumably of the same, captured with the moth, has since turned into the chrysalis, but has not yet emerged. Passing the cemetery, the gum forest becomes somewhat monotonous for a few miles until the Acheron is reached. The mania for ringing the trees seems to have come upon the owners of the land on the hill above the river; and very soon what was formerly a thick forest will become a dreary hillside of dead trunks, whitening in the sunlight. Some little way across the river, close to where the Buxton road passes off is a fine patch of *Leptospermum myrsinoides* in full flower; our coleopterist advances joyfully, umbrella in hand and a twinkle in his eye, thinking that at last his time had come; he shakes vigorously, and secures for his reward plenty of dead flowers and leaves, but not a single insect. However, the collecting is not all in vain, for some very good specimens of different genera are found elsewhere, especially of *Clerus*, with *Elaters* and a few *Longicorns*.

Passing on, the Piping Crow Shrike is noted, with the Rufous-fronted Fantail, the Shining Flycatcher, and Black-faced Graculus, and the note of the Coach-whip Bird is heard. A specimen also the Common Porcupine (*Echidna hystrix*) is captured, and two of the lizard, *Cyclodus nigro-luteus*, which are carried home alive. The only snake seen is a single example of the Copperhead (*Hoplocephalus superbus*), which unfortunately escapes into the grass alive from the side of the road, where it had been basking in the sunshine.

Soon Narbethong is reached, and then begins the ascent of the Black Spur. At first the road rises gradually, and then more steeply, until we come to the region of tall gums, and look through a clearing in the trees miles away to the north, over the valley of the Goulburn. Far away the purple peaks of the Cathedral Hill, near Alexandra, with its bold outline, stand out clearly amongst the ranges which fade away behind it into the dim distance. As the road winds round the crest of the Spur it cuts across the top of a deep gully filled with a luxuriant growth of sassafras, beech, silver wattle, hazel, musk, and great tree ferns (*Dicksonia antarctica*; while higher still up the hillside a fire has cleared all the scrub, and burnt black the stems of the hill ferns (*Alsophila australis*). It is noticed, with regard to the wattles, that as the gullies are approached *Acacia decurrens* disappear and gives place to *Acacia dealbata*. The descent to Fernshaw is rapidly made, and we camp for the night in a lovely spot by the Watts River, from which Kirby - who is



an enthusiastic fisher - succeeds in extracting one blackfish. Near to Fernshaw are seen the Boobook Owl and the Nankeen Kestrel.

2ND DECEMBER.- The scene is so lovely, with the mists melting away up the mountain sides and the river noisily flowing along over its stony bed, that we cannot help regretting that, in the interests of the large towns, this beautiful spot is practically closed to travellers. Of course, the coach road still leads through it; but to pass by in the heat and dust of the day is very different from wandering along by the river or up the Spur as evening draws on and the far away hills are gradually deepening in colour until the sunlight touches only their summits and leaves the valleys in deep shade. To see any spot at its best, and to thoroughly enjoy it, one must live there from day to day. Here in Australia, especially, the evening with its soft rich colours and warm after-glows and the early morning with its mists and subdued but clear brightness, seem as if they were designed to compensate for the harsh hot light of midday when everything stands out distinctly and there is no blending of colour or form.

Leaving our camp, we again take the Healesville road. A considerable number of beautiful *Papilio macleanus* are flying about, and in the *Leptospermum* scrub a few insects are captured, including the longicorn *Trichomesia newmani*. From the road close to Gracedale Hotel the works in connection with the new Watts River scheme can be seen on the opposite hillside. After wandering leisurely along we reach Healesville late in the afternoon.

#### Fly fishing at McVeigh's by David Scholes

My first thoughts, rather appropriately, are of my early fly fishing days at McVeigh's on the Upper Yarra in Victoria - of fishing in the fine drizzling warm rain when the termites are out. There are two fish rising, one behind the other. The water is clear and shallow, say two feet at most, and the bottom is sandy. I can see them in the water as they rise. I make a long cast, but then the scene changes - one of the trout is in the net lying on a great burnt fallen tree trunk and Mr. Chips, my cocker spaniel, wet, dripping and smelling very doggy, is on the log also. He looks at the trout with his lovely brown eyes, then at me, ears up, licks his jaws with his bright pink tongue, and is gone. The scene changes. Just above the road bridge the trout are eating the termites like mad. I cast to them one after another along the far fern-lined bank, but although they take the fly I feel nothing when I strike. Then suddenly, I think of Walsh's Creek, joining the Yarra at McVeigh's. Small, mostly no more than three yards wide, chock full of logs and snags and difficult corners, but also chock-full of twelve-inch trout, this is exacting yet exhilarating water to fish. I see it all now, and there is my cheeky Red Tag, as it bounces into a deep, black, still hole from the side of a huge damp log, and down it goes immediately. And I see no more.

...

And then the morning Mr. Chips falls into the aqueduct near McVeigh's and I miss him and call him and go back searching and find him whining and clawing at the concrete sides. And lying flat on my stomach I reach down and pull him to safety by the collar, and his frightened look, and his shivering afterwards. And how I follow the aqueduct upstream and find the plank from which he obviously fell while chasing a kangaroo or wallaby or rabbit across it.

And one day eating my lunchtime sandwiches amongst the thick scrub near the stream. And the tame yellow robins that come so close to eat crumbs. And how I crash into a gnarled log hidden in the tall bracken, leaving a piece of it in my left that had to be dug out in hospital. And the parrots and foxes and kookaburras, the slippery stones and cool water, the clear blue sky and hot sun.

On Wednesday the 26 th of May 1999 at 8.30 pm Channel 9 Melbourne put to air a program called The River Story. This program, hosted by Jennifer Keyte, detailed the history of the Yarra River and had some rarely seen footage of Yarra Falls. This may be some of the first colour video footage taken of this area. Also on the program was some fantastic aerial footage of the upper reaches of the Yarra River above the reservoir. The trees along the Yarra River appeared to be gigantic. I am not sure if the aerial film was by helicopter or by ultralight.

It is worth noting that Yarra Falls is technically not on the Yarra River but just off it on Falls Creek. I would say that there is still more video footage of this area available that has been edited out. If you do find this worthwhile video in a video library, remember that the Yarra does not start at the foot of the Baw Baws as the program indicates but on the divide between the Thomson and Upper Yarra catchments, near Mt. Gregory.

On the Wednesday the 14 th of July 1999 Channel 10 news in Melbourne also has some good aerial video of the upper yarra reservoir. The article was shown at approximately 5.35 pm and had what looked to be footage of where the Yarra River flows into the reservoir. The story related to the low level of Melbourne's water catchments. I found the footage interesting because you are not allowed to go there unless you use or hire a plane or helicopter. It is also one of the only places you can get a good view of a pristine Yarra River.

These videos should be available to the public, probably for, a fee and subject to copyright conditions. The television reporter was Norm Beaman.

While looking at this matter of access to closed catchment areas I assume that because the film of Yarra Falls and views of the Upper Yarra Reservoir were taken from closed catchment areas that because of national competition policy any one can now gain access to these areas.

## GOLD in the Upper Yarra

In 1860 about 500 diggers worked and prospected the Upper Yarra. Big Pat's Creek was opened by Pat O'Hannigan, who also claimed to be the discoverer of gold at Hoddle's Creek. In September 1860 he informed the Prospecting Board that he had found a new field on the Yarra, but failed to meet the geologist at the arranged spot. Starvation creek was unsuccessfully tried out for gold until October 1860, when Sherbonne Shepherd informed mining surveyor Murphy he had found good gold in its tributaries. He also advised the Prospecting Board that two men of F. McMahon's party had found good gold in Wombat Creek, a south tributary of the Yarra just west of Alderman's Creek, where the country was rough, tracks dangerous and the scrub dense. McMahon's was a well known place on the Yarra in the 'sixties, and McMahon twice applied for a reward for his discoveries, but was refused finally by the Rewards Board in 1864.

There were others who sought rewards for gold discoveries on the Upper Yarra. Irwin and McNevin, in 1864, asked for a reward for the discovery of 'a south tributary of the Yarra', and Thomas Littleton and party also applied unsuccessfully for the 'Upper Yarra'. Two men, David Ewart and Henry Hyne, claimed to be discoverers of Warburton in 1860. Last, but not least, John Wood Beilby said he found gold on the Britannia field,

presumably long before the advent of McCrea. There was also an official report from Anderson's Creek in 1857, which said gold had been found in this area, 'beyond Paul de Castella's station'.

In 1862 prospecting north of the Yarra became successful; the period coinciding with the beginning of the attempts to find a road via the Upper Yarra to the Jordan and Woods Point goldfields. Gold was found there in September 1862, by a party consisting of John Walsh, J. R. McAvoy (late of McCrae's party), John M. Connell and William Gooley, in what became known as Walsh's Creek, and in October 1862 Cornelius Donovan and party opened Donovan's Creek, a Yarra tributary coming down from the Divide from the north-east. The two parties each received 200 pounds reward in 1862, but a claim for a reward for the discovery of Walsh's Creek by N. McNamara was refused. The new track there - Sullivan's - was near the prospect claim. Near there, Bear Creek and Damper Creek were also opened in 1862, and Cumberland Gully at the head of Armstrong's Creek (Melola), running south from Mt Arnold, was found to be auriferous. A claim for a reward for the discovery of Cumberland Gully was lodged in 1864 by W. Robley.

Darling Goldfield was opened in 1863, with the discovery of quartz reefs at Wombat Creek, the highest point of gold digging on the Yarra. The first reef here was the Xmas Reef, discovered by Gilbert T. Jones, one of the rewarded discoverers of the Jordan goldfield. In 1867 in this area Cronin's Creek was opened by Cronin and party, about the same time as the reefs on Donovan's and Walsh's Creeks. In the winter of 1874 rich reefs were discovered at the junction of McMahon's Creek and the Yarra, and the town called Reefton began near Lee and Carrol's Reef, the first one discovered there, and which yielded twenty ounces of gold per ton over a long period.

### Picturesque Victoria

In the early 1900s the Victorian Railways issued a book called 'Picturesque Victoria and how to get there'. There were a number of editions of this book produced and it is now a collector's item. The following is an extract looking at the area around Warburton to Mt Donna Buang, McVeigh's and Yarra Falls (then known as Campbell's Falls).

Mt. Donna Buang lies about five miles to the north of the Warburton Railway Station, and may be reached within that distance by a very steep bridle track; but a vehicular road to the summit is now in the course of construction. It is intended to eventually continue this road along the crest of the Divide past the Ben Cairn rock to the main road near Malleson's, so that the mountain will then be accessible by either from Warburton or Healesville. This road commences at the bridge over the Yarra about half a mile from the station at the entrance to the settlement of the Signs of the Times Publishing Company, and proceeds at an even grade of about 1 in 16 to a gradually increasing altitude, passing Wallaby Creek, Cement Creek, and numerous other little mountain streams en route. At every turn of the road magnificent views of the Yarra Valley are obtained, the area of vision increasing with the altitude attained, until the summit is reached at a height of 4080 feet above sea level, and as described by Professor Kernot in his paper it is "700 feet higher than Macedon, 400 feet higher than Juliet, and higher than any point in England, Wales, or Ireland, and surpassed by only one or two in Scotland," although in a direct line it is only 40 miles from the metropolis.

Snowfalls are frequent during the winter months from July to September, and the snow frequently lies to a great depth on the summit of the mount for weeks at a time, forming a great attraction for tourists from the city who are enabled by a convenient train service on Saturday to reach

Warburton in the afternoon or evening, and after spending the night in the township to make the ascent of the mount on Sunday, starting after an early breakfast, taking lunch with them, and descending again to Warburton in time to catch the evening train which lands them in Melbourne at a reasonable hour.

Sport : Fishing- English trout, blackfish and cod. Shooting- Rabbits, hares, few quail and duck in season.

#### Warburton to Wood's Point

The trip from Warburton by coach via the Yarra Track to Wood's Point provides equally as fine an excursion as the journey from Healesville to Marysville across the Blacks' Spur, and is one that enables passengers to realise the great difficulties that had to be surmounted in order to cut a track across the intervening ranges. A coach runs tri-weekly during the summer, leaving Warburton on arrival of the morning train from Melbourne. The track runs along the Yarra to McMahons, from there also on to McVeigh's, 20 miles, and the scenery for the whole distance is magnificent. At this point the river is crossed and the ascent of the range is begun, the next 7 miles up the hill to Waters' Hotel being a ver stiff climb, the grade averaging 1 in 14, and running as low as 1 in 10.5. Tea is served at Waters' on arrival of the coach about 8 p.m. After leaving here the coach steadily rises for the next 15 miles through similar country till Matlock the remaining 5 miles of the distance to Wood's Point are all down hill, the coach being timed to reach the destination about midnight, its actual time of arrival depending greatly upon the state of the weather and the track.

Coach fares 22/6 each way. Proprietor :Mr. McVeigh, Walsh's Creek.

The Warburton-Walhalla trip via the Yarra Falls and Mount Baw Baw.

The re-cutting and repairing of the track between the above mentioned points, and the building of rest-houses at suitable distances on route, has made available for tourist traffic a round trip through one of the most magnificent mountain districts of Victoria. The distance from Warburton to Walhalla is 71 miles, and the total mileage of the round trip, Melbourne to Melbourne, is 225, made up as follows:-

Melbourne to Melbourne (rail)	48 miles
Warburton to McVeigh's (coach)	20 miles
McVeigh's to Walhalla (horse or on foot)	51 miles
Walhalla to Melbourne (rail)	106 miles

The morning train from Melbourne daily connects tri-weekly with the coach from Wood's Point, leaving the township shortly after the arrival of the train, and by this coach tourists may travel as far as McVeigh's Hotel at Walsh's Creek, where they are due to arrive at 3.15 p.m. The coach road skirts the course of the Yarra all the way to the hotel, crossing numerous tributary streams, the most important of which are Big Pat's Creek and McMahan's Creek.

Shortly after leaving Warburton the bush grows more dense, and some beautiful glimpses of bush and river scenery are obtained en route. At McMahan's Creek the last post office and store up the Yarra is passed 6.5 miles from town, and about 6 miles farther on is Reefton, once a busy mining centre, but now almost deserted. Owing to the pooriness of the soil, the trees here are only of moderate size, but in season the pink and white heath blooms freely. It is not a lengthy run from Reefton to McVeigh's, and here a bridge crosses the Yarra, which is at this point a rushing shallow stream about 30 ft. wide. This hotel, with its excellent accommodation and reasonable tariff, forms a splendid headquarters from

which to explore the beauty of the surrounding district during a few days stay. It lies 1000 ft. above sea level.

At the hotel, horses may, if desired, be procured for the trip across the ranges. The track after leaving McVeigh's winds along the southern bank of the Yarra - now almost level with the water's edge, and anon rising several hundred feet to cross a projecting spur. At Alderman's Creek, 3 miles out, a track branches off south-east to Neerim, about 30 miles distant, passing through some of the finest timber country in the State - from one forest giant alone, felled in the bush, 10,000 6-ft. pailings were obtained. Five miles farther, Contention Creek is reached, and a noticeable feature is a quartz battery driven by the power derived from a water-wheel on the creek, where gold mining is in progress. Shortly after leaving Contention Creek the first myrtle's or beeches, are seen. The track runs through very picturesque country right on to the first rest-house, 14 miles from the hotel, and about 10 chains from the track. At this point are the splendid falls on the Falls Creek, close to its junction with the Yarra. The track is, owing to the steepness of the hillsides, a difficult one to follow to the head of the falls; but the exertion is well repaid by the sight of the descending water, which drops in a succession of leaps to a total depth of about 750 feet. The creek on which these falls occur rises on the northern slopes of Mount Baw Baw (the article is incorrect here as Falls Creek rises just below the divide between the Thompson and Yarra catchments), and is at this part a stream of considerable volume. The spur above the falls rises to a height of 3000 ft., and farther along the track leading on to the Thompson River and Mount Baw Baw, the general elevation of the plateau is 5000 ft. The night can be comfortably spent in the shelter of the rest-house, where wire-mattressed stretchers have been provided, and cooking utensils, etc., etc., stocked for use of wayfarers. In this rest-house are six of the stretchers; the next has four, and the one nearest Walhalla six also. The utensils provided include billies, pannikins, a fryingpan, and a couple of buckets for the carrying of water. It is requested that tourists vacating the huts may leave a small quantity of dry firewood within for the benefit of the next comers. Shortly after leaving the rest-house the track passes a magnificent growth of old beech trees, and further on crosses a bridge over the Thompson River.

It's Pleasant on the Poley

by Merle Halls

It was early Spring, the day was cool and cloudy, but promised fair, as we left the van at the river, a mile north of Acheron Gap. After walking a few hundred yards along the Poley Range track, we lunched at a pleasant spot near the river. It was a struggle to boil the billy as the wood was of the "hard to burn" variety. After lunch, in true club tradition, we had to climb; the track was somewhat obscured at first by fallen logs and was fairly steep, but later the going was quite good and made pleasant walking.

On reaching the top of the range we walked about three miles, then diverged from the Mt. Ritchie track, turned to the left and arrived at some Forest Commission huts for an early camp.

About halfway along the range we walked through patches of soft snow, and as the altitude increased the snow became more abundant, much to the delight of the younger members of the party.

On arrival at the camp, there was much jockeying for the best huts, and lucky were those who got one with a chimney that didn't smoke, or one complete with window or door. What with the very poor wood (same as lunchtime) and the so-and-so chimneys, the air was thick, and not only with smoke. In fact, it was hard to identify several well known

characters in the prevailing smog. Good water was obtainable about a hundred yards from the huts. The nights promised to be extremely cold, and water buckets left outside had frozen hard at an early hour.

We awoke next morning a trifle red-eyed (from the smoke) to see glorious sunshine and thick hoar frost. The party got off to an early start, with boots crunching through the hard crusted snow, beautiful in the morning sunlight, and a stop at the fire tower on Mt. Ritchie (4,250 ft.).

Here there was a variety of activities; photography, snow fights and climbing the fire tower. Some indulged in all three; and it was nothing short of dangerous to be involved in a snow fight with some of the muscle bound younger fry.

At some points along the range there was a distinct difference in the timber; the change being from white mountain ash to alpine ash, the "Woolly-butt" of higher ranges.

Leaving Mt. Ritchie and the snow behind, we headed towards Mt. Strickland (4,000 ft.) along the Dividing Range, and traversed some particularly fine sections of forest, serenely beautiful in the Spring sunshine. After crossing the saddle at the source of Ingle's Creek, we glimpsed some fine views of the Acheron Valley and the distant Cathedral Range. About six miles from Mt. Ritchie we reached the top of Mt. Strickland.

Immediately after leaving the fire-line track, we commenced to drop down, crawling over and under fallen and blackened logs to an old mill site, then plunged down steeply along the old mill track. Diverging right we came to the old settlement of Wilke's Creek, where we had lunch. A lovely creek this, coming down from the Paradise Plains.

After lunch we struck off upstream, along an overgrown track, but after some discussion, retraced our steps to another track we considered more likely to lead to Keppel's Lookout.

As by now time was running short, only those who enjoy a fast "bash" decided to go to the Lookouts; the rest of the party elected to make a more leisurely return through the pleasant bush to Marysville. Those who traversed the tops joined the van at Stevenson's Falls at nightfall, whilst the remainder were picked up at Marysville.

"It was a lovely weekend."

(Editor's Note: Readers familiar with the area described in this article will realise that the range traversed was part of the Great Dividing Range north of Acheron Gap and running parallel to the Acheron way to Mt. Strickland. Over this length it is approximately two miles to the east of the road. At Mt. Strickland the range turns east and swings across toward the Lake Mountain area. The older maps, particularly the old Healesville-Marysville and Warburton District's map show the Poley Range as being the watershed between the east and west branches of the O'Shannassy River; however, of late there seems to have arisen a tacit understanding that the Poley Range is part of the Great Divide as first stated. Actually the M.M.B.W. private road labeled "Poley Range Track," traverses both ranges, and it could be that the ambiguity has arisen through misinterpretation of their signposts. It would be of interest to get any further information which may be available).

Other Places of interest in the closed catchments not open to the public are :

- Golden Bower Mine
- Golden Secret Mine
- Browns Camp
- Chester and Lockes Mine
- Myrrhee No.2 Mill

- Damper Mine
- Great Britain Mine
- Snobs Creek Mine
- Donovans Creek Township Site
- Mississippi No.1 Mill
- Quarry
- Falls Creek Hut (Site)
- The Big Tree

Parks Victoria have a number of pamphlets relating to the Upper Yarra reservoir park available.

Walking tracks in the Yarra Ranges National Park not managed by Parks Victoria.

These walking tracks are generally shared with cars and four wheel drives and have not been designated as walking tracks in the Yarra Ranges National Park draft management plan.

The Upper Yarra track

This walk follows the southern boundary of the Upper Yarra Catchment Block of the Yarra Ranges National Park. The track is quite steep in places and traverses Mt. Horsfall. When walking along this track you come within a few kilometres of Yarra falls. If you undertake this walk in Summer time water may be hard to find. In Winter time the walking track may be under snow. Parts of the walking track are also shared with 4wd during the drier parts of the year. A pamphlet for this walk is available from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources at Powelltown.

The Yarra track

This is a major roadway to Woods Point and beyond. It closely follows the gold road from Marysville to Woods Point of the 1860s. Places like Fehrings and Shaws had in previous times accommodation houses and alcohol shantys. The western boundary and northern boundary of the O'shannassy catchment, via Mt. Ritchie and Paradise Plains. is also part of the older Yarra Track but which already came into disuse by 1866.

The area around Paradise Plains has, at times, many logging trucks going by so keep a lookout for them when on the narrow roads.

The Nine Mile road from The Triangle to Toorong.

This road passes through some nice rainforest. It is also the site of in your face logging, where logging has not only gone up to the boundary of the Yarra Ranges National Park but has actually taken place within the Upper Yarra catchment.

Stories relating to the Yarra Ranges National Park and beyond.

TIMELINES FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

Events indicated may not necessarily have occurred in the year indicated.

1864

Correspondence of the Woods Point Mountaineer  
The New Track from Melbourne to the Jordan Diggings.  
To the Editor of the Mountaineer

Dear Sir,- As there are so many complaints about the route from Melbourne to the Jordan Digging, namely via the Big River and the Jamieson, we would beg to offer a few remarks for the information of travellers, with regard to the new track. The distance from Melbourne to the New Chum Creek ( by the coach ), 40 miles; to Fishers Creek, 12 miles; to Down, 5 miles; to Stephenson's, 5 miles; to Mount Arnold, 9 miles; to Nelson's, 7 miles; to Parry's, 4 miles; to Phillips and Davies, 6 miles; to, 6 miles; to Springs, 7 miles; to Wood's Point, 9 miles; total 110 miles.

At all the above mentioned stages good accommodation can be obtained at reasonable prices. The travelling is easier than that on the other tracks, and by continual improvements by the Government, this track will ultimately be well adapted for dray and coach convenience.

By inserting these few observations in your valuable journal you will render service to the public generally.

Yours Respectfully  
Shultz and Goula.

1865

There are two lines of coaches running between Melbourne and Healesville, the one leaving at nine in the morning, and the other at six in the evening. The first change of horses takes place at Eltham, fourteen miles from the Metropolis. Up to this point, a good macadamized road is passed over. We then take the bush road over Kangaroo grounds, to the Yarra Flats, where a halt is made for dinner, and a very excellent one is provided by Mr. Bell, the proprietor of one of the best conducted hotels on this line. The road from this place to Healesville is far from a good one, although it might easily and with but little expense be made a very good one; as, however, the importance of making the Yarra Track more available for traffic is now understood by the Government this will no doubt be remedied.

We reach Healesville (presuming that our readers left by the day coach) at about five o'clock in the afternoon. This township is about 40 miles from Melbourne, although quite a new one, is well provided with hostelryes. The scenery along the road is very fair, but not such to inspire very poetical feelings - we must except a view from the summit of the Big Hill, about two miles south of the Yarra Flats, which is very beautiful.

Starting from Healesville, on the following morning, the country assumes a more mountainous aspect, although many natural impediments have been removed by the cuttings that have lately been made. From the township just named the valley of the fine river Watts is a distance of eight miles. Here we can obtain refreshments before commencing the ascent of the far famed Black Spur which has hitherto proved such a bete noir to the travellers on this road.

1874

Search for the source of the Yarra

Within 60 miles from Melbourne as the crow flies is a tract of country which, but for those imaginary lines, indicating supposititious river streams, which geographers love to draw, would be represented on the map of Victoria by little more than a blank space. In outline shaped like a horseshoe, about 20 miles in width, and 30 miles in length, it is surrounded by tall mountain ranges, which stretch from Marysville to St.



Clair, and thence almost semicircularly to Mount Baw Baw, from which point they continue in a nearly straight westerly direction till they become more or less mingled with what are commonly known as the Dandenong Ranges. The region thus compassed about is still further hemmed in ( on its western side ) by the alpine ridges of which Mount Juliet forms a conspicuous feature ; and the circumvallation would be almost complete but for "The Gap," through which flows the River Yarra on its way to the sea. Within the bounds thus described the head waters of the said river have their source, and it is a matter of fact that hitherto this portion of Victorian territory has been almost utterly unknown. True, a river line, with tributaries, some of which are named, appear on the map; but, practically, no actual knowledge of any part of the main stream, or its source or surroundings, higher than the rivulet suspiciously designated Starvation Creek, is in the possession of the Government survey authority. A little is known of the river course as far as MacMahon's Creek, a few miles further up, but that is all. When many exploring parties were out searching for an Upper Yarra track to the Wood's Point goldfields one or two glimpses of this district were obtained, and what is called " Bowman's track " was traced right across it from its southern boundary to St. Clair, but the information so gathered is trifling, and for scientific purposes comparatively vague and unsatisfactory. Under these circumstances we are able to extract much that is valuable from the journals of two members of an exploring party of three who during the last few weeks of 1878 started to travel from Mount Baw Baw to the Yarra source, and, if possible, follow the river to MacMahon's Creek. We will tell their story as nearly as possible in their own words.

It was shortly after noon on December 11 last that the party arranged their swags, shouldered them, and left the township of Tanjil, en route for the summit of the Baw Baw. Each swag weighed about 28lb., and the whole lading consisted of the following articles :- Three blankets, weighing nearly 3lb. each ; a small tent-fly, 6ft. by 6 ft., weighing about 3lb.; 10lb. flour, 10lb. biscuit, 2lb. tea, 10lb. sugar, 8lb. German sausage, three pots of Liebig's extract of beef, and a bottle of cognac of warranted high character. Their route lay in the first instance up the spur dividing the rivers Tangil and Tyers, and after somewhat hard travel they camped for their first night at the head of Bull Beef Creek, and supped on their rations. Next morning they breakfasted on grilled monkey-bear, and, following the blazes of the old geodetic survey party, made for the trigonometrical station established about 5,500ft. above the level of the sea, on nearly the highest peak of the mountain. The unlearned reader may be informed that Mount Kosciusco, the highest known mountain in Australia, is 7,260ft. high. They had not mounted far before they found themselves in altogether new country. First they met with splendid sassafras trees, which ere long they found to grow so thickly together that they could only make their way through them with difficulty. The overgrowth was moreover mingled with magnificent over-arching ferns. At Lady Manners-Sutton Creek they stopped awhile to admire a very fine belt of mountain ash, and at 6 p.m. they reached Granite Creek, which may be fairly described as in the Baw Baw ranges. Here they saw trees the ascertained height of which was 350ft., and the trunks of some of them measured 80 links or about 53ft. in circumference. Next day found them on Baw Baw summit, on which they camped, for the atmosphere was so thick with mist and smoke from bush fires that they could get no clear outlook. During the night the wind changed from north to south, and the mountain top was thenceforward till the following noon enveloped in rolling clouds of dense volume, which drenched the poor explorers to the skin. At last the prospect cleared, and a vast and magnificent panorama unfolded itself. To the south-east where the Gipps Land lakes, to the south the apparently endless Hoddle range, where

" Hills peeped o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arose. "

To the south-west lay Western Port Bay and Bass's Straits; to the westward Arthur's Seat, Mount Eliza, Mount Martha, Hobson's Bay, and Station Peak ; to the northward the township of Red Jacket (the roof of the schoolhouse, which forms almost the sole remnant of burned-down Matlock, could be discerned gleaming in the sunlight); and to the north-east, the great ranges of North Gipps Land. They found the timber on Baw Baw to comprize the stunted mountain ash, myrtle and mahogany, and thick scrub, mostly erica.

The party had now a somewhat puzzling questin before them, for they were required to decide in what direction they would begin their search for the Yarra Source. In the ranges on which they stood rises not only the Yarra, but the Tangil, the Tyers, and the Latrobe, and there was danger of mistake. They knew moreover, that the gullies were numerous, and that surrounded as they were by mountainous heights, covered wiyh tall trees, they would never get another view of the country they had to traverse. Eventually, taking Matlock as their bearing for a start, they shaped a course down hill N.N.W. for about three miles and a half, and then N.W. for about a mile and a half further. At that point they came across the first of a series of mossy flats, covered with a scrub which they arbitrarily denominated "lurcher," after their dog, whom they often had to carry over the worst portions of the ground. Such a companion could not have been a comfort. Underfoot the earth was soft and spongy, and clothed with what looked like spergula. It was obviously one of the mossy flats that contribute to the head waters of the rivers that rise in these parts, but whether the particular stream in question was that of the Tangil or the Yarra was not clear. Patient observation enabled the travellers to decide the point, which was completely settled when they found themselves on a steep range overlooking both rivers. This discovery was made on the second day after they left Baw Baw, viz., Thursday, December 19, and they son afterwards pitched their camp for the night delighted with their success and terribly tired by their journey through granite boulders and dense scrub. The later was found an abomination, and for want of a better name they dubbed it Crevecoeur scrub, for its leaves grew the wrong way, and it's prickles were sharp, riminding them of the Crevecoeur bread of poultry. Their resting place was a romantic spot between two huge boulders, and at the head of a sparkling little rill which ran into the valley below. Beneath them lay the object of their search - the Yarra. The river bed was a deep gorge in which granite boulders were so jammedas to cause the waters to make any number of charming little cascades. The whole scene was arched by sassafrass and myrtle trees. As they could see no gigantic ferns the party concluded that they were still some 4,000ft. above the level of the sea. According to their view the main stream the Yarra takes its rise from a small plain or flat, several acres in extent, thickly carpeted with the spergula resembling moss already alluded to, and dotted here and there with water holes. The spot was almost surrounded with hills capped with granite, from whence the water was found to percolate and be carried down a well defined watercourse, which gradually increased in size as it was joined by numerous other rivulets similarly derived from the surrounding watershed, until it became a deep and rapid stream in the valley below. Gasing on the spectacle before them, the members of the party felt convinced that they were the first white human beings to witness it.

The exact order of the events which happened to the party during this and the succeeding few days is not clear, for the memoranda before us are somewhat confused. The explorers seem to have endeavoured to bear N.W., and crossed numerous streams, all running into the Yarra. Their path was extremely difficult to traverse, and occasionally they would get on for 900 yards or so without touching the ground, but picking their way along long lines of dead timber, and supporting themselves by holding on to the scrub on either side.

## The Source of the Yarra

To the Editor of the Argus.

Sir,- It appears to be not generally known that the River Yarra Yarra was traced to its source 31 years ago by a gentleman in every way practically qualified for the task. The following particulars were made known in a newspaper published by me in Melbourne at that time, and though it has subsequently appeared in the pages of my "Early History of Victoria," it will no doubt, if transferred to the columns of The Argus, be read with interest by thousands of individuals who have not hitherto had an opportunity of perusing them :-

"The Source of the Yarra Yarra.- Whilst the Government was making futile attempts to trace the source of the Yarra, Mr. Walpole, who was a practical surveyor by profession, but at that time had, in conjunction with Mr. Goggs, a dairy station near Melbourne undertook the exploit. The following article appeared in the Standard of the 12th March, 1845, which we are sure will be read with interest by every one. It deserves an imperishable place in the early history of the colony as a feat of private enterprise and personal curiosity, combined with laudable ambition, overcoming difficulties and impediments which the Government failed to surmount, and accomplishing a task redounding to the credit of Mr. Walpole and his brave companion. 'The Yarra rises in a gully between the Snowy Mountains and one of the Goulburn mountains about 100 miles distant as the crow flies, and commences to flow to the south-east, from which direction it's numerous tributaries also flow. The spring, the river's source, is so small that it could run through a 4 in. pipe. It is fed about midway on the south side by six tributaries, and four or five on the north side; they are situated upon an average about three or four miles apart. After each tributary the size of the river decreases considerably. These branch streams rise in the gullies adjacent, and some of them are of great magnitude. The country beyond Rirey's Station is one mass of scrub. With one of Mr. Proctor Thomas's sons, Mr Walpole left Rirey's Station on horseback, but found it impossible to make any progress, not only from the density of the scrub, but the utter absence of vegetation or any feed for the horses. They accordingly had to retrace their steps, and leave the horses behind them. They a second time started on foot and walked for five days in the bed of the river through 2ft. and 3ft. of water. In this course they had often to climb a height of 40ft. over dead trees, which had fallen in great numbers across the river from either bank, forming a complete barricade, the stream finding its way through the interstices. Gum, ironbark, and other timber have grown to an extent in altitude and circumference unseen in any other portion of this province, while many of the plants indigenous to tropical climates have been discovered, and, amongst others, a shrub in every particular resembling the coffee plant, with a large red berry the size of a cherry, which being exposed to the sun, becomes quite hard and black; also a large aromatic berry bearing every resemblance in appearance and taste to the black pepper berry, but with a flavour so pungent as cayenne. From these indications there can be little doubt but that innumerable tropical fruits of this description cover the face of the interior of this continent. The sassafras and musk plants exist in great abundance. The land is described as being of the richest quality and well watered, but of open country scarcely one square yard was visible. The river the whole of the way up is as clear as crystal, and where not covered with dead trees a clear pebbly and rocky bottom is distinguishable. About 17 miles

from the source an abundance of good slate exists, and will split into plates of an eighth of an inch in thickness. The only birds seen were pheasants or lyre birds, and they appeared in multitudes. No recent tracks of the natives were discovered, but a few barked trees leading from Gipps Land to one of the tributaries were observed a few miles below the source of the river; they appeared to have been barked some three or four years back. The Yarra is described as singularly tortuous, at one point running for two miles direct south, and then to an equal distance full north."

The position of a tree near the source, on which Mr. Walpole cut his initials, is marked on the Government maps. - Yours

T. Strobe,

Punt-road, Richmond.

1884

We started from Lilydale under luxuriant conditions, having chartered for the use of our party, six in all, the comfortable "Tom Thumb" coach of Cobb and Co., which, with its well padded sides and back, is to the ordinary coach what a first class railway carriage is to a second class. The day was bright and warm, and the rich level of the Yarra Flats, after the showery weather which had preceded, looked its best. The country through which the road passes was as brilliantly green as though the season were Spring instead of late Summer. Healesville, with its richly laden fruit gardens, its grand poplars, and its luxuriant blackberry hedges looked pretty as we drove through, and when we came to Fernshaw the ripple and dash of the Watts River greeted us pleasantly as the stream sparkled in the bright sunshine. We lunched here, and then started off in advance of the coach up the Black Spur.

To some of us the beauties of this road were familiar delights, and to others they came with all the fresh charm of novelty. The sunshine was bright and hot, and the road was steep, and by the time the coach overtook us we were glad to take advantage of it. Indeed, one of our number had been for some time seeing in the long swinging strips of the bark peeling off from the huge gum trees suggestions of dangling bell pulls, with genial but illusory associations of whisky and soda-water. These ideas have zest to the drink we took from the cool rushing stream down under the fern trees on the left of the road.

When the ridge of the spur is crossed we get into a new watershed, these streams finding their way northwards into the Goulburn. There are grandly massive trunks of eucalypti standing on the edge of the road on this hill top, and we pass them sufficiently close to be able to realise their huge size. All this tract of vegetation, with its great fern trees, each crowned with its rich cluster of radiating fronds, its beautiful beech trees with their dense, dark green foliage of small glistening leaves, and their mossy and fern covered trunks, and the colossal columns of the eucalypti, impresses the beholder with an almost oppressive sense of luxuriance and growth. In its presence the animal kingdom seems so weak and poor compared with the vegetable world, on which Nature seems to have specially lavished her affectionate care and her affluence of bounty.

That little settlement of Narbethong, at Fisher's Creek, a few miles beyond the top of the Black Spur, has become a favourite resort of tourists during the last year or two, and seems to supply them with comfortable accommodation. It lies right in the heart of the ranges, and we learned that there are abundant points of interest in the neighbourhood to supply pedestrian excursions to the tourist. Some miles further on we crossed the fine stream of the Acheron, which has nothing

in its aspect to suggest any association with Hades. Why the Acheron? But perhaps it was one of the Acherons of Greece, and not that more famous one in the realms of Pluto from which it borrowed its name.

As we drive on, from the huge mountain masses which rise around us, one on the right hand of our road singles itself out, from the impression of great comparative height given by its lofty crest. This, the driver tells me, is Mount Strickland. It is about 4,000 ft high, and it is the highest mountain in the vicinity. At one time, he tells me, the road to Wood's Point used to cross this mountain, and then enter on to Paradise Plains beyond. Again, why Paradise Plains? Was it that, after toiling up the long, steep slope of the great mountain, level country required some very ecstatic term to do it justice? And is it not rather odd that at any time a road should cross the highest mountain in the district?

We descended through the forest to the pretty little village of Marysville, then just losing the evening sunlight, as the sun was lowering behind the westerly hills. Like Fernshaw, it is situated on the side of a mountain stream, the Steavenson Creek, or River as it is proudly called by the residents. We take up our quarters at Mr. Keppel's Hotel, and then those who are so disposed make acquaintance with his wonderful bath, where a cold, sparkling rill of mountain water is led into a large square bath neatly slabbed round and big enough to swim in. An untimely cold prevented me from sharing in the enjoyment of this bath, of which every visitor to Marysville speaks with such enthusiasm, but I was quite prepared to believe in the rapturous account of its delightfully exhilarating qualities given by my companions.

I, in the meantime, strolled about outside the hotel, looking round on the encircling mountain tops. One prominent hill of apparently conical shape and great steepness was, I was told, named Nobbly Spur, and over that, I was assured, our coach road would lie for the excursion arranged for the next day. By this time the welcome dinner hour had arrived, and we brought to the meal highly effective appetites, sharpened by many miles driving and walking in the invigorating mountain air.

We are stirring early in the morning, and strolling about in the cool mountain air. After breakfast our horses are hitched to, and we drive through the little township across the bridge, and soon begin the ascent of Nobbly Spur. This road fully realised the expectations suggested to my mind by the sight of the hill from Marysville the previous evening. The road was the steepest up which I have ever driven on a regularly made road, and to get up at all the road has to wind zigzag about on the face of the hill in a very serpentine manner. We soon find that we are getting into a higher atmosphere, and look down on the little village we have just quitted from a rapidly gained elevation.

The road all along this part is a very adventurous one. It is well made but narrow, and we always have a deep and precipitous declivity on one side and a bank notched into the hill on the other. The nature of the roads here is suggestively indicated by the horse teams of the carriers conveying goods to Wood's Point. We see four or five strong horses attached to an apparently not very heavily loaded, two wheel dray, and our driver tells me that seven or eight hundred weight is on this road considered a full load for each horse.

As we get up on the higher level we get fuller views of the great mountain masses rising in the solemn majesty around us. Behind us we have Mount Strickland and the distant top of Mount Juliet, on our left are the fantastic peaks of the Cathedral Range, and before us is the lofty crown of Mount Arnold. The forest is at times composed of massive stringybarks, and at other times of the towering, clean shafted gums of the blackbutt variety. Just before we reach a great loop in the road, known as Tommy's Bend, the driver stops the coach and indicates to us the proper point to get a view of Sassafras Gully, which runs from the top to the bottom of the great range on the opposite side of the valley.

The view, as we saw it in the dazzling noonday sunlight, was worth coming all the way from Melbourne for its sake alone. The gully ran down the face of the hill as straight as a line till it intersected with the gully at right angles. And its bed was wholly occupied with sassafras trees. They distinguished themselves from the beeches and the huge gum trees of the surrounding forest by the brilliance of their lightly tinted green, and still more by their regular pyramidal form, as regular as though they had been trimmed by the shears of a gardener since their days of babyhood. They formed a wonderful column of brightly shining, sharp pointed trees rising from the depth of the valley to the crest of the lofty range. The peculiar regularity of their form and arrangement made the scene one of the most wonderful pieces of Nature's landscape gardening it has ever been my fortune to see.

A lover of trees would find matter of scarcely smaller interest in the noble beech tree forest through which the road ran beyond the bend, in noticing the deep, dark foliage of the beeches, their massive moss clad trunks and branches, so different from the relatively slender formation of the tall gum trees, and the depth of the shadow they cast. At this part of the road we have something the same luxuriance of vegetation which we met with before at the summit of the Black Spur. We drive on a mile or two through the beech forest, and then reach the creek, where we are to stay for lunch.

It was an admirable place for a picnic. There had been a camp of a road party on the side of the clear, cold stream, and they had cleared a considerable patch, on which white clover was now copiously growing. The little clearing was closely shut in on all sides by the lofty forest, through which not even a straggling sunbeam could make its way. The pleasantly rippling stream ran within a couple of yards of our fire. At the back of us the clear green patch on which stood the decaying huts of the road party was bathed in sunshine. This was the ultimate point of our journey, and when after lunch we had strolled about under the Beechwood shade over the ground richly carpeted with the glossy, green hartstongue fern, and had picked up our things, and when the last "cockshy" had been taken at the final empty bottle on the stump, and we turned back to our coach, to which our careful and civil Driver Newman had, by this time, attached the horses, we all felt that we had reached the turning point of a very pleasant outing.

1889

#### Fernshaw

On the Sea and in the Forest - From Melbourne to Fernshaw - Lilydale - St. Hubert's Vineyard An " Experience " - Withered Gum Trees - Raspberries and Cream - At Fernshaw - A Solitude that Might be Felt - A Cherry Goodnight - Ascending Mount Juliet.

Melbourne is "marvellous" as the fifty years' work of man; Fernshaw is even more marvellous as the immemorial handiwork of nature. The toilers of the great city of the Antipodes possess a boon indeed in the wild tracts of forest wilderness which stretch across the Victorian ranges. The forest is the proper refuge for the tired dweller among city streets. It is also now as it was when the Hebrew poet long ago sighed for the wings of a dove, that he might fly far into the wilderness and be at rest. Many men not unwisely, go to sea when they would recover spring and energy; but life at sea acts in different ways. The calm, the sense of pause, which one associates with the vacant spaces of the ocean is for the most part fiction of fond imagination, the fact generally being that to be at sea is to be cooped up unavoidably in the more or less exacting society of a miscellaneous company of complete strangers, to pitch and roll distressfully in high running seas, to be shut under hatches in stifling cabins, and to spend sleepless nights of humid self-suffocation

amid the ceaseless roar and racket of weather and steam. Life at sea to the unwonted landsman is the apotheosis of unrest, and the abnegation of seclusion. Still it does undoubtedly put new energy into many weary people, only its way of doing so is different from that of the wild woods. Here it is the solitude, the silence of infinite life unconscious of itself, the stillness with which the very air is charged, only rendered deeper by the sounds which now and then break in upon the silence - it is the perfect calm which, "felt in the heart and felt along the blood," enters into us, and marvellously charms away all fretful, anxious moods from our tired senses. Long may the quietude of Fernshaw renew the flagging energies of Melbourne's workers.

Fernshaw lies some fifty miles north east of Melbourne, about a half days journey, made partly by rail partly by coach. The whole way is full of interest. First one notices the long straggling suburbs of the city, with their pleasant gardened villas ( Hawthorn, perhaps, the pleasantest of all ), where an English eye may be gratified to see the new homes of our people making themselves a seclusion among the trees and shrubs brought out from the country gardens of the old. Later the train passes the " Surrey Hills," and stops at " Box Hill " station. One looks in vain, indeed, for the short, smooth, thymy sward that clothes the slopes of Betworth Down and Ranmore, and which I can now see from the open door near which I am writing on a pleasant morning of our northern June, but it was kindly done to preserve such names as will to many immigrants be full of endeared associations. From " Box Hill " the first glimpse is caught of the wild hill country lying under blue haze to the north east. But for many miles after getting beyond the suburbs the scenery we pass through is not beautiful at all; that it will become so I firmly believe, and indeed now it is full of interest and illustration of colonial life. The land is broken up into small holdings, and still in the transition state between the wilderness and agricultural rusticity; it lacks the charm belonging to either condition. It is a wilderness disrobed - a region of disorderly farm lands. At Ringwood the landscape improves, long tracts of dark wooded hills opening out in the beyond range; and after passing by Croydon, another five miles brings us to Lilydale, where the railway ends, and we change into one of Cobb's coaches. This strong contrivance does actually accomplish the rest of the journey without being overturned or necessarily even damaged at all, which, however small a thing it may seem to the inexperienced, will ever remain a memorable fact to those who have made the excursion. The road is somewhat rough. On the occasion the present writer has in mind the coach was exceptionally full, and it seems a suggestive incident that before we came to what he called the " bad part," the driver requested that some who had outside seats would ride inside the coach, so as to lessen its topheaviness ! I must confess to having sometimes considered it necessary to " hold on," though that may have been but an instance of a " new chum's " unheroic particularity.

Lilydale is pleasantly surrounded with pasture lands and vineyards, but is not itself picturesque. Colonial townships, indeed, cannot be picturesque till planks and corrugated iron have been abandoned, or some style of building houses found better suited to those materials than the model of an English villa. Beyond the township the country is beautiful at once. About three miles along the road a point is reached where the view has an interest quite apart from its exquisite natural beauty. Beyond the level pasture fields, bright with herds of grazing cattle, can be seen the already famous vineyard of St. Hubert's, clothing with a mantle of fresh pale green foliage the further slopes of the Yarra Valley, and closed in by a sheltering range of darkly wooded hills. It would be out of place to speak in these pages of that sweetness of industries which, under the gracious influences of sun and soil, is here

growing to world wide recognition. Those who would know something of what has here been done, and what the future seasons may be trusted to bring, should read the delightful sketches of an Australian vine grower's experiences, written by the cultivated owner of these vineyards, Mr. Hubert de Castella, and which he has called " John Bull's Vineyard." Quite apart from its immediate subject, it is a capital sample of the buoyant, persistent temperament of enterprising Australia. But for us who come to look upon the loveliness of nature, not to study industries, and, coming with that intention, find it a region more lovely than words can express, let us merely say that here the charms of many meadowed Surrey and of the vine clad slopes of Southern Italy are blended in one delightful stretch of sunny country.

Some way further along a rather ugly episode occurred, which somewhat disturbed the aesthetic rapture of the ladies. We had got down a nasty bit of road, and down in the hollow the mud was thick and the ruts phenomenally deep. Here we stuck fast. The leaders pulled and strained bravely, the coach refused to stir, when suddenly, with a report like a gunshot, the swingle bar snapped. The broken pieces of the bar and the loose, heavy traces fell against the horses' hind legs, and with a terrified leap, which, if he had not dexterously slipped the reins, must have pulled the driver off his seat, they fled at full gallop, the traces striking them at every step. Harnessed together, and so misguiding one another, they at length brought up full against a large gum tree root, which had been dragged out of the ground and left upon the roadside. The force of the collision must have been terrible; but they were not killed, nor even were their legs broken. One horse, indeed, did seem for about ten minutes to be dead; but he came round, and then a new swingle bar being extemporised, they were all three reharnessed, and trotted along to the end of their stage as if nothing unusual had happened. This little event seemed to me to have a savour of what is called colonial " experience."

There is one part of the road which is rather dismal: for miles on either side thousands upon thousands of the gaunt, bleached trunks of gum trees, dead, but still standing grim and unsightly - the ghosts of trees, as it were. What we see is, however, but a part of the transition from the wilderness to agriculture of which we spoke. The trees are " rung," that there may be more pasture for the sheep and cattle. Thousands of acres are gradually cleared in this way, and the withering stage is one of mournful ugliness. Still it is pleasant to reflect that a new beauty of rural homesteads and of lives of pastoral industry is slowly arising amid the ruin of the forest.

Some while before reaching Fernshaw the coach drew up at a small roadside cottage, where raspberries and cream were offered for sale, for this is a rich place for raspberry gardens, where capital incomes may be made by men who own quite small holdings. Of course the raspberries and cream were delicious, but it was the flower garden which caught my English eyes, with its crowded luxuriance of hollyhocks and fuchsias, yellow mouse ear, evening primroses, and honeysuckle, exactly recalling a thousand cottage gardens in Kent and Devonshire. It is a sweet, redeeming trait, that English love of flowers, covers a multitude of ugliness.

Soon after this the forest deepened, and the road passed through the dense serried ranks of giant gum trees rising from three to four hundred feet, and in the gullies even sometimes towering to five hundred. They are the tallest trees in the world - more than a hundred feet taller than the famous pines of the Yosemite Valley in California. The one desire is now to escape from the racket of jolting coach, to get away into the silence, and to listen and watch at pause among all this strangeness.

The village of Fernshaw is decidedly pretty; its small white homesteads are picturesquely gathered round about an open space of green sward, encompassed with mighty grey trunks, while at one end the Watts River



tumbles its noisy and never failing waters over a bed of dark rocks. This is not a place to linger long indoors for there is still time on the day of arrival to follow up one of the wood splitters tracks leading from the coach road a little way into the bush. It is but a little way, indeed, for as yet men have not penetrated far into these mountain fastness of primeval forest.

It was the gullies of the Dandenong ranges which won from Anthony Trollope his first exclamation of real satisfaction with Australian scenery, and certainly this is a region of stately loveliness which is probably unsurpassed throughout the world. I took one of these narrow tracks which lead in from the main road, and in a few moments I found myself in a solitude so intense that it seemed a presence in the air and over all things. Forest clothed ranges rose before, behind, and on either side of the gully - literally myriads of these enormous trees, their smooth, grey trunks rising two hundred feet and more before throwing out their first light branches, and their bases hidden in the dense undergrowth of musk, white Christmas flower, and the large feathery discs of the tree ferns. Then, too, the strange, wild creatures which have here their ancient dwelling places : flocks of gorgeous cockatoos, black ones, with bands and crests of yellow, their shrill, harsh cry softened in its fall through five hundred feet of fragrant summer air; the blue and orange parakeets, and the sumptuously attired lory, all in scarlet, with deep purple stains upon his wings; and the voice of the laughing jackass, strangest of all bird cries, beginning with a low croodle of soft content, then as his mirth heightens, rising slowly to a louder chuckle, and increasing till at last it bursts into one loud, riotous guffaw, as it gave itself in wild abandonment to its uncouth, irrepressible fun. The best time at which to hear these birds, and perhaps to feel deeply the charm of this virgin wonderland, is the last half hour of sunlight, what time the day birds are choosing their roosts for the night, when, looking westward down the gullies, we see between the giant boles of the trees, where the sun is sinking through an atmosphere of mellow gold, and, high above, the wooded summits of the ranges gleam with a moment's lustre of pink radiance and deep purple shadow. At this time I have heard the forest ring with jovial cachinnations of these merry birds, who know no melancholy of the twilight. Very impressive, too, is it when, after these sounds are hushed, there follows an interval of profound, breathless silence before it is broken by creatures that wake by night. It is but a brief moment, for twilight does not linger in the air in Australia.

Should there be a clear moon, there remains yet one more thing to be done before going indoors. It is very pleasant to re-enter the bush by the track which leads along near the banks of the Watts; the outline of the overhanging fern trees against the moonlight in the clear expanse above, and the broken moonlight shooting in silvery arrowheads upon the river running underneath, is a fairylike sight. One may hear, too, while listening to the bubbling note of the frogs and the multitudinous chirrup of the crickets, the measured beat upon the ground of a wallaby leaping past, and occasionally the comical complaining utterance of the small native bear, something between the growl of the wild beast of the forest and a domestic grunt.

Let us briefly sketch a second day at Fernshaw, spent in making the ascent of Mount Juliet. A short walk back along the main road, every foot of the way beautiful with the overhanging fringe of the drooping fern fronds and white embroidery of the Christmas flower; then a turning to the left, past the ranger's homestead, and the narrow scarcely discernible track leads on into the heart of the forest. Again I felt the sweet burden of utter solitude; the fresh morning air came laden with rich perfume, which it had gathered in filtering through the leaves of countless myriads of fragrant gums from solitudes " where there was never heard the sound of men." Again there was the sharp cry of the startled

parrots as they flashed their gleaming wings and vanished out of sight among the high branches. Lower down, over the tangled undergrowth, the butterflies flickered from flower to flower - black and gold swallow tails, with tiny brown shipper and other kinds, which we can remember to have seen among the clover fields of England. Probably these have come out in the egg in grass seed from the old country, like the daisies, dandelions, and ragweed, which sprinkle their bright crowns about the grassy footways of Victoria and Canada as they do under the spring hedgerows of our English lanes. The honey bees are here, to, with their gold banded cousins, murmuring of cowslip meadows and hyacinth wood beyond the seas.

About half way I stood for a while resting and looking down the long grey and coloured aisles. The stillness was intense; there was no breath of wind to stir the leaves, only the faintest hum of the insects in the sun, when suddenly, with a sound like a cry of agony which seemed to make the silence ache, somewhere not far off one of these gigantic patriarchs of the lonely forest, overdone with years, stretched out his four hundred feet of trunk in one terrific ruinous fall. It was very impressive; when all was still again, it seemed as though the sound had come from somewhere far back in the immemorial years. There was something of the solemnity of death about it. Towards the top of the mountain a number of gum trees had recently fallen, and in making my way round them I lost and failed to recover the track. The direction of the summit, however, could be guessed from this point, and working through the bush in as straight a line as was possible, I gained the clear space at the top after two more hours of rather hard climbing. The view from here is exceedingly grand; the whole country below - gully, plain, and hill - clothed with the forest of gum trees, acacia, mountain ash, and myrtle. It is quite unlike anything we ever see in England, not merely because we are looking across a real wilderness through the greater part of which no man has ever passed, but because of the very peculiar colour which overspreads the entire landscape. Many leaves of the gum tree are stained with streaks and spots of brilliant red, and this blending with the hues of other foliage, and with the pale haze which gathered in the hollows, the whole scene showed in the bright sunlight a dull reddish purple, like the colour of a ripe red plum with the bloom upon it. To the south west the faint blue of the sea in Port Phillip was dimly visible, but every other way range rose beyond range of purple wooded hills, till the view faded in the hazy distance. I remember ( and, indeed, am not likely ever to forget ) how the whole while I rested there a native thrush sang on incessantly, as if his heart were full of the rich intoxication of the fragrant air, while somewhere far below in the opposite gully a jackass laughed and chuckled in his solitary mirth.

1889

The Watts' River Scheme

To the editor of the Lilydale Express.

Sir- As was long ago anticipated by me, Mr Davidson has for some time past been forced to face the difficulties which were pointed out three years ago regarding the drainage of the roads which, for the distance of four miles on either side of Fernshaw, empty their contents into the river of the future water supply. How has this arisen? Through the gentleman intending to storm frame by doggedly and defiantly resolving to "build a castle in the air," in the great 115ft wall across the river for a weir and reservoir, extending from near Holland's Mill to Watts' Bridge at Fernshaw. By the adoption of this absurd and dangerous scheme, the whole filth of the roads will discharge into the river, and not only

pollute the dead water, but make the whole utterly unfit for use during a "fresh." Now all this could have been avoided if he had been guided by reason, by tapping the river about a mile above Fernshaw, where instead of a huge and dangerous wall, an immense reservoir could with the greatest ease have been excavated in the there ample valley, which assuredly is there ample. By the adoption of this plan all the road sewerage would have been entirely avoided, the inhabitants of Fernshaw left in their holdings, the dangers of a bursting of the great wall averted, and the disgraceful interference of the Graceburn rendered necessary. Where then, also, would be the necessity of damning every enterprise in the Upper Acheron by stultifying and negating the industries of saw-millers, selectors, carriers, agriculturalists, hotel-keepers, etc.? No matter what traffic passed over the roads, it would not in any way affect either the lead or the reservoir, and it is very possible the gentlemen must even yet yield to the adoption of the Upper Watts' Scheme. Further, the extension of the rail from Healesville to Alexandra would be carried on without affecting the purity of the water, and do more than anything else to disuse the road, as there would be little or no traffic on it. The puerile proposition to extend the "Reserve" four miles on the other, or north, side of the watershed of the Watts'- which has no more to do with the Watts' than Mr Davidson's claim to the heirship of the British Throne - is only a further confirmation of the shifts to which he has been driven to make up for his rashness, want of prudence, and forethought, and pertinaciously following his hobby in the adoption of the Lower Scheme, which means besides what has been before enumerated an extinction of the Upper Acheron rights and interests, besides crippling Healesville, Marysville, Buxton, and the surrounding district. If the gentleman has not prevented and cannot prevent the pollution of the Yan Yean Reservoir and its surroundings, which on the whole has been one failure after another, how can it be expected that he can superintend and properly and effectually finish the larger one in question? Failure! failure! Such proceedings are altogether intolerable, and it is to be hoped the Government and country will not yield to the propositions of a misanthropist, but appoint some unbiased and qualified engineer to carry out the works as they should be. I am,

EXPOSITOR  
Narbethong.

1890

#### A Deserted Village

The Water Supply Department has just completed its compensation payments to the last of the late inhabitants of Fernshaw - that interesting little hamlet on the banks of the Watts River which had to be doomed to destruction in order to preserve in its pristine purity the strong flowing mountain stream which is to double the water supply of the metropolis. Altogether, 30,000 pounds, in round numbers have been paid away in compensation to the persons who were compelled to give up their land and houses to the government and move elsewhere, this amount being distributed among 20 claimants. Thirty thousand pounds would have struck the tourists, who composed the chief portion of its fleeting population in its habitable days, as a very large sum to pay away for so small a place as Fernshaw. However, the people had to go and they would not go for less. The township was composed of a few settlers' homesteads only, the post-office, and a couple of hotels, and Mr Rendall's extensive raspberry plantation. Immediately the Watts water supply scheme was decided on, it was recognised that the settlements would become a source of danger! The offtake being two miles below the township, the drainage of the latter into the river could not fail to be a dangerous source of

pollution. Accordingly it was bought out and entirely demolished. Houses, fences and primitive streets have all disappeared now, leaving scarce a trace being, and the whole district, the large portion of which has always been in the possession of the Crown, given up to nature as a sacrifice to the growing needs of a great city 50 miles away.

The river itself, upon the sloping banks of which Fernshaw was so picturesquely situated, has an interesting history of its own. It was designed by nature as a tributary of the Yarra, but when the water supply scheme is completed in its entirety, it will be annexed in bulk by the engineers of the department, and turned bodily into channels running direct to Melbourne. In the early days of the colonies - the forties - the Messrs Brierly, who came from the Sydney side, took up all the country from Christmas Hills (now Yarra Glen) eastwards, for a cattle station. Their home was built in the locality of Mr Paul de Castella's well-known vineyard at Yering. The discoverer of the river was a man who gave it his name. He was a drover for Messrs Brierly and had charge of an out-station some distance up the Yarra, and while there found the tributary of the Yarra, which he named after himself. Watts was an assigned servant, who was, however, much trusted by his employers. He died in their employ in 1842. His last resting place was marked by a red-gum slab and a brass plate. At St. Helena willow was planted on the grave, which has now developed into a splendid tree, four feet in diameter. It has, curiously enough, absorbed the red gum slab in its trunk, but the head of it still juts out at an angle, and is shown as a curiosity to visitors to Yering.

The native name of the Watts River has been a matter of some speculation. Mr James Dawson, formerly a protector of the aborigines in the Western District, and who has taken great interest in the early history of the colony, and the preservation of native names investigated the matter, and arrived at the conclusion that "Maroondah" was the correct appellation. The blacks were in the habit of naming the rivers in sections, according to local peculiarities. The Watts had, therefore, several names, but Maroondah was its title at the point of off-take for the water supply scheme. The works which have a capacity equal to 50,000,000 gallons daily, but for the present will only be required to supply Melbourne with half that quantity, will be completed very shortly. Though the scheme has hitherto been known as the Watts', it will play such an important part in the future welfare of the metropolis, that it is under contemplation to change a rather doubtfully derived term to the old aboriginal name. Both the river and the water supply scheme will, therefore, probably be known in future as the Maroondah, and the re-christening will take place upon the opening of the new works.

1890

Found Dead in the Bush.

#### A Lonely Death

On Tuesday afternoon information was brought to Senior-constable Tevlin, in charge of the Healesville police station, to the effect that a corpse had been found in the scrub in the vicinity of Mount Monda. The information was brought to the officer by a man named Henry Wrenden, a laborer employed at the waterworks. His story was that on Tuesday morning he was out trapping opossums, and making his way through the scrub he came across a dead body. As it was too late in the day Senior-constable Tevlin decided to wait until Wednesday morning. On that morning he organised a search party, and they started for the place in a large conveyance. Owing to the rough and impassable nature of the country they had to leave the conveyance a short distance past the waterworks. After a

tramp of three miles they came to the spot where the body was lying. This spot seemed a veritable forest, so thick was the scrub and ferns. A small creek, known as "The Saw-pit Gully Creek," runs past the place. The spot used to be inhabited by splitters some twelve years since, but now has become as wild as the surrounding country. There is an old unused track about half a mile from the creek, but owing to the nature of the country it would be almost impossible to get to it. On proceeding to the place pointed out by Wrenden, who had acted as a guide to the party, a horrible sight was presented to their gaze. On the banks of this little sparkling mountain stream were the legs of a human body, fully clothed, and the feet in the water. A few yards further on was the body with arms torn out of the sockets and void of all flesh. A further search was then made for the head, and after some time the skull was discovered in the bed of the creek, and almost covered in mud. Close by and almost buried was a black boxer hat. The different portions were collected and laid together, and a search for more evidence was made in the locality. A common glass tumbler was found close by, where deceased had probably sat down to drink. About 10 yards down the creek the deceased's coat was found by Guard Phillips, who was among the party. A spectacle case was found in one of the pockets, and between the coat and body were found a pair of plain spectacles. Deceased was evidently an elderly man as the scalp of the skull appeared to be bald, but some grey hair was found adhering to parts of it. The whiskers were also found, and on being washed presented a grey appearance. After a thorough search of the locality had been made and nothing else found, Senior constable Tevlin searched the rest of the clothing and found the sum of 7s 6d in the pocket of the vest. The body was then placed on a stretcher and brought to Healesville police station for the purpose of holding an inquiry.

The body was dressed in a suit of superior blue serge, white shirt, flannel undershirt, white collar, and black satin tie. A pair of watertight boots were on the feet, and appeared to have been recently soled. The hat had the name "Woodrow and Son's, manufacturers" on the inner band. Senior constable Tevlin is of opinion that the body is that of some unfortunate tourist who had got into the bush and perished. He describes the bush in this part as almost impenetrable. No papers were found on the body, nor in fact anything that would lead to identification. The officer also thinks that the body had lain there for some months, and that it was torn to pieces by the wild dogs which abound in the locality.

An inquiry was held at the courthouse, Healesville, yesterday, by Mr Green, J.P. Evidence bearing out the above facts was given by Wrenden and Senior-constable Tevlin. Dr. J.C. Baird, who made an examination of the body, in course of evidencesaid : There were no signs of fracture, wound or any marks of violence. I would judge height to be about five feet six inches to five feet nine inches, and age to be about sixty years. No evidence could be derived from the internal organs, and there was no means of ascertaining the cause of death. The man had no doubt been dead some four of five months. On searching the clothes I found a four-bladed tortoise-shell handle pocket knife in the right trousers pocket. In the left pocket I found a folded paper, which on examination proved to be two pawn tickets, one of which was issued by the Phoenix Loan office, 250 Russell street, Melbourne, and bore the number, "1443," being a pledge ticket for a sack coat and vest, on which was loaned 5s. It bore date "17th March, 1890," and was in favor of "John Williams, Queensberry street, Carlton." The other ticket was issued by the National Loan office, in favor of John Williams, Queensberry street." The number of this ticket was not discernible, nor was the month, only the date "19th - 1890." In the shirt were pearl studs and one pearl solitaire. I am acquainted with the locality where the body was found. A stranger would

easily get lost there. From the clothing I would conclude that the man was not of the laboring class.

A verdict was recorded of found dead. The remains were buried in Healesville Cemetery, Mr Green reading the usual burial service. The police intend making further search in the locality where the body was found, but it is very doubtful if anything more will be brought to light.

1890

Brutal Murder

Near Healesville

The Body Horribly Mutilated

Discovered

At Foot of Mt Riddle

Whilst the magistrates were holding court at Healesville on Thursday, information was received that a most brutal murder was discovered about two and a half miles from Healesville, that morning. Mr Allan was at Mr Steel's paddock at the foot of Mt Riddell, looking after horses, and near the edge of the dam, saw the face of a man protruding out of the earth, and partially covered with a few green bushes. He removed the bushes sufficiently to satisfy himself that a human body lay there, and after replacing them, proceeded at once to Healesville, to report the matter to the police. Senior constable Tevlin, accompanied by Constable McLernon and a party of men, proceeded immediately to the scene of the supposed murder. Near the north-west corner of the paddock, immediately inside the fence, is a hut uninhabited. A search was made there, but nothing of importance discovered, except that a fire had evidently been made in the chimney within the past few days, and a 1 pound note was found on the floor. On proceeding to the dam, which is about 200 yards from the hut, the body was found on the outer side of the bank, about ten feet from the water. On removing the few sprigs of gum branches, the face and left shoulder were quite exposed. The other portion of the body was covered with about an inch of mud. On removing it the body was fully exposed, lying on its back, and apparently quite fresh but frightfully mutilated. There is a deep gash on top of the head through the skull, two and a half inches long, a deep cut into the bone on each cheek, and another at the back of the neck, nearly severing the head from the trunk. Both arms were cut off above the elbow, and both legs above the knee. The body was quite nude. What appeared to be a long white turban was tied around the neck, evidently for the purpose of dragging the man's body along. As the limbs could not be found near the body it was thought they were thrown in the dam, which contains five feet of water. Constable McLernon went in but failed to discover anything. The late heavy rains had completely obliterated all marks that may have been made. A return was again made to the vicinity of the hut. About 20ft. from the hut is a small heap of logs with about four feet clear space to the fence. Here was found a lot of ferns broken off and laid down as though for a bed. On removing the ferns a quantity of blood was seen, and it is supposed that this is the actual spot where the murder was committed. On looking underneath the hut the legs and arms were found. The remains were collected and brought into Healesville, where in due course an inquiry will be held.

The body is that of a Hindoo, supposed to be an Indian hawker, and apparently about 5ft. 6 or 7 inches high. The murder was evidently committed for the purpose of robbery, and was probably done with a heavy pickaxe that was in the hut. The murder is supposed to have been

committed about last Sunday or Monday, and probably by his mate, although how he or they could have got in that particular place is beyond conjecture, as there is no visible road leading to or near it. The nearest house is half a mile away, and beyond it towards Mt. Riddell is dense forest.

Two black trackers from Coranderrk were sent to the scene of the murder by Mr Shaw, at the request of Constable Tevlin, and on further search being made it was discovered that the murder and mutilation was committed at a distance of some four chains to the north of the hut. At this spot was found a quantity of blood, splinters of bone and portions of flesh and hair, also a tomahawk and pair of blucher boots. On the tomahawk appeared to be blood. The boots and tomahawk were brought into Healesville.

1891

The following is an extract from Jim Barrett's book: The First Bushwalker, The Story of Fred Eden, published in 1996. Fred walked from Melbourne to Sydney via a part of land that now forms the Yarra Ranges National Park. Used with permission.

Tuesday the 15 th of September

This day I passed some extensive vineyards and after a while crossed the Yarra Yarra, here a clear stream, pretty deep and flowing between thickly wooded banks. The weather was wet and cloudy and by the time I arrived at Healesville the mountains which here appeared to be already of considerable size were covered with mist and a cold rain fell occasionally. Altogether I felt very uncomfortable and entered an Hotel with my puppy where I sat in the bar for the rest of the afternoon and evening feeling lonely amidst the noise and jabber around. These bars are a confounded nuisance. A traveller does not want to be drinking always, what he wants is a good warm room with table, chairs and something to read, not a polished bar like a chemists shop. Although there was no comfort in this Hotel I had to pay 6d for every drink and 1/6d for every meal; but I had no choice, the weather was too bad to camp out in. Healesville is much frequented by people from Melbourne in summer who come to see the mountains. Healesville, Ferneshaw [Fernshaw], Maryville [Marysville] and Narbethong are according to guide books the great attraction for people who wish to contemplate mountain scenery, but in my opinion you have to go up to Matlock before you get a fine view and know you are in the mountains, whilst Mts Lookout, Useful and about the Jourdan [Jordan] and Aberfeldy is finer still. All scenery is beautiful to me, be it flat plains and swamps, or wild mountains; but you hear a lot of talk about Fernshaw and Marysville which places are not to be compared with the Aberfeldy and Mt Lookout of which as well as of the MacAllister and scores of other beautiful districts nothing seems to be known. Gradually the afternoon passed away and I retired early to rest.

Wednesday the 16 th of September

The road after leaving Healesville ascends considerably through fine woods; close to here there is a turn off which leads to Mt. Mondo [Monda] there are also some waterfalls in the vicinity but I was too heavily packed to go out of my way to see them. A couple of miles from Healesville I passed a large Hotel on a hill close to the roadside. It was surrounded by forest which covered all the dark gloomy slopes around. There was little view from the road although there may be some from the Hotel for all I know. At any rate it seemed to me that I saw scores of better places for a mountain Hotel further on. The road was being repaired about here, it is a very good coach road all the way. I followed it which was as far as Marysville. At noon I arrived at Fernshaw which is

at the foot of the Black [Blacks] Spur. Here I expected to find a village, but there was not a single house although formerly somebody had lived here for there was an orchard besides the remains of hedges and garden. By the side of a fine stream that comes out of the thickly wooded mountains I sat and rested awhile. I was now about to enter properly into the mountains. The map I had was a very poor one and the information I got from people was poorer still, so I had to see and learn for myself. As I have already noticed the valleys along the watercourses in mountainous country are often if not generally the last parts opened up in Australia whilst you would think they would be the first. The roads into a new mountainous country are not made up the valleys but up a spur and continue often along the highest part of the ridge. Thus you sometimes find a valley inhabited far up, but that has no outlet down the valley, the only way out being over some mountain perhaps right at the head of the valley. Omeo for instance where the main road is over the ranges at the head of the valley and not the Mitta Mitta down which there is only a very rough track. In Switzerland the outlet for trade, commerce and traffic is always down the valley in every case I know. Of course the countries are different in every way, the formation of the mountains also. These mountains about here are drained by the Yarra which empties itself by Melbourne into Port Phillip Bay and although it's source is at Mt Baw Baw ( The Yarra River source is not at Mt Baw Baw, it is close to Mt Gregory, which is near the western end of the Baw Baw Plateau ), at no great distance from the capital, yet the greater part of its course is wild, uninhabited and but little known. From Lillydale you can go up a little farther to what is called Launching Place but above that the course of the stream is through the darkest gloomiest solitude imaginable, the only human beings living further up being a few solitary gold diggers, and they, an example of what is stated above, don't go down the river at all, but come and go, and get all they want by ascending to the track leading along the main Dividing Range of the Colony. I had when first studying the map of these parts, thought of ascending the Yarra and coming over from it's source to the valley of the Thomson or Aberfeldy River, but guessing how things were, the absence of settlers and tracks and the density of the vegetation and wilderness of the country, I had soon given up that idea and determined to go to Matlock by what is called the Yarra track leading along the Main Divide to the north of the Yarra.

All this mountainous country between here and Bright, Omeo and far to the East was once a rich gold yielding country and overrun by miners in all directions; little towns sprung up and thrived and either sunk again to a world forgotten unknown little village, or disappeared altogether leaving in some places hardly any remains. In some cases however the places continued to exist like Woods' Point, or grew larger and important centres like Bright and Omeo. Omeo is hardly a case to the point for that district has farming and grazing as a mainstay. Many once thriving places however as before stated (have) almost entirely disappeared. In those times there were tracks which are now grown over and forgotten, with shanties and houses along them now fallen and ruined. Nothing is more interesting and melancholy than to come onto these remains, to follow these mhas made, also in claims north and south of the body of stone. The stone is a very high class, laminated quartz, and rich in mineral. A prospecting battery is on the ground, and from about 7 cwt, of stone a return was won of 1 oz. 4 dwts of retorted gold. This seems to show that the late manager of this claim knew very little about his business, and he was walking over indications of this lode for about five months, pooh poohing the idea that gold could be on the lease without his knowledge.

The Victorian Mount Morgan shaft is going down very slowly.

The alluvial diggers' prayers have been heard. Of the few claims that are still working two or three have received their Christmas boxes (4 and 5 oz to the paddock), and the others are expecting their Santa Claus in



the next paddock. I hope they get it, as my last paddock only went 17 grains such are the ups and downs of digging.

The Twin Jacks, Frenchman's is anxiously awaiting track cutting so that they can get their machinery down.

The other leases that are being prospected are giving satisfactory results, so that the "Guardians" prophecy of some months back is coming true.

Our friend Mr. White, the surveyor, has been surveying more leases around here, and after Christmas they will most likely be prospected fully.

1897

## Marysville

The British Mount Morgan claim has suspended operations for a while.

The Victorian Mount Morgan claim is still prospecting. They are calling a meeting on the 25 th of January to receive reports and half yearly balance sheets, and deal with other important matters relating to the company.

The Santa Claus tunnel is in 350 feet.

The Glen Cairn shaft was flooded by the late heavy rains; but will be in work again this week.

The Big River, Shaw's, Twin Jac. Then the ridges, when once the top is gained present often a fairly level surface to travel along with few obstacles to be overcome, whilst the bottom of valleys often abound in obstacles. Again I have noticed in Australia that often you come far up into a fine broad open valley and on following it down instead of getting broader and leveller you get into narrow gorges and broken country of the roughest description. This is often the case for a few miles just above where a river leaves the mountains and emerges into the plain country. There perhaps you will find the roughest part of its whole course and on seeing it would never imagine that there was a fine broad valley farther up. As instances of valleys getting narrower farther down their course take the MacAlister, Livingstone and Mitta Mitta. An example of the above to a certain extent is also to be found in Burragorang in New South Wales. In the Valley of the Snowy River also high up are fine broad pasture lands, lower down it runs through forbidding defiles in the mountains for a great distance. Some how or other though it seemed to me that besides the above reasons, the people here do not realise that the natural highways out of valleys are down the rivers, or if they do, they or the Government or both have too much work on hand to allow them to undertake making roads down the bottom of the valleys and out onto the plains, but content themselves with those tracks and roads they already have. Or when a new road is proposed some scheming community will intrigue to get it made to benefit itself and nobody bothers about natural outlets. Somehow this feature of Australian mountain valleys struck me as a peculiarity.

I was expecting to find some unused track leading from hereabouts eastward into the mountains and as I afterwards heard there is one leading over Mt. Strickland and up onto the Yarra track, without going near Marysville or Narbethong at all. In fact I heard that there once was a whole miners village on the flat summit of Mt Strickland. I saw just beyond what is called Fernshaw a track branching to the right marked Morley's track, and on enquiring of a passer by where it led to was told 'Oh nowhere, away into the mountains', so I determined to keep the main road and commenced the ascent of the Black Spur, the road being cut through dense forest with thick undergrowth and plenty of fine tree ferns; but there was no view. However on getting to the top I had a view down the other side into a pretty valley surrounded by mountains lying at

a good depth below me. It was now growing late so I determined to camp where I was. Leaving my baggage with the puppy tied to it I went down a little farther to get water which I soon found and returned to my things night having now set in whilst the bright moon was shining on the mountains around and into the misty depth of the valley and the puppy was yelping away where I left him, his piteous cries echoing through the woods and great was his joy at my return. The top of this Black Spur which is on the Main Dividing Range is several thousand feet above sea level, although you would not think it and the timber on top and all around is high and dense. But the night was very cold and although I had my waterproof covering above me to keep off dew and wet, the cold came up through the ground on which I lay and made itself felt and very unpleasantly.

Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of September

This morning, having packed up I walked down the hill to the little place called Narbethong, situated in the valley at the foot of the Black Spur.

Crossing a pretty little stream I entered the Hotel at Narbethong and had a good breakfast and then sat for a while on the verandah in the warm sun. From Narbethong the road led on through country mostly cleared and some cultivated, passing some houses and close to what appeared to be a fine estate on the left; at the entrance gate to this latter the Marysville road turns abruptly to the right and after a while the Acheron River is reached at which spot on the map the place Granton is marked but as yet not a house is to be seen. Probably the site for a town has been surveyed here. From here the road ascends through woods for a long time until within a mile or two of Marysville down to which it descends again. I entered this place during a pelting shower and went to the last inn you come to where I remained for the night.

Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> of September

Marysville is a little village with two Hotels and a police station. The coach that runs between Healesville, the railway terminus on the Melbourne side and the terminus of the line which is to run from the Goulbourne [Goulburn] valley to Alexandra when completed, passes through here and Narbethong. The place is often visited by tourists from Melbourne and although pretty there is nothing grand or striking about the scenery. This morning I went to see one of the chief attractions of the place, the Sutherland [Steavenson] Falls, which are situated at the head of a narrow valley or gorge about 3 miles from the village. I found a good sized torrent pouring over the mountainside down a narrow, rocky, almost perpendicular channel surrounded by dense vegetation. The place is nice and cool and retired and that is about all. There is nothing grand or striking. It was about 10 o'clock when I left the village and after crossing the bridge at the farther end I left the coach road leading to the north and turned to my right up a hill. This is the commencement of what is called the Yarra track to Matlock and Woods Point; it is passable for drays in summer time. In winter it is soft and often blocked for carts with snow. It ascends by a spur to Mt Arnold and continues along the range forming the Divide between the waters that flow north into the Murray and thence to the sea at Lake Alexandrina in South Australia, and those that flow south into the Yarra and thence into Port Phillips Bay. The first 10 or 11 miles are up hill, the road here being a good one with sidings cut and gutters as far as Cumberland Creek 13 or 14 miles, but after that it is nothing but a cleared track through the bush, for once arrived at the top of the range beyond Cumberland Creek it follows pretty closely so that on the whole you can almost say that the middle of the track is the watershed. Luckily for me I had only proceeded a few 100 yards up this road when I was overtaken by a young man with a wagon and 4

horses, so we continued together, walking and riding as best suited us for about 9 or 10 miles. It was almost all up hill through forests that prevented your getting a view of the country though at times you had pretty glimpses of deep valleys and wooded peaks and mountain sides. At Marysville we left the last habitations for a while, between there and Matlock a distance of about 50 miles there are only three habitations, namely a splitters hut at Cumberland Creek, and further on two accommodation houses. We proceeded up what is called Rubbeley's [Robley's] Spur onto Mt. Arnold on which there appears to be a cattle run for there was a fence along the road for a while. It is about here I believe that the old track over Mt Strickland mentioned above, joins the Yarra track. Just a little before we got to the top of the ascent not far from a turning called Tommy's Bend we arrived at a clear space in the woods where we boiled some water for tea and ate some dinner. Here, the young driver informed me, he was born. In the time of the Woods Point rush a shanty stood here belonging to his father, but they had left it years ago carting away all the wooden framework to help build their new home down in the valley so that nothing hardly was left. I believe the road passes very near the summit of Mt Arnold which the young fellow thought was about 6,000 ft high ( Mt Arnold is about 4,000 ft high ) but I think it can hardly be that. It is wooded to the top, so that from no point, at least not along the road, can a clear view be obtained although now and then glimpses of deep valleys and distant hills are obtained through the trees. All the mountains about here, although of considerable height appear to be wooded right to their summits. On Mt Strickland I heard there was a clear space. On passing Mt Arnold you can see that there is a deep valley before you on your right which is probably part of the Yarra basin and for a while there is a pretty sharp descent to Cumberland Creek, a stream which runs into the Yarra where there are a couple of huts the one this side of the stream being inhabited by a woodsplitter, the other, formerly an accommodation house, being empty. About a mile or two this side of the creek we were delayed for over an hour by a large tree having fallen across the road, which we had to haul on one side with the horses it being luckily already chopped through in two places by someone before us. This crossing of the Cumberland Creek is a lonely place, miles away from anywhere in the midst of the wild forest and mountains. The waggon stopped here to take a load of palings and return, the palings having been got in readiness by the father of the young man I had come with who just came up as we arrived with a couple of pack horses, and wild ferocious looking bushman he was, dark and swarthy with a big black beard. He was in a rage with one of his packhorses which he knocked about in a most brutal manner. I thought he would have smashed all its bones. I would have liked to have interfered had I thought it advisable. Hearing it was only 4 or 5 miles to an empty house further on I continued although it was already late. Night fell and I was still toiling through the dark gloomy forest. The moon rose and at length, being very tired I arrived at an open space in which stood, clear distinct and ghostly in the bright moonlight, a couple of good sized buildings. So good and well preserved did they appear that I hesitated a moment to enter and went round to reconnoitre leaving the puppy squealing by my baggage. Suddenly his squealing stopped and I returned and stepped in through the window into a good room with two small bedrooms adjoining. In the large room was a table with some articles, tins and bottles on it, an armchair cut out of a huge block or log of wood and covered with rough cloth and a couch were also in the room. I stuck a candle into a candlestick I found and looked round. All appeared as if the place was inhabited or as if the occupants had only recently left it. I made a fire in the fireplace and put my blankets on the couch and then discovered that the puppy was missing. Intending to fetch some water at the same time I stepped out to look for him. It was very cold, the sky being clear

and as this place is several thousand feet above the sea it is cold at night and in the morning there was a sharp frost. At the side of the house I found a tank sunk in the ground, partly boarded over and stooping down to fill my tin I heard something. whine and the next moment I pulled out the poor half drowned puppy who had fallen in when I went round to reconnoitre. Half frozen and shivering I took him to the fire and dried and fed him whilst I sat in the armchair and warmed myself and ate some supper. The appearance of the room made me expect somebody to come in every moment and I started now and again, the long walk through the dark lonely bush having bred strange fancies in my brain; but the following day I heard that the place had not been inhabited for years, excepting by an opossum trapper or gold seeker who would camp here for a while at rare intervals.

Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> of September

On getting up I had a good look at the place by daylight. It had evidently formerly been an Inn doing good business for there was a good sized bar beside some large rooms which served probably as dining room and parlour, several small bedrooms, kitchen, outhouses and stables. This shows that there must have been a considerable amount of traffic on this road formerly for besides this place, known as Walkers', I passed two more deserted Inns between here and Matlock besides two which are still inhabited. Round this house the forest was cleared for a space and there was a yard and what had evidently been a garden and a cultivated field. Although on the mountains there was no distant view all you could see was trees and trees everywhere. I did not proceed far along the track before I was overtaken by a lad on horseback; it was the postman who, once a week I think, takes the mails from Marysville to a place known as Fehrig's [Fehring's] accommodation House about 28 miles on the track to Matlock. The Matlock mails go round by Woods' Point to which place a coach runs from Mansfield in the North. Occasionally they go by Walhalla and Jericho in the south. This boy told me that in winter there was often a good lot of snow on this road. He had only started from Marysville that morning and was going to Fehrigs [Fehring's] and back again to Shaw's Hotel 7 miles this side of Fehrig's; then on the morrow he would return to Marysville. After he left me I met three men on horseback, two young and well dressed, the other a middle aged rough looking man with a black beard. The two first were mounted policemen in plain clothes, who had been up to arrest the latter, a gold digger who driven another digger out of his hut and threatened him with an axe. It must be remembered that generally in such places these huts are put up by a digger who leaves, and then the hut belongs to nobody in particular. Other diggers come and take possession and go again. It is thus easy to imagine how a quarrel arose. Soon after this I came to where there was evidently a great fall in the country to the North and on going a little way from the track I could see down into a large valley of great depth surrounded by wood clad mountains. This valley is I believe known as the Big River valley and is uninhabited. To the East, Across this valley, was an open green patch with huts distinctly visible on it. I could not guess what place this was but heard afterwards it is Matlock nearly 2 days journey from here on foot round by the road along the top of the range, but apparently quite close across the valley. Although it looked from here as though hanging over the valley it is in reality a couple of miles behind the mountain which really borders this valley. From this point the track follows the top of the range very closely for a while. On one side of you is the Big River valley and on the other the Yarra. Another deserted shanty is passed and late in the afternoon I came to some cultivated fields and further on to a little Inn called Shaw's Hotel, all situated on the top of the Divide. Old Shaw was just outside so I bought a few necessities from him and hearing it was only 7 miles to the next house I decided to

go on. The chief customers of Shaws are I understand a few diggers who wash for gold in the creeks down by the Yarra and thereabouts, for there is very little traffic along this route now. The diggers, so Old Fehrig the man who keeps the next house told me, have often no money to buy clothes or food but when they get a few ounces of gold they go to Shaw's pay their debts and remain drinking there until all is spent. These diggings are poor on the whole, but now and again the digger may come across a patch out of which he gets several ounces in a short time. Old Fehrig said he believed there were creeks in which there was plenty of gold for the country was not as yet half explored and that on some of the thickly wooded slopes of the Yarra valley nobody had ever been at all. The diggers live down on the Yarra mostly, several miles from here along rough tracks hardly noticeable at all. The diggers live down on the Yarra mostly, several miles from here along rough tracks hardly noticeable at all. It is about five miles down to where the Yarra flows darkly through the thick vegetation between the massive gloomy slopes that rise on either side, and solitary and strange also is the life of the men who live there. A strange history perhaps could some of them relate did they choose to talk of themselves. It must not be imagined that there are many diggers here now, perhaps there are only 7 or 8 altogether who live within reach of this place. Now and again in winter some opossum trappers will come this way and camp in some old hut and trap and shoot opossums the skins of which are very good for rugs and such like and fetch from 7 to 18 shillings a dozen at Melbourne. Then in summertime a few drays will pass on the way to Matlock and now and then a mine manager, surveyor, prospector or other traveller, and now I have mentioned all the people who are likely to enter Shaw's little bar or to tread the Yarra Track out this far. After leaving Shaw's the sky became overcast and the wind cold and humid and I felt extremely downhearted and melancholy. It seemed as though in all the world I had nothing to look for and expect, nothing to care about; that little puppy, said I, is probably the only living creature that is attached to you. But if you have nothing more to look for in the world at least in these gloomy woods you have nothing to fear and are far away from vice and trouble. Then a feeling of apathy came over me, you have to live, so tramp on and through the woods and mountains, the future has now no interest, the past you cannot change. Submit to your fate and what the future brings, joy that lasts an hour or two, and then gives place to gloom, feeling ever varying. I know now by experience that all is unstable, even this present feeling of despondency will pass away in a short time, I almost wish it would last, but nothing, nothing lasts, as the preacher says, 'all is vanity'. I looked down to my left there was the valley to the north, clear and bright; but a little further on I could peer through the huge trees down to my right into a dark, wooded abyss where flows the Yarra, and onto the massive gloomy slopes that border that invisible stream on the south, overhung with clouds from which showers were falling. I saw we were going to have a rough night and hurried on to obtain some sort of shelter and by dusk arrived at where there were some wooden huts and some cultivated land around them. A little old man with a woman and boy were driving some cows into the stables and bawling at one another in a language I could not understand. At first I thought they were Chinese but on looking at the woman who was dark and swarthy with a fine big nose and good features I thought they were red Indians and was wondering how they got there, run away from some American circus perhaps, I thought. There was a fire outside by which I put down my things and warmed myself as soon the woman and boy came up and began talking, they speaking English pretty well but in a foreign accent. At last I made out that they were Germans speaking one of the Prussian dialects. The man was a German called, Fehrig[Fehring] the woman some relation of his; she was dark and must have been handsome when young. She was somewhat masculine in her

demeanour and I believe is known about here as dirty Trine or Katrina for she is rather slovenly I confess. I fancy she was of Wendish ( Wendish - a Slavic people occupying the region between the Elbe and Oder Rivers in Saxony and Prussia ) or Slav extraction. There was no place but a wretched hut without a fireplace to camp in, so I decided to stop in the house and to pay for my accommodation as I had plenty of money ( It should be remembered that although Fred wrote that he had plenty of money, the ten pounds which he started with represented an expenditure of only ten cents, in 1996 value, for each day of his journey ); so we all entered a large room in which there was an immense fireplace with a good fire burning in it. In another corner by a window was an immense fireplace with a good fire burning in it. In another corner by a window was a little bar for the old german sold gooseberry wine, biscuits and such like and although he had no licence, brandy also to the diggers and others when he thought it safe to do so, which no doubt pays very well so that if fined once or again ( for it is very seldom anybody would denounce him up here ) he could afford to pay. It is only in such very out of the way places that illicit grog selling takes place now in Victoria, although formerly I believe it was very frequent especially at Gold-rushes. I heard a story which I believe is true about some men who had a sly grog shop somewhere about Ballarat in the early days. The road up was in a terrible state from the rains and they were fetching up a whole load of spirits which if they could get it safely up and sell it, would bring them in a little fortune. Whilst still a long way from their destination they got hopelessly bogged and could proceed no further; so they camped and by spreading reports and other devices started a bogus rush to the vicinity, giving out they were diggers and had made a rich find. Soon crowds of diggers flocked to the place, they started their grog shop, sold their grog and cleared out with the proceeds leaving the diggers, who soon discovered there was no gold there, to curse them and clear out also.

These people, the Fehrig's, lived in regular german style and drank a mixture they called coffee instead of tea. After supper the old man got two glasses of gooseberry wine for himself and for me, a very good stuff I thought it. He and the woman although very peculiar, were intelligent on the whole. The old man had been here from the earliest days of the Woods Point and other digging that were rushed in this district and this place was his own property. The boy, who was fair haired, had a remarkably pretty face, half parted lips and soft liquid eyes. Happy child, bred in these wilds he knew but little yet of the trouble and misery of this world. Cows, dogs, horses, opossums and such pets were companions and playthings, how far better than the wine, women, cards and such playthings as one gets down below at Melbourne and thereabouts.

Sunday the 20 th of September 1891

I stopped at this place all day, the weather being cold and rainy. In the afternoon I started to go down to the Yarra where there are some diggers. The track which turns off to the left a little way back on the road I came yesterday is an indistinct one and I did not find it at once. I followed it down but a very little way and returned to the house and sat by the fire whilst it rained and blew outside.

If you want to know more about the Yarra Track and Fred's trip Sydney and his life history you will have to buy Jim Barrett's book. I found it a fascinating read, as any bushwalker probably will.

1894

Intelligence was brought into Healesville last evening that four lady visitors to Gracedale House had undertaken an excursion to Condon's Gully

a most picturesque spot at the foot of Mount Monda, but nevertheless a very difficult place to find except by those well acquainted with the locality, and that at a late hour they had not returned consequently the conclusion was arrived at that they had missed their way in the evening darkness and had in plain words "got bushed". Constable Hocking lost no time in organising a search party, and with a number of willing volunteers at once proceeded to the locality named with the object of rescuing the adventurous tourists from their very unpleasant predicament. Information received just before going to press is to the effect that the party consisted of Mrs Quick and daughter and two ladies who were staying at Gracedale House, who were accompanied by Mrs Heatherton and her daughter in the capacity of guides. The gully was reached in due course, where the party "camped" for refreshments. The visiting ladies together with Mrs and Miss Quick then proceeded up the creek with the object of collecting some specimens of the many beautiful ferns to be found there, and on their return by some means they missed the camp, and wandered on till the fact was forced upon their minds that they were "out of their latitude" and unmistakeably lost." Mrs Heatherton, who had remained at the camp deeming the absence of her fair charges rather prolonged and darkness coming on apace, determined to follow up the gully in search of them, but nothing could be seen or heard of them. She then decided that the only alternative was to summon assistance, which she at once set about doing, with the result that search parties went out as previously mentioned. Mr Almand, the officer in charge of this section of the metropolitan water supply scheme accompanied Mr Hanrahan, groom at Gracedale, who were in advance of the town contingent, were fortunate in discovering the wanderers. In reply to their repeated "cooees" they heard a faint answer in the distance, and on proceeding in the direction, the wet and shivering lost ones were discovered near a large log, determined to await the turn of events or the rise of the morning sun. Beyond the miserably wet and cold condition in which they were in, and the dreadful thoughts of having to weather out the night under such inhospitable conditions whether they liked it or not, the stray ones bore the situation - we were going to say "manfully." They were escorted to more congenial quarters, and during the administration of necessary "restoratives," congratulations were interchanged upon the fact that results were not as bad as they might have been.

1895

Everybody must admit that Mr Davidson, the Inspector General of Public Works, is undoubtedly an engineering genius, and every credit must be given to him having added to the water supply of the Metropolis and its suburbs the pellucid waters of the Maroondah River and several smaller streams in the vicinity. Some thirteen years ago Mr. Davidson viewed from a high peak on the main Dividing Range the lovely valley of the Watts (Maroondah) and made up his mind that it should be utilised in the direction stated, the construction of the works and the diversion of the river now being matters of history. Unfortunately for the residents of this district the matter did not end there. Mr Davidson is not satisfied that the water leaves the river so pure as it ought to be, and this in the face of the monthly analysis undertaken by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of works, and now for some years past Minister after Minister connected with the Lands Department has been asked to prevent settlement of any kind within a stated distance of the watershed. The incontrovertible fact that the drainage from the area of the 40,000 acres which is now sought to be absorbed in the Metropolitan Board's rapacious maw, runs on the other slope altogether from the Watts Valley and into the Acheron River, thence on to the Murray and the sea, does not appear to receive the smallest consideration from the powers that be; their

grand aim and object, to all appearances is to block up every inch of the most fertile valley and timber lands in the country, to the ruination of trade and almost every branch of industry in this Providentially empowered district. And apart from the Board's desire to alienate the valuable land referred to there is an openly - expressed determination to carry their power so far as to close the Fernshaw road altogether! Surely the exercise of high handed power like this will never be allowed by an already crushed community in these parts. In pursuit of this policy the Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, who is Mr Davidon's aider and abettor seized the opportunity of the boards solicitor occupying the position of Minister of Lands to invite him to inspect the country, and on Saturday last Mr Best journeyed to Healesville by the first train from Melbourne, accompanied by Sir James Patterson, M.L.A., Hon. J. G. Duffy, Postmaster General, the Hon. Victor Hood ( a scion of the British aristocracy ) the "White Knight" Mr E. G. Fitz Gibbon and a number of other gentlemen prominent in the political and official world of Melbourne, not forgetting special representatives of the "Age" and "Argus." The whole party proceeded from the Terminus Hotel in drays supplied by Mr Daly and on horseback to the disputed territory, followed at a respectful distance by a majority of members of the Healesville Shire Council, who were determined to fight against the Board's encroachment if need be to the bitter end. A supply of good things had been previously dispatched by Mrs Daly to the trysting place, in charge of a waiter dressed in the orthodox manner as befitted the dignity of the occasion so that everything was as it should be. On arrival at the top of the Black Spur, those of the party who could get horses to ride proceeded through the bush in the direction of the territory the Board wished to have reserved, until they were abruptly stopped by a large bushfire, which doubtless had been started in honor of the visit. Their intention being frustrated they returned to the feast. Speeches were made all round. The Shire Councillors entered their protest through the medium of President (Cr. E. J. Hall), Crs. Nichols, Sloss and Clements, the Chairman of the Board stated his case; and the Minister of Lands then said that he would carefully consider the matter and give his decision later on. Thus the time was put in very pleasantly, full justice being done to the dainty dishes provided while the beer of the Shire Council and the champagne of the Board went round to the entire gratification of all, and then the whole party returned merrily homeward catching the 7.50 pm train to town. With the merits and demerits of the Board's intention to "grab" a further slice of our valuable territory we will not deal further here, but content ourselves by asking "Who pays the Piper?"

1896

Gold in Sandstone.

Government Geologists Report on Reefton find.

Mr R. Murray, the Government Geologist, has presented an official report to the Minister of Mines of the alleged discovery of a gigantic lode on the Reefton track, some 15 miles north of Marysville, on which a special representative of "The Age" also reported in Monday's issue. After describing the locality and the means by which it may be reached, Mr Murray goes on to say :-

The ground has evidently been tested long ago by former prospectors, and it appears that good prospects were obtained in loaming and trenching; but the present occupiers, Messers. Clingan and party, have made more exhaustive trials and express themselves satisfied with the results. There is, however, no actual dyke or lode, but a broad belt or group of silurian rich lands strongly impregnated with pyrites and with the brown ironstone resulting from their decomposition, and also with



veins and patches of quartz. The rocks consist of quartzites, sandstone, mudstones, containing numerous vughs filled with a mixture of ironstone and quartz resembling some of the ore of Mount Morgan in Queensland; but as regards features the resemblance to the descriptions given of the later place ceases here. These appear to be more than 100 feet in width and considerable length, within which gold prospects are stated to be obtainable either by loaming or crushing and washing samples of the more ferruginous rock.

At the principal site of operation there are numerous cross trenches and a shaft about 30 feet in depth of formation. These all show the ferruginous matter, both pyritous and oxidised, with quartz in veins and vughs occurring plentifully throughout the mass, but the oxidised material does not seem to extend far below the surface, and the pyrites predominate with increasing depth. In the shaft there is a succession of alternating of hard and soft layers of rock in the form of flatly underlying floors, and intermixed with these are the veins, bunches and vughs of quartz and ferruginous matter, the later being in all stages from underdecomposed pyrites to completely oxidised ore.

It is stated that a quantity of the stuff raised from the shaft without special selection was sent to Bendigo for trial, and yielded at the rate of 25 dwt per ton. I took at random some small samples, and on treatment by ordinary dollying and washing obtained a fair prospect of fine gold,, besides much pyrites. There is no doubt there as to the auriferous character of the formation, but before embarking large capital on it I would advise the erection of a small battery and the carrying out of a series of tests at a number of points along the formation both at surface and at some feet below, so as to ascertain beyond question whether the bulk value is sufficient to justify working on a large scale, for there can be no picking and choosing of the ore. Should such trials prove a fair average bulk yield, even if only a few penny weights per ton, there need be no fear as to the ultimate success of the understanding, as the available tonnage is enormous, and there are excellent facilities for working it most economically with water power, which is obtainable in sufficient volume and fall to drive a very extensive milling plant. Concentrating appliance to collect the pyrites would also be essential.

Without therefore, indulging in too sanguine a forecast, I feel justified in recommending further exhaustive tests as above indicated, but would add the caution that there are no present inducements to cause men without capital to flock to the field.

1896

#### The New Find of Gold

The reports which of late been circulated in reference to the new discovery in a gold bearing locality have been the means of raising no little excitement seemed to have modified there is sufficient genuineness in the report to warrant an assurance that there have been really good foundations for the statements made. However, there is a sort of modifying consideration to be taken into account now, and the question of capital to place the necessary machinery on the ground is about the only obstacle in the way. The gold is there all right, as well as other minerals, but the great difficulty is to establish the proper appliances for the separating of these minerals. The following is the report of the "Ages" special correspondent:-

In a report presented unofficially to the Minister of Mines last week by Mr. E. M. Cairnes, it is alleged that in the ranges at a point some 15 miles beyond Marysville, on the road to Wood's Point, a large dyke formation has been discovered, consisting chiefly of a "ferruginous brecciated sandstone, in parts highly mineralised, and the sandstone and mineral carry the gold." The report further stated that the "lode" was at

least 500 feet wide, and that free gold had been obtained from 15 dish prospects, and that from a crushing of about 5 tons of ore taken out of a shaft "40 to 50 feet" deep an average of 1/2 oz to the ton had been obtained. Such briefly are the main points ( in themselves sufficiently startling to arrest general attention ) as set out in Mr. Cairnes's report. They have since been endorsed by a second mining expert, namely Mr. G. Thureau.

I visited the alleged mountain of auriferous ore on Friday last, having to travel some 15 miles beyond Marysville in order to reach the spot. The last 7 miles of the journey had to be made over a shocking bad road. Naturally a three days' journey into this mountainous region at this season of the year stated by much discomfort, the cold being intense, though happily the trip was free from the additional misery of having to pass the day in the saddle with rain falling all the time.

The locality is reached by following for about a mile the Reefton track where it branches off the Woods Point track. There is no settlement in the neighbourhood, and only one solitary hut - that of three miners who claim to be the discoverers of the mountain of ore. Their names are Jas. and Rob, Clingan and D. McKenchie. I was informed, however at Marysville by the oldest inhabitant that the mountain of ore was known locally 15 years ago, but that no one could be got to spend any money to test its value. Clingan's party has been prospecting in the ranges for some months. Since Easter they have been devoting all their attention to a mountain spur, which embraces a belt of silurian country, and on which recently has been bestowed the high sounding title of the Victorian Mount Morgan Goldmine. The present prospectors have done some trenching, and have also put down near the crest of the spur a small shaft, about 20 feet in depth - not 40 feet, as stated by one of the experts. It is from this shaft, the prospectors state, that 5 tons of crushing stuff was taken. These are the whole of the workings.

The shaft already referred to passes through sandstone, but the last few feet are intersected by iron veins and nests of pyrites. All over the surface of the spur the "ore" outcrops. Of the fact that there is a mountain of a particular kind of ore there can be no manner of doubt whatever, in fact it is visible to the naked eye. Not so, however the gold, which is declared has been seen from time to time therein, not alone in the nests but even in the very sandstone itself. I failed, however, to discover the trace of gold in either the ore or the sandstone; nevertheless two well known mining experts have reported that they have seen free gold both in the sandstone and in the small pyritous quartz and iron veins. The stone is freely charged with pyrites, and in some of the trenches there are bunches of pyrites to be seen. The two mining experts who have inspected and reported on the property declare that the whole formation - for its entire width of 500 or 600 feet is auriferous, and Mr. Thureau even says it is also "slightly argentiferous". He describes the deposit as an almost "illimitable congregation of metalliferous veins". Mr Cairnes calls it "brecciated ferruginous sandstone". The miner would in a more homely way describe the formation a sandstone interlaced occasionally with small veins of pyrites, ironstone and quartz. If the sandstone which comprises about nine - tenths of the entire mass, is gold - bearing as well as the mineral ore, why, then, the discovery is a valuable one. For there would in that case undoubtedly be a mountain of ore containing many millions of tons of stuff to be operated on. But in any case a very large amount of capital would be required to develop the property, so that whatever may be the ultimate history of the discovery, the field has no attractions for the poor man. Another point is also perfectly clear, and that is that only a limited amount of prospecting has been done on the ground. Yet enough can be seen of the lode formation to show it would be quite out of the question to attempt the deposit by sorting the mineral from the sandstone. To discard the sandstone would be

to rob, so to speak, this mountain of ore which is nearly all sandstone, of its very existence. The value of this discovery entirely depends upon the assertion that the sandstone is gold bearing, and that in fact the whole spur rising something like the bed of Armstrong Creek, is available to be quarried and put through the crushing mills.

In order to thoroughly test the value of the property a great deal more prospecting requires to be done. The few trenches that have been cut and the one small hole that has been sunk are merely like the scratchings of a child at play, and do not furnish enough data to warrant any large expenditure of capital until there has been a bulk test of the ore on a comprehensive scale. Let 100 tons of stuff be taken from half a dozen different faces and treated, and then some basis will be furnished as to whether this discovery is of any commercial value. But in any case even the small amount of prospecting already done will result in some good - it will direct attention to these ranges, which are practically unexplored, for quartz reefs or other lode formations although many of these creeks and mountain rivulets have been, and are still being prospected with more or less success for alluvial gold. Indeed, the story is put about Marysville that Cumberland Creek, Donnelly's Creek, Bear's Creek and several streams, the names of which have not reached me, have been worked half a dozen times over by the gold digger, and always with success. I had actual evidence of prospecting carried out at the Cumberland Creek, in which a small party of men were sluicing adjacent to the main road.

At Marysville it is stated that many scores of miners are "knocking out" a living by prospecting in the mountain streams which wind in and about the ranges on either side of Mount Arnold. The existence of quartz reefs in the ranges has also been proved, and it is alleged that from one reef worked a few years ago 5000 oz of gold were obtained.

The difficulties of carrying on prospecting operations in the ranges are enormous at present, owing to their accessibility. Another problem that staggers the prospector is how to get any crushing done, there being no battery nearer than Matlock. Much might be done by the Mining department to encourage and assist prospecting by cutting tracks and the publication of some reliable notes on the leading geological features of this, for the most part, geologically unknown region. Some useful pioneer work has yet to be done by the department in this direction, and no time should be lost in detailing an officer to make an exhaustive examination. Increased attention is likely to the district consequent on the publicity given to the existence of gold bearing ore in the vicinity of Mount Arnold. The deep interest awakened by the reports published on what is called the Victorian Mount Morgan gold mine has already prompted some speculative people to peg out claims all around the prospector's leases. Some 30 leases have been marked off, but it is unlikely that work will be commenced upon any of these claims until more exhaustive tests are made to prove the value of the formation in the area held by the original prospectors.

1896

The "Age" on Friday last devotes an article to the subject of timber resources of the colony, the arguments used therein being worthy of much more than mere passing comment. Allusion is made to the unrestricted devastation of some of our valuable timber areas without the slightest attempt at making provision for future supplies from these lands or the remotest effort at a systematic supervision. This aspect of the question should certainly receive the serious consideration of the Lands Department; but there is another phase of the matter which more particularly concerns the residents of this district and this is the unmitigated folly of closing up here in our very midst lands containing

timber of various kinds and of quality and abundance unsurpassed in the colony. This is the case in respect to the immense tract of country around Healesville which has been appropriated as a watershed by the Metropolitan Board of Works who adhere to an obstinate policy of refusing to permit a single tree to be touched, but allows the valuable timber in the reserves to rot rather than have it turned to profitable use. The article ( from which we give a few extracts in another column ) refers more particularly to the area comprised in the Maroondah River watershed, and of course has a local bearing. The subject is one which requires to be earnestly and persistently urged by the people here if they hope to retrieve the loss of wealth producing resources at our very doors which were unscrupulously snatched from us at an unguarded moment. A matter of such importance cannot be too forcibly urged in the interests of the residents of these parts, who for lack of other resources depend mainly on the splendid timber obtainable but which we now find wasting and decaying within range of our vision to the detriment of the whole district, stagnation of business, and continual impoverishment for lack of employment and industrial activity. It is indeed monstrous in the present condition of things that we have at our very doors mountains of valuable timber which we dare not touch. The railway is at our steps, and the metropolis, with its eager market for timber such as we could supply with profit, is within a paltry 40 miles. As the article forcibly points out this absurd and dog in the manger condition of things should not be tolerated, for under proper supervision the timber could be taken from these watershed reserves without the least detriment to the water supply of the metropolis; and we earnestly commend the matter to our liberal minded and progressive residents with entering a stirring protest to Parliament against this impolitic and certainly unjust block to our industrial advancement. We are represented by sensible men, and if the inhabitants here will only take a firm stand and show their determination that something should be done to open up our timber resources we feel sure that our Parliamentary representatives would give their advice and assistance to the introduction of some means whereby these valuable timber resources may be made available to us, for surely something is needed in the shape of an outlet for industry and employment in this woebegone though beautiful corner of Victoria. The loss of these extensive areas of land, thereby stunting our resources to an almost extinguishing point, has been the ruin of Healesville, and until some means are devised for releasing this main source of reproduction - which in the first instance should not have been deprived us - we will continue to grovel in the same condition of subsisting in a hand and mouth fashion upon one another and the few pence which visitors who come to enjoy our beautiful scenery and solubrious climate during a short period of the year may leave with us. We should demand for the reopening of an industry which in the past proved so advantageous and which is our right. Besides, this matter not only affects us, but it seriously concerns the colony's revenue derivable through the railway, the value of the timber contained in the Watts River watershed being estimated by Mr. G. S. Perrin, the Government Conservator of Forests, at no less a sum than 500,000 pounds. Our grievances will never receive attention unless we make them known in the proper way, for simply complaining to each other of the hardships we suffer will never effect the object of our desires. As there are surely many influential gentlemen present in the residential dinner to be given by Mr Jno. M. Gretton this afternoon, we would suggest that this important matter would be a fitting subject to introduce. At all events it would do no harm and possibly good may result by showing that we are not entirely oblivious or apathetic to our interests.

## Our Timber Resources

In order to ensure an ample supply of water for the metropolis an act was passed giving the Metropolitan Board of Works control of large forest areas in the Walla, Fernshawe and Upper Yarra districts. In the Watts River watershed the board has 35,000 acres of mountainous forest land conserved in the Wallan district by the Walaby and Silvers Creeks there are 22,000 acres and around the source of the Yarra there are 115,000 acres. The last is not altogether under the control of the board, being partly held as a State forest and partly for future water supply purposes. The most important of these conservations is that in the Watts River watershed, and for the purposes of this article attention may be confirmed to this. In order to prevent the possibility of pollution all human habitations within the area were removed some years ago, and tree felling and splitting were stopped. The forest, save for the water works constructed therein, has now practically reverted to its primeval state, and trees of enormous size have grown up and matured. From time to time attempts have been made to allow felling to be carried out under certain restrictions, but the board, headed by its obstreperous chairman, has resolutely set its face against anything of the kind. "This forest land," the board says, in effect "has been given us for water supply purposes, and we mean to allow it to be used for no other. Timber there may be of great value on it but it must stay there and rot. We will not allow it to be taken out even under the strictest precautions against pollution of the water." This is the obstinate attitude assumed by the board and its officials, who discountenance any suggestion that much of this timber might be taken out and turned into money without the least affecting the water supply either in the direction of diminishing the quantity or of impairing the quality.

No one who knows anything at all about forestry or meteorology will attempt to deny the value of thickly timbered mountains for securing an ample rainfall for water supply purposes, and for minimising the force of floods. But while it is necessary that conservation should be encouraged for these highly beneficial purposes, there is a point at which rigid conservation becomes unnecessary, and that point has been reached by the Metropolitan Board of Works. In the Watts water shed there is locked up some of the finest timber in Australia, trees of mature growth, that are simply rotting away because of the board's pig headed policy in refusing to consent to their removal. It is a constant complaint that the timber industry is retarded because the Government does not build railways into the more remote and inaccessible forests where timber of great value grows in abundance, yet within 40 miles of Melbourne, and in close proximity to a railway, there is an ample and valuable supply of timber as can be found anywhere in Victoria. It needs only a short line from Healesville to tap this forest without in the least causing pollution, turning to profitable account an asset which the board's obstinacy now renders valueless. The plea of pollution as an argument against throwing open the forest to restricted felling operations is carried altogether too far. If a few men and horses and bullocks entering to take out logs every day is going to seriously pollute the water supply of Melbourne, how comes it that this fearful pollution is not caused by the present traffic of men and horses and vehicles along the road which runs through the forest. It is questionable moreover, whether, from a sanitary point of view, it is a greater advantage to allow trees to rot and decaying vegetable matter to filter into the Watts than to permit a few men and horses to go into the forest and remove the timber before the decay sets in. It is questionable, too, whether it is advisable to allow the old trees to cumber the ground, thus preventing young ones from springing up. The advantages that would accrue from the opening up of this forest altogether outweigh the alleged disadvantage of possible pollution. First

of all it would give a much needed stimulus to an important industry. It would employ a considerable amount of labor, and turn to profitable account a neglected source of revenue. It would enable Victoria, on account of the proximity of the forest to Melbourne, to enter into competition with Tasmania for the supply of timber, particularly for paving blocks, to Europe, and it would also greatly increase and doubtless considerably cheapen, the supply of fuel to Melbourne. Only the other day an order for a large shipment of timber arrived in Melbourne which could not be executed, and the order was forwarded on to Tasmania.

In persuing the policy of keeping the forest locked up, the board is at distinct variance with the experts in forestry. The most prominent opponent of the board's action is Mr G. S. Perrin the Conservator of State Forests to the Government. In this matter Mr Perrin may be assumed to know a little more about the value of forests and their potentialities than even the omniscient gentleman who controls the destinies of the Metropolitan Board. Like most other people Mr. Perrin is quite in accord with the boards policy of conserving the forests under its control to a sufficient extent to ensure a copious supply of water but as an expert he fails to see how the elimination of matured trees can have any possible effect in polluting the water or lessening its supply. "I would strongly oppose men, horses or bullocks being allowed to camp in the forest, but the timber could easily be got by means of a narrow guage tramway or a wire rope attachment, such as is used in Tasmania. This would overcome difficulty involved in the promiscuous use of bullocks and the risk of pollution arising therefrom. There is a large amount of valuable mature timber on the ranges around Black Spur that ought to be removed. There is a particularly liberal supply of spotted gum useful for railway sleepers, paving blocks and heavy constructive works ; and mountain ash for indoor work, stringybark for building, and acacia blackwood for furniture and carving are to be found in abundance. Being near the railway, these timbers would no doubt fetch a good price at the market. The value of the whole mature timber in the Watts River watershed might be roughly estimated at 500,000 pounds and a good proportion of this could be taken out without injuring the water supply. There is no earthly reason why the biggest trees should not be utilised for commercial purposes. Their elimination is rather a benefit than otherwise. Their extraction may reduce the altitude somewhat, but there is an advantage in the number of young trees that would spring up in their places. It is one of the first principles of forestry to always have trees coming on. Once a tree has arrived at its full vigor and growth it begins to decline, exactly as a human being does. The moment one of these forest giants is cut down thousands of saplings spring up in its place, so that by a system of judicious felling the removal of the mature trees would be a benefit rather than a detriment to the water supply. I am quite with the board in objecting to splitters and saw millers being allowed to overrun the forest, but conditions could easily be arranged under which the best timber could be taken out and utilised to the advantage of every body concerned.

It will thus be seen that the policy of the board in erecting a Chinese wall round its forest and permitting valuable timber to rot is not in accord with the opinion of the government expert, nor is it in accord with the dictates of common sense.

1896

Marysville

[From our own Correspondent]

The mining business off the Yarra Track is rather quiet just now, most of the claims awaiting granting of their leases. Free gold has been struck on two of these leases to my knowledge. The Bear's Creek Reef is

quiet after last crushing, awaiting re-arrangement of company. The Briton is very quiet also.

The Golden Bower and Star Reefs Companies are being floated in Melbourne.

Alluvial diggers on Donovan's Welch's and Bear's Creeks, and Big River, are all getting a little gold, but during the winter months most of the claims have trouble with the great flow of water.

1896

Marysville

[From our Correspondent]

Much has been said about the mountain of ore situated about 13 miles from Marysville towards Woods Point and on that much abused road the Yarra Track, the one that our friends at Warburton would like to abolish if it were possible. There are some 42 leases pegged out around the prospecting company's claim, the Victorian Mount Morgan, and our prayer is that it may prove as good as represented. Twenty five of these leases have been surveyed, the surveyor (Mr White) having been camped there for some weeks back. Several of the leases have been prospected by trenching, and the stone taken out, on being dollied and panned off, has shown gold. The stone is very highly mineralised, and will of course require the latest gold saving appliances to win all the gold when crushed by battery, but there being such a large quantity of stone to be treated it is obvious that a small return will pay for treatment. As gold mining companies cannot be formed at a moments notice it will be some time before the Reefton turnoff - or rather the Victorian Mount Morgan field - is in full swing.

The Santa Claus lease, situated on Bear's Creek, 18 miles from here, has been floated into a company closed at 5,000 pounds, the prospector being Mr. R Ely. Trenching has disclosed a very fine body of stone of dyke formation on the lease which has assayed 1.5 oz. to the load. Mr Ely has a contract to drive a tunnel 400 feet from the creek level, and it is supposed that this tunnel will cut the different formations at a depth of about 250 ft. from the surface. The tunnel is now in over 50 ft.

A line of leases has been pegged out from the Bear's Creek reef (now named "Olive") to the Golden Bower on Nuggety Creek, a tributary of Donevan's Creek, and Mr White is now surveying some of these leases. One of these leases on the Big River, 23 miles from here, will most likely be in work in a week or so.

Of course it will be understood that although there are a lot of leases pegged out and surveyed, there will be very little done on them till they are granted; but taking the outlook at present, it is undoubtedly a very bright one for the district, and we have now a better future ahead of us than we have had since the bursting of the land boom.

The pack track cut by Mr Feely from the Yarra Tack to Donovan's Creek and up Bear's Creek is nearly completed, and will prove great service to the different holders of claims in the vicinity.

1896

Notes on the Ministers Visit of Road inspection

(By one of the party)

The Yarra Track

The Upper Yarra Shire Councillors must have enjoyed the trip very much, especially at those little periods when each new comer made it his business to inform the Minister that the Upper Yarra Shire had refused to allow money publicly subscribed to repair the road to be expended. Did the shire engineer Russell go to Flemington Race course to get ground room for that immense plan of his? It was clever but hardly fair to

resuscitate a road that has been obsolete for twenty years to string out the mileage. Had he a local knowledge he would have known that there would be a difficulty in getting such a large article ( mining machinery ) through the trees, and no possible chance of spreading it on the Yarra Track. It was ingenious of Wildman to suggest that machinery for Mount Morgan could be taken by Reefton and the new track to Fehring's (Fehring's)

and then brought back past Shaw's and Walker's by the Yarra Track; and the idea of Russell's that teams would load at Healesville and go via Coranderrk, Launching Place, and Reefton to avoid the mountains is worthy of the white knight, and a twin brother of the knight's idea that polluted water will run up hill and defiled the pure rivulets inside the watershed.

The patient way in which Mr Taverner listened to the various speakers, and the enquires he from time to time made, showed that he wished to be possessed of all the information possible, and the kindly manner that he enquired of poor old Splitter Bill about his sick wife ( whom the poor old fellow intended sending to the hospital without any hope of ever again seeing alive ) was touching, and proclaimed him, whatever else' a white man; and whether his decision will be for or against the Yarra Track, his quiet and unassuming visit will be kindly remembered. Over a quarter of a century has passed since Mr Cameron has been familiar with the Yarra Track, but he was able to recognise and name spots where bustling accommodation houses stood in the brisk days of the sixties. He enlivened the journey with incidents that he remembered occurring in the early days, and it took all the Ministers credibility to stow away some packing anecdotes and the immense loads of machinery that was packed to the ranges when they were eager to get the stampers at work mashing up stone the richness of which would pale the best stone of the West into insignificance.

A pleasing feature of the trip was the meeting at Shaw's of Crs. Raymond and Scott, Dr. Higgins, and ex- Mayor Blythman, of Woodspoint, who invited the Minister to extend his visit on to their town. Mr Taverner said his arrangements would not allow him to do so, but said that he and Mr Foster, Minister for Mines intended visiting the district after the adjournment of Parliament, and he would ask them to promise not to keep him up too late. The burden of the Point delegates complaint was that they wanted improvement in road accommodation, the question of routes they left with the Minister.

Mr Taverner evinced a desire to learn as much as possible of the practicability of a road by the Big River valley and Frenchmen's Creek, which it is asserted will avoid nearly the whole of the snow difficulty, make the distance several miles shorter, open up Big River valley to settlement, and pass by the Stockman's and Twin Jacks, two gold mines of more than passing promise; although in their early stages they are at present employing over thirty men, which number will be largely increased in the near future, and a twenty - head battery is to be erected at the Twin Jacks forthwith.

At the Warburton turn - off, above Shaws, the Woodspoint contingent and several other gentlemen, including the President ( Cr Barton ), bid the Minister and party good-bye, and Mr Taverner mounted a steed that from appearances would be an adornment to the furrow side of a plough, passed swiftly onward through the forest, down that famous and beautiful bicycle grade to Reefton.

It is to be regretted that circumstances would not allow the President to return courtesy of the Upper Yarra President by going to Warburton with the party, in which Healesville was represented by its two latest born councillors ( Mathews and Robbins ) Cr. Clements had intended going but business prevented him. Cr. Keppel apparently afraid of Wildman, would not pass the shire boundary.



May the Minister in his dreams kindly remember the Yarra Track and assist to bring back some of its departed glories by a voice to put it in order.

1896

Marysville

[From our own correspondent]

Nov 21st

The settlement of the question of the Yarra Track and Warburton's one sided notion has caused great satisfaction to the mine holders and independent diggers of the "up the road" branch of the community, and they think it is a blessing to get out of the clutches of an autocratic shire into one that has the good of the ratepayers at heart and will further their interests by keeping in repair the roads and etc., that pass through their plot in Victoria.

The "Golden Bower and Star" case is to be heard some time in February or March 1897, so that the acknowledged true reef of the district is to remain idle whilst the Melbourne sharks and wits get their share.

The owner of the Olive, on Bear's Creek, Mr. Preacher, is ill in Melbourne and it is feared that when in his present weak state the "smart men about town" will try their by no means prentice hands" on him.

The Santa Claus, Bear's Creek - Mr. Ely is still engaged driving tunnel and has cut several leaders carrying good prospects. The depth is 257 feet, and has cut a sandstone wall supposed to be a footwall of dyke. Water is making freely in the face, which is a sign that the lode is very close. This is the lease on which the prospector, Mr. Ely, can show from one to four ounce prospects in the trenches on the surface.

The British Mount Morgan is sinking shaft. This claim is about a quarter of a mile north of the Victorian Mount Morgan.

Mr. McKechnie, prospector of the Victorian Mount Morgan, has another good show on Briton Creek. He took up an abandoned lease, the Briton, and has prospected same to some purpose. He can now show the dyke formation, carrying good gold. He has sunk 40 feet through the formation, the dyke showing to the bottom of shaft, and carrying gold all the way. Gold can be got from all the trenches that he has made, also in claims north and south of the body of stone. The stone is a very high class, laminated quartz, and rich in mineral. A prospecting battery is on the ground, and from about 7 cwt, of stone a return was won of 1 oz. 4 dwts of retorted gold. This seems to show that the late manager of this claim knew very little about his business, and he was walking over indications of this lode for about five months, pooh poohing the idea that gold could be on the lease without his knowledge.

The Victorian Mount Morgan shaft is going down very slowly.

The alluvial diggers' prayers have been heard. Of the few claims that are still working two or three have received their Christmas boxes (4 and 5 oz to the paddock), and the others are expecting their Santa Claus in the next paddock. I hope they get it, as my last paddock only went 17 grains such are the ups and downs of digging.

The Twin Jacks, Frenchman's is anxiously awaiting track cutting so that they can get their machinery down.

The other leases that are being prospected are giving satisfactory results, so that the "Guardians" prophecy of some months back is coming true.

Our friend Mr. White, the surveyor, has been surveying more leases around here, and after Christmas they will most likely be prospected fully.

1897

## Marysville

The British Mount Morgan claim has suspended operations for a while.

The Victorian Mount Morgan claim is still prospecting. They are calling a meeting on the 25 th of January to receive reports and half yearly balance sheets, and deal with other important matters relating to the company.

The Santa Claus tunnel is in 350 feet.

The Glen Cairn shaft was flooded by the late heavy rains; but will be in work again this week.

The Big River, Shaw's, Twin Jacks and Stockmans's are still going ahead but nothing fresh to report.

Most of the alluvial claims were flooded through the recent heavy rains, and it will be some weeks before the trail races and etc., can be fully repaired.

1897

## Marysville

A sum of 500 pounds has been passed by the Glen Cairn Company of Briton Creek for the purpose of sinking a perpendicular shaft to a depth of 100 feet more or less, at which depth the country will be cross-cut and the dyke thoroughly tested. The shaft is now down about 50 feet and it has been reported good prospects have been won up to and at this depth.

1898

An accident, which narrowly escaped having a fatal termination to two people, mother and child, occurred on Monday last, the 15th inst at a place known locally as the "Little Peninsula," on which is a solitary dwelling, the residence of a miner named Charles Russel, his wife and family. The spot, as its name implies, a projection of a spur of a hill of about six acres in extent and surrounded on three sides by the River Yarra. About one-third of a mile distant, but on the other side of the river from there, is a mining claim known as the "Little Wonder," where some time ago Mr. Russel was employed. From the mine a track had been formed leading to the peninsula. The river at the point where the track intersects is about 70 feet wide, with a small island a few yards in extent in the centre. From each bank to the island two small saplings, about the thickness of ordinary scaffold poles are laid to afford footing. On the far side the saplings are uniform in size and straight and give a firm footing. On the near side where the stream is widest, one sapling is thinner than the other and bent; it is consequently lower than the other, and also being lighter and more elastic than its fellows vibrates considerably and gives an insecure footing. To assist passengers to cross this portion a piece of fencing wire is suspended in place of a hand-rail. Through the head of the peninsula is a tunnel that had been cut for the purpose of diverting the river from its course to enable the river bed around the peninsula to be worked. About two thirds of the whole body of the river water emerged from this tunnel at a spot about 200 feet below the crossing. On the upper side of the tunnel a large body of stone excavated from the tunnel has been dumped into the river and forms a dam reaching two thirds across it. From the mouth of the tunnel a roaring seething mass of foaming water rushes with a terrific force, while above the dam the water is comparatively still. The crossing-place at the river is situated between two or three chains from the house, and was constantly crossed and re-crossed by the children, so that the parents never thought of any danger to the children occurring there. On the day

above mentioned the mother sent two of the children Eva and Annie, aged 9 and 5 respectively, on a message to the "Little Wonder". She also told them when they returned to bring some pipe-clay from the other side of the river, giving each a small tin vessel to carry it in. The late rains had swollen the river, so that it had risen to the level of the poles on which they had to walk. On returning from the "Little Wonder," they got the pipe-clay, and started to cross the river with their little burdens. Eva, the elder girl, led the way and just reached the opposite bank when Annie the younger, called out that "the boards are going." Eva threw down her little poy of pipe-clay and said to her sister, "Stop there till I come," but before she could get to her the little one fell in the river. Eva gallantly jumped in after her, though holding on to the saplings thinking to catch hold of her, but could not succeed, and not feeling the bottom under her feet, she scrambled back on to the saplings and went ashore calling loudly for her mother. Her mother who was working in the garden, at first did not pay attention to shouts of the child, thinking it was just usual play and romping; but Mabel, another daughter, aged 7, went down finding out from Eva that Annie had fallen into the river, immediately ran back for her mother. When the child fell in the water she was upheld by her petticoats and kept floating for some time until she drifted near a small bush growing off the extreme point of the island above mentioned, but which was partly under water by reason of the rise in the river. She caught hold of a branch and tried to struggle further in but could not, the branch finally breaking she drifted further down the river, while Eva ran down the bank and went to the point of the heap of stones above described as projecting two thirds of the way across, with the intention of pulling her sister out as she drifted by. When she got to the point of the dam the child had sank and Eva not seeing her called out "Where are you Annie?" Just then the mother came running down, at first bewildered not knowing what to do but catching sight of the child rising again to the surface near the far side of the river, ran across the bridge (though previously never able to cross without the assistance of her husband), along the bank until opposite Annie and pulled the child to her bosom then walking on what was described as an "easy" bottom she was simply "treading water," a thick felt petticoat which she was wearing acting as a balloon and keeping her afloat, there being actually nearly 8 feet of water there! Unfortunately in making for the shore again she made for the nearest point, and in doing so was barred and caught by a snag, and could neither proceed one way or another. When finding she could not get out of the river, she told the girl Eva to go back to the "Little Wonder" and ask some of the men to come down to her assistance. The distance the child had to go was about a third of a mile, and she was wet from her previous immersion, and when she got near the place was too much exhausted to walk up a slight rise to reach the camp, and had to crawl up. However, she hastened as fast as she could and acquainted the men with the position of affairs and four of them immediately ran down as fast as they could to Mrs Russels assistance. Hurry as much as they could, it must have been some considerable time before the men could reach the spot. In the meantime, Mrs Russel being held fast, her attention was again directed to the little one in her arms, who she found quite unconscious and livid; she held the child so that a large quantity of water she had swallowed was expelled, but could do nothing more. The girl Mabel sought for and got a rod, which she held to her mother to assist her out, but the rod broke and Mrs Russel nearly fell back into the deep water again; but finally the snag broke and she succeeded in regaining the shore just as the men arrived to her assistance. When the party got into the house attention had then to be paid to resuscitate the unconscious little-one and after about an hour's exertion trying to restore respiration, moving her arms backwards and forwards, etc and using friction, the men succeeded in

restoring the little one to life and its mother's arms. The men who thus had the pleasure of restoring the child to life are Messrs. Hopgood, Dredge, Farrel and Elliott.

1898

#### Prospecting in the east - ward ranges

A gentleman who has spent much time in prospecting the ranges to the eastward sends the following interesting communication to us for publication :-

There is not much to occupy the attention of a prospector till nearing Warburton, where this is a grand track of easy grade. When a river makes up its mind to form a track it is done properly, and one could almost imagine it thoroughly understood the law of gravitation. I met Mr. Trail, at one time a resident of Healesville, who has been appointed to lay down a tramway and mill site to be ready when the railway arrives.

In passing through the district one must admit of the necessity there exists for a railway, when it is considered they are sending their products via Lilydale and Healesville to Matlock. The first observation of rocks is at Warburton, a massive chain of which ( of the granite order ) shapes its course towards Marysville. Proceeding along the road I noticed a large tin stream where works had been stopped till the train comes along. Arriving at Muddy Creek the first quartz claim is met with, which was opened by Mr. Schroeder, a resident of Healesville, who, it is stated went away and left it open to forfeiture. It is now being carried on by a New Zealand gentleman, who is sending ten tons to the Reefton battery to be crushed. It is estimated the quartz will go two ounces to the ton. Coming to McMahon's Creek there is an hotel kept by a good business lady where everything is good and homely. From this creek commences a long strip of cultivation on the banks of the Yarra, where oats, peas and potatoes are grown, all looking well, and some splendid dairy cows are noticeable. Three miles further on is Reefton. Mr. Bowder, an old resident and great favorite, has developed a reef in which seven tons gave thirty ounces. This gentleman has a large family of grown up sons and daughters, so that he and the sons could work the reef. Eight miles further on is the Yarra crossing, there is a building owned by Mrs Martin. Here also is to be seen cultivation. After crossing the river, I am amongst some grand looking quartz, and quickly I get napping, finding axide of iron, arsenical pyrites, and mundic, indications that would start a Ballarat miner into great activity. Proceeding on to Clear Creek there are two well known Healesville prospectors ( Mr. R. Heatherton and Mr. J. Harrison ), and their many friends will be glad to know they are on the metal. Their weeks return ending October 22nd, was four ounces, worth 3 pound 17 s 6 d per ounce, and they say they have many months' work ahead; and it is to be hoped their yield will never get less. Only imagine aged men battling manfully and sprightly, with their extremities in water, that is merely dissolved snow. They kindly invite me to tea and also "lay me on" to a comfortable hut where I meet an aboriginal Edward Hunter, who is prospecting. He is well fitted out with appliances such as rifle, compass, magnifying glass etc. He has been collecting rock specimens for Mr Murray and Mr Stirling F.G.S. Hunter and his mate had a dispute with a man who has jumped part of their claim, showing the absurdity of the Castlemaine mining regulations, our member constituting one of the Board. 320 feet along the line of the reef is all that is allowed two men. Hunter's mate's mother ( Mrs Spleen ) was taken seriously ill, and while absent in Melbourne about three weeks, a man comes along and marks out a lease covering their prospecting claim, after having discovered gold. The defect in the regulation is the too small area. If the allowance had been larger the jumper could not have covered

all their claim, and the conditions imposed are too stringent. Compare this regulation with the Gippsland by merely crossing the Woods' Point road, where there is an area of 500 yards allowed along the line by 250 yards across. In reference to the prospects of the district it is stated that roughly speaking, there is in Victoria an area of 20,000 square miles of exposed rock, which are almost everywhere intersected by auriferous quartz veins. It can be safely said that there is between Mount Arnold and Matlock on the east and west and the Yarra and Big River on the north and south, an area of 1,200 square miles of silurian rock, intersected by exposed quartz veins.

Here is room for hundreds of prospecting parties and putting in operation the modern economic system of opening cross sections of the escarpment. A vein may be discovered in, say two months, by two men, at a cost from 20 pound to 25 pound.

1898

#### Prospecting in the East Ward Ranges

After a little digression in my last I proceeded along, and came in contact with the "long and short," of Wood's Point fame, two well known prospectors which appellation is derived in consequence of one being remarkably tall and the other being quite the opposite. I learnt from them they are prospecting at the head of Damper Creek, but are now on the way to the junction to meet the packer from Marysville, who is a son of Mr. Barton, our well known councillor, a fine intelligent fellow, who goes up every Friday to supply the mining camp with food, tools, etc, and likewise the weekly newspapers, of which I notice the "Leader" is the most popular. Proceeding up a leading range, and "napping" some very promising quartz, I drop in on a party of sluicers who explain to me that the watershed leads up to Donovan's Creek and I also ascertain that the range I have left leads to Chester and Locke's claim, going north, and that the quartz and caseings are precisely similar to those I had tried last summer near Walkers. I was so satisfied with the indications that I wrote to the Mining Department for aid from the prospecting vote, to find, after a long correspondence, there were no funds available. In the meantime Chester makes the discovery, and he and his mate will be rewarded, as they deserve to be. It is quite safe to say that this range will prove auriferous right on to the Upper Yarra crossing, south. From this watershed I cross over westerly to a very high spur called the "Snob's" which trends towards Mount Morgan. The ascent, about 3,000 feet, is up a leading spur, probably two miles distant to the top. I thought what, stupidity it was to lay out a track right up the face of the Mount, when it could have been taken round by the side of a leading creek with a moderate grade, and then in a zig-zag fashion near the top. The packers have to struggle with their loads up and down this spur every trip. Arriving at the top there is a grand view of the ridge leading east to Shaw's, resembling a large backbone. From this ridge seven distinct rich gold alluvial creeks take their source, all tending towards the Yarra, which should be a good indication that the quartz veins will prove auriferous. Nearing Mount Morgan the formation seems to be granite, diorite, massive sandstone, and some quartz, of a very poor appearance, with a complete absence of slate, and covered with a forest of immense trees. What a contrast to the ridges I had left, with good looking quartz, of nice texture - red, blue, brown, grey and schistose. The Ballarat miner always affirm that a rich finding of gold would never occur under such surroundings, and when it is known that those large trees grow in soil from decomposed granite, that it would never produce in yields like the slate, and I also hold strongly to that theory. In passing I had a casual look at the Mount Morgan workings, and cannot

imagine with 50,000 paid up shares ( 12,500 pounds ), where the money has gone. There is not the slightest comparison with the Queensland Mount Morgan formation and this. The late "Vagabond" and the South Australian Government geologist described the Queensland Morgan formation as containing all the silurian samples of rocks in the dyke, besides the granite which stood up over the wall casing. Mr. Cairns has evolved a theory, and suggests an hyso thermal action - that the sandstone as a sedimentary deposit was in a boiling soft state when the plutonic rock below forced up a shower of gold into the sandstone, and then after cooling it was held there. This is a reference to the rich Mount Morgan; but Mr. Cairns seems to have overlooked one very important factor. The specific gravity of gold and sandstone are very unequal, gold being nearly four times as heavy, which would cause the gold to sink through the semi-fluid mass. If this should turn out to be a rich field in the way described, the theory of quartz being the matrix of gold will have to be modified. While on the subject of matrix, several geologists hold that granite is the matrix. Now granite is stated to consist of quartz, mica, and felspar, and the latter composes silica, alumina, lime, potash, oxide of iron, and oxide of manganese, quartz of silica and oxygen. This explains where the indications come from in the searching for auriferous quartz. If I were suggesting to the young Australians on what subject to study. It would be the elements of geology for no other offers such possibilities for their future. Look at the position of Messrs. Chester and Locke have attained, and there are hundreds of other opportunities available with equal chances of success. Leaving Mount Morgan, I arrive at Cumberland Creek, and invited to stay with my old Healesville friend, Mr. Fahey, a man with a great fund of knowledge on mining, geology, and history, which are his favorite topics. He showed me some samples of stream tin, and some pretty specimens of the peculiar needle shaped crystals of actinolites. [ We have seen one of these specimens and much admired them, anyone wishing to examine one of these curios can do so at Mr. Carter's, or at this office ]. I observed in several places the metamorphic rock gneiss. It is composed of granite which has been subject to the sedimentary process, and is consequently stratified.

I was greatly astonished to see how the road had been cut up during the past twelve months, and I am informed it will require 300 pounds to put it in order. It would puzzle one to know what special benefit Healesville derives from this large outlay. It benefits Matlock without contributing one farthing.

In conclusion, should any parties desirous of prospecting in the area traversed require any further information they can do so by applying at the "Guardian" office.

1898

Victorian Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co.

The following report from the Mining Manager, just to hand, is published for information of the shareholders -

At the mine, matters are progressing very well; the new lode at 1120 feet level continues to open up splendidly; in fact, I am now thoroughly satisfied that we have opened up a new lode entirely distinct from anything which so far has been disclosed on the surface.

One of the peculiar features in connection with the new lode is, that the strike is north-west by south-east, with an underlay to the north-east at an angle of 45 degrees. We have a well defined foot-wall and hanging wall. All the country between "Walls" is presenting generally a very settled appearance.

The distance between "Walls" is about 14 feet, the greater part of which is good ore. Running through the ore occasionally are "horses" of

blue rock, similar country to the "Walls". At first I was afraid these "horses of mullock" might seriously interfere with the course of the ore body, but now I have come to look on those with pleasure, for I find that they may be looked upon as "indicators," for usually the country adjacent to the intrusive rock is richer in gold than where there is a larger body of ore and no intrusive rock present.

Another most important feature to be noticed is the presence of gold in the quartz. This may sound strange to most mining men, but as yourself and the directors are aware, that in the past the quartz we had was valueless, consequently, considerable value must be placed on this change, for, in my opinion, we are simply on the top of the formation of a large quartz lode, which will develop and improve as depth is attained. My reasons for coming to this conclusion, are that the quartz is not found in isolated pieces as it was in the higher levels but occurs in well defined veins with a dip and a strike similar to walls. So far we have got the best gold from bottom level.

Taking present dip of "Walls" we can cut the lode from tunnel in 50 feet driving which would give us 90 feet of backs to operate on from tunnel to 120 feet level, and by connecting with winze enable us to open up the mine properly, give good ventilation and allow systematic works being carried out.

In order to further prove the load before recommending the Board to the expense of driving tunnel I intend during the ensuing week, to put in plat 20 feet lower down crosscut from there to cut the lode, which, I estimate, can be cut in 10 feet of driving, and then connect with winze.

During the week the ore in face was carefully assayed daily, value varying from 7 dwt, to one ounce per ton, of course, samples of picked ore going considerably higher; value of ore in face today one ounce per ton, from two assays. Samples assayed of sand and slimes for last eight hours run as it leaves battery ( usual method of sampling every half hour ) shows a value of 16 dwt per ton.

I am not by any means satisfied with the percentage of gold being saved by the battery, and I have raised four of the plates half an inch.

The plates are in bad order at present, but I have not got the chemicals I require to improve them, but the postal authorities would not allow us to forward what we require per parcel post. However, I will be in town about the end of next week so that I can bring them up with me.

The battery, you will see, has crushed 60 tons only for 110 hours run, only about two-thirds what it should have done, this is due to the fact that I have had to change the hands taking two original "feeders" from the battery to the mine - they are however improving.

CYANIDE - Have a quantity of tailings ready for treatment.

Yours faithfully

JAS. GITSHAM  
Mining Manager.

1899

#### Lively Times on the Yarra Track

At the Woods Point Police Court last week, Christopher Fehrig sued a man named Fred Baker, on a triple charge of willful trespass, obscene language and unlawful assault on the 17 th of February.

Christopher Fehring, who gave his evidence in broken English, deposed that Baker had kicked him on the back and used bad language and trespassed on his mother's house on the Yarra Track.

To Mr. Godfrey (defence) Baker had been working for my mother five weeks, but I could do it all in a week's time. He pulled a stable down, but did not finish it. My mother did not pay him as she was in debt to the storekeeper. Baker came to the place on the 17 th Feb and asked for

his money. I said I could not pay him, as I had been robbed. He asked me for his money before the robbery. I said I would send the money to Yarra bridge. He used bad language ( unfit to print ) to me and my mother. He then went away to Nelson's, and came back with Nelson and used more bad language. Our house is on Crown property, and we have deeds to it. I consider the house is mine because my mother said she would give it to me when she dies. I followed accused to Nelson's, but never picked up any stones. I will swear five times that Nelson never said, "Go away with your armful of stones, or you will be throwing them through the window." The accused started the bad language and called me a bad name. My mother said he was the same. Whatever accused called me I called him. My mother told me to take out summons and told me what to say in court. My mother was summoned as a witness, but could not come. She had pain on the inside.

Mr Godfrey contended that the defendant simply went for his money. Mrs Fehring had used bad language and he retorted. There was no case of trespass, as the property belonged to informant's mother. As for assault, the boy Fehring threatened to throw him out of the place, and accused may have administered a gentle kick.

Fredrick Baker deposed; I have been five or six days out of work attending these cases. I started to work for Mrs. Fehring on the last Thursday in the old year. I was engaged at 1 pound a week and tucker, and worked for six weeks. I left because I was starved. I never got any money. After I finished I asked Mrs Fehring for the money, and she said she would send it to me. After I left I was sick and went into the hospital. When I called again she said her money was stolen, and I told her she had told a lie, because she said before she had no money, and 40 pounds had been stolen. She called me a lazy, lousy loafer, and other nasty names. I never used the language informant said I did. The only name I called her was a liar. When I asked for the money Christoph wanted to chuck me out, and I said, ' If you are the stuff to do it, come on.' When I called for the money Christoph came to the door, and I heard his mother cursing and swearing inside, and then she came out as if she would hit me. Christoph was going to chuck me out. I then left and went to Nelson's, and Christoph followed me up to give me a hiding. He had an armful of stones, and Nelson told him to put the stones down or he would break the windows. I never kicked him. Christoph waited outside to get a shot at me. He used no bad language, but accused me of breaking down a fence, and that was what annoyed me. As for trespass, I had ridden 64 miles to see Mrs Fehring and get my money.

Andrew Nelson here entered the court and gave evidence. He said he kept a roadside inn on the Yarra Track. On the 17 th February Baker came up the track to get money due to him. Mrs Fehring told him to tell Baker she would give him 1 pound. He did so. Baker was not satisfied. Witness then accompanied Baker to Mrs Fehrings, and told her Baker was not prepared to take 1 pound. Baker called her a bad name, and she retorted. Both Mrs Fehring and Baker used obscene language and applied obscene epithets to one another ( unfit to print ). He saw Christoph with stones in his hand. Baker then went away, and was having tea at his house when in rushed Christoph and said ' You - hound, you have knocked down our pailing fence. As soon he went away Mrs Fehring came and called Baker, everything she could lay her tongue to. This time Baker did not say anything out of the way.

The Bench dismissed the charges of assault and trespass, and fined the accused 10 pounds or three months for bad language.

Mr Godfrey urged that the penalty was excessive. The Bench said they must mark their sense of the fearful language used. If bad language was used on the other side, a prosecution could be brought. They believed Nelson's evidence and accused had sworn falsely.

Two weeks were allowed to pay the fine.



#### Wages Due to Baker

Fredrick Baker v Terena Fehring, claim of 6 pounds for wages due. Verdict for the amount 3 pounds 10s. cost to plaintiff, and 2 pounds 2s professional costs.

Fredrick Baker V Terena Fehring, for using insulting words Defendant did not appear.

Plaintiff deposed that on the 17 Feb at Nelson's place, Mrs Fehring had made use of certain words, previously sworn to.

Andrew Nelson gave corroborative evidence, Accused was fined 3 pounds, and 2 pounds 2s costs in default one month.

Abridged from the " Woods Point Standard ".

1899

#### Mining News from Yarra Track

The Stockman's Reward, by Big River washed up one weeks crushing for 44 oz from about 30 tons. This was a short run as the battery had to undergo repairs. The reef, which is only about 6in wide but very rich, employs about 40 men, and the lode shows gold for 360 ft. consistently, still carrying gold south, where the drive is being continued. A new find, which should develop into something good, has been made near this claim by Mr Ben Shaw. It is a distinct line of reef from Stockman's.

There will be no escort from Stockman's Creek for some little time owing to the company doing dead work in the shape of sinking a shaft from the tunnel which, when completed, should be responsible for some good returns.

Chester and Locke ( The Golden Secret Mine, near Walkers Hotel ) started to crush last Saturday, and have stone enough at grass to keep them crushing for about a month. The stuff all looks well, and if it pans out anything like the last there should be close upon 1000 oz.

The Syndicate is looking well, and promises to be one of the best in the locality. They have about 30 tons of quartz at Chester's battery awaiting crushing, which when put through will surprise many.

Mr Andrew Kirwan has about two tons of quartz taken from his claim on the Bear's Creek, awaiting Chester's convenience, and should this be satisfactory we shall see more machinery on the road. This reef is about 18 inches wide and means a big thing. So far good Gold is visible to the naked eye.

Good news has just come to hand about the Victorian Mt Morgan. A large body of oxidised ore has been met with, and I should not feel all surprised to hear of the battery again starting operations.

1899

#### Liquor Selling without a License

At the Woods Point Court of Petty Sessions last week, Inspector O'Connell, inspector of liquor, proceeded against Terena Fehring, Yarra Track for selling liquor without a license on 18 th October.

The defendant pleaded not guilty and said she had given the drink with a good heart.

Thomas O'Connell, the prosecutor, produced a gazetted notice of his appointment.

William Hutton, revenue officer said that on the 18 th of October he called at the defendant's house, situated on the Yarra Track. He was accompanied by Edward Walter Hyman. They arrived at the place a little before 1 pm, and conversed with Miss Fehring for some time outside her house. Witness said to Hyman, "Well, we'll have a drink." Defendant said,

" I have no whisky. I have some beer." She went inside and brought out a bottle of beer.

1899

Good prospects of a nice coarse gold have been obtained on the O'Shannassy River, a tributary of the Yarra, taking its rise from Mount Arnold. The discoverers have started cutting a race with the object of mining the river and working its bed.

A few days previously an accident that might easily have resulted fatally occurred to Mr H. Starling of Warburton. Mr Starling was working on his contract, cutting a track from Alderman's Creek towards Baw Baw and pulling a stump he was grubbing it yielded unexpectedly and he fell backwards head down a steep declivity. He at first collided against a boulder a few feet away and then slid down; still head-foremost, about another 30 feet, to where a log against which a quantity of rubble and rubbish had collected afforded a small platform, which, luckily, stopped his further progress down hill; but for his descent being thus fortunately stayed the result might have been serious if not fatal, for the precipice was close on a hundred feet in depth. Mr Starling suffered some severe bruises, and had his scalp torn. He was at once conveyed to Warburton, a distance of 32 miles, where the wound was treated and several stitches put in.

1899

Warburton

The "Golden Bower" at Donovan's Creek, which, when worked in the early days proved immensely rich ( 600 ozs being obtained from one crushing of a few tons ) has been recently taken up; a cyanide plant is now in course of erection thereon.

On the same creek, but about two miles from "Golden Bower," another rich reef has been recently discovered. A final crushing of three tons is shortly to be made; the stone has been taken out, bagged; and conveyed to the Yarra Track, where it awaits further removal. It is expected to go about 3 oz to the ton.

1900

The "Camp-out" at Maroondah Weir.

In Victoria November is, no doubt, the best all-round month for the field naturalist, and encouraged by the reports of the Lerderderg "camp-out" in the corresponding month of 1899, it was resolved this year to carry out a similar excursion in the Healesville, district, about forty miles E.N.E. from Melbourne. The district being one of the gathering grounds of Melbourne's water supply, a large tract of country is practically in a state of nature and under the control of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Permission to explore the reserve and make use of the regular camping ground was readily granted by the Board's officers, and accordingly on Friday, 9th November, three of the party left town by the first train with the camping outfit, which was generously placed at the disposal of the Club by our fellow-member, Mr. A. Mattingley, who also arranged all details as to provisions and cartage. Other members proceeded by the midday and evening trains, so that the muster at supper-time amounted to thirteen, which was augmented by another arrival the next evening.

The spot selected for the camp was a sheltered nook on the bank of the Watts River, a little below the weir of the Maroondah aqueduct, about four miles and a half from Healesville. Here were erected a dining marquee and two sleeping tents, so that the party formed an imposing encampment. The first night in camp to many proved sleepless. Perhaps the rushing noise of the Watts close by sounded too much like rain, or the melancholy call of the Boobook Owls- "more-poke," "more-poke" - was responsible for this. However, all were early astir on Saturday morning, when there was every prospect of a splendid day. After breakfast nearly all started off on the track to Mathinna Falls, nearly three miles away, on the eastern slope of Mt. Monda, which overlooked the camp. Soon after crossing a little stream known as Contentment Creek, the track led up a spur, and became somewhat steep. Numerous fallen branches and logs lay alongside the track, and collectors were soon at work turning them over, with the hope of obtaining certain kinds of beetles, land planarians, peripatus, and other forms of cryptozoic life which frequent such situations; and they were not unrewarded, for a good variety of planarians was obtained, as well as several specimens of peripatus. The path was bordered with the pink flowers of *Tetratheca ciliata*, with here and there bushes of *Pultenaea muelleri*, with its deep yellow flowers. Higher up the delicate yellow flowers of *Eriostemon corneifolius* were noted, while the universal *Goodenia ovata* was very fine. The Hill Tree Fern, *Alsophila australis*, now became more frequent, and a fine specimen with a triple stemmed trunk was noticed near the track. After a somewhat level portion another steep pinch occurred, where flying about in the sunshine were numbers of the pretty butterfly *Xenica hobartia*, of which specimens were secured. The Bracken Fern, *Pteris aquilina*, on this spur was very high and dense, and prevented much exploration of the hillside. A few bushes of *Prostanthera melissifolia*, with a few expanded purple flowers were seen, while among some rocks grew the creeping Fan-leaved Fern, *Asplenium flabellifolium*. Arrived at the falls, a pretty sight met our view. Here was a beautiful fern gully, full of the usual vegetation, with the water of Contentment Creek dashing down the rugged rocks and disappearing in the depths below. Photographs of the falls were taken, and some time was spent in the search for the lower forms of animal life among the moist and decaying vegetable matter. On a subsequent visit to this locality about eighteen ferns were identified, among them being *Lomaria lanceolata*, *L. fluviatilis*, *Aspidium capense*, *Asplenium bulbiferum*, and *Gleichenia flabellata*. The Batwing Fern, *Pteris incisa*, was very luxuriant, sending up fronds four to five feet high. The curious lycopod, *Tmesipteris tannensis*, was found in fruit on the tree-fern trunks, where were also noticed the orchids *Chiloglottis gunnii* and *Corysanthes pruinosa*, the former being in flower. A singular nodular fungus was growing on many of the tree trunks, which yielded abundance of dense black spores on drying.

Some members scrambled down a hundred feet or so to the lower falls, which are the prettier sight of the two, and below which is a deep gorge full of vegetation of all kinds. The Sassafras, *Atherosperma moschatum*, had just finished flowering, and was entwined with the stems of the Supplejack, *Tecoma australis*, which was noticed in bloom lower down. Another climber, *Clematis aristata*, had made use of the bracken in places, and was conspicuous with its large creamy flowers. Returning to camp, the midday meal was disposed of, after which the members dispersed in small companies in different directions, returning at sundown for a well-earned tea. The necessary washing-up being concluded, the various collectors brought out their specimens to compare notes, or examine with the microscope, or if butterflies to set, or birds to skin, or plants to press, either of which was easily accomplished by the excellent light from gas generated in the marquee. Then an early retirement was made, in view of more work on the morrow.

Next morning (Sunday) was equally fine, and after breakfast four members started off for Mt Juliet, two to Fernshaw, while others remained at camp, or explored the nearer neighbourhood. The Mt. Juliet party were out all day, and returned home thoroughly satisfied with their hard work. Crossing the Watts at the weir a track up a spur was followed to the Fernshaw road. On the way fine specimens of the orchid *Calochilus robertsoni*, with its singular fringed labellum, were obtained. On the roadside *Astrotricha ledifolia* grew in abundance. Further on fine patches of Ti-trees *Leptospermum scoparium* and *L. lanigerum* were in full bloom, but yielded little to the entomologists. A few specimens of the mountain butterfly, *Epinephile abeona*, were seen flying about the blackberry bushes, now very abundant on the roadside, and captured, but the beautiful species *Papilio macleayanus* was not to be caught. We were now facing the steep front of Mt. Juliet, but little did we think that it would take almost four hours before we reached the summit, some 3,000 feet above us, and less than three miles away. The track was not so well defined as that on Mt. Monda, and seemed to lead up through a greater variety of vegetation; but perhaps it was in watching to see that we did not go wrong that so many plants were noticed.

Passing the former site of the forester's house, the purple Foxglove was noticed to have made itself quite at home, and might fairly be added to the list of introduced plants. The little violet, *Viola hederacea*, the little pink orchid *Caladenia carnea*, and *Tetratheca ciliata*, with its flowers varying from delicate pink to deep mauve, bordered our path for two-thirds of the way up. The pure white flowers of *Stellaria flaccida* appeared everywhere in the scrub, while here and there the bushes and ferns were bound together with the twining stems of *Comesperma volubile*, bearing its delicate blue flowers. *Pimelea axiflora*, and the Native Laburnum, *Geodia lotifolia*, were fairly plentiful. *Panax*, *Sambucus*, *Prostanthera melissifolia*, *Eriostemon correifolius*, and the Kangaroo Apple, *Solanum aviculare*, were noticed; also *Persoonia arborea* and *Zieria smithii*, but the former was not in flower. As our path was very steep, and we could not see the top of Mt. Juliet, we were glad of the excuse every now and again to turn round and compare the height we had attained with that of Mt. Monda, which was visible through the heavy timber of the mountain side. At last we reached a large tree which bore the somewhat superfluous legend "To Mt. Juliet;" had it directed us to the spring which is said to exist thereabouts we should have been better pleased. The mount was now steeper than ever, so we decided to leave coats and baggage behind, so as to lighten our work for the last 1,000 feet. Near here we found *Veronica notabilis* and several composites. Shortly after leaving our halting place the track which zig-zagged up the mountain face became almost obliterated by fallen timber or the washing away of the soil, and there was also a thick growth of heavy grass, which made walking very slippery, and as the surface was now very rocky, progress was slow. At last we got among the dead trees which form conspicuous objects from the Fernshaw road, and were able to get glimpses of Healesville far below us. The vegetation became scarcer as we ascended until at length we got up to the lower edge of the topmost plateau, when walking became easier. Now we began to realize that our efforts were not to be unrewarded. At last Mt. Monda was below us, also Mt. Riddell, the sugarloaf peak which rises at the back of Gracedale House. With a final effort we made for the trigometrical survey cairn, now visible on the summit, passing on the way some fine specimens of the Silver Wattle, *Acacia dealbata*, which was still bearing a wealth of yellow bloom, though just past its prime.; while flying about them and some Blackwoods, *Acacia melanoxylon*, were the butterflies *Pyrameis*, *Papilio macleayanus*, and *Epinephile abeona*.

Arrived at the cairn, 3,650 feet above the sea, a magnificent panorama was spread out before us, with little to interrupt the view, as all the large trees had been felled years before, at the time of the survey, and we were able to overlook those growing lower down. Far below us could be seen the former site of Fernshaw; here and there portions of the road over the Black Spur could be made out, and traced across the Dividing Range to Marysville, which was just visible. Stretching away due north was the valley of the Acheron, with the Cathedral Peak near Taggerty standing prominently up; round by the east, range after range extended to the horizon. To the south our view was somewhat cut off by a high range towards Warburton, but away to the south-west, over Mt. Riddell, the Dandenongs looked like a small hill, with Lilydale at the foot. Unfortunately the western horizon was obscured by haze, so that none of the conspicuous landmarks of Melbourne could be made out, though one of the party had burdened himself with a heavy field glass. The locality of our last extended excursion, Plenty Ranges and Wallaby Creek, was clearly visible, while nearer at hand were Mt. St. Leonard (3,300 feet) and Mt. Monda (2,974 feet), the latter about nine miles away as the crow flies.

Mt. Juliet is the centre of one of the largest trap rocks in Victoria. This includes Mt. Monda, but does not extend to Mt. St. Leonard (only three miles further), which is in a granitic area extending eastward along the Dividing Range to Mt. Arnold.

Though within the ordinary winter snow limit, we were sometimes disappointed with the vegetation on the top of Mt. Juliet, expecting to find something more Alpine than we did. Even *Grevillea alpina*, so plentiful at Mt. Disappointment and Wallaby Creek, and also at Mt. Corranwarrabul (Dandenong Ranges), was not noticed at all during the three days' excursions. Some stunted gum-trees, which may have been *Eucalyptus gunnii*, were noticed, but few herbaceous plants were seen. Unfortunately, we could not spend much time on the summit, and having been reinvigorated by the charming atmosphere of the mount, we turned our backs on the cairn and commenced the descent to the marked tree, which was safely accomplished after numerous slips and slides. It was now well on in the afternoon, but though our appetites were keen, for want of water our luncheon seemed hard to swallow, so we put it away until a better opportunity occurred. Descending the mountain did not require so much exertion as the ascent, and had the disadvantage of allowing less time to look about; however, numerous specimens were picked, and duly handed over our botanist on return to camp. At last we reached the Mosquito Creek, and were able to quench our thirst, which fortunately had not been aggravated by a hot wind, the weather having been delightful all day. Returning to the main road, we set off in the direction of what was once Fernshaw, distant about a mile, and spent some little time on the bank of the Watts, intending to make back to camp to camp alongside the river; but the growth of bracken, blackberries, etc., proved so thick that we had to take to the road again, and so back by our track of the morning to the Maroondah weir and the camp close by. The evening was again spent in setting butterflies, skinning birds, or endeavouring to make out our botanical treasures by means of the "Key," and so time rapidly passed until bedtime.

The early morning of Monday was rather cloudy, but after breakfast the weather was all that could be desired. Parties went off in various directions - one along the pipe-track or aqueduct as far as the first tunnel, another to the Mathinna Falls, another down the Watts Valley, and so on, re-assembling at mid-day for our last meal at camp. After dinner each began to pack up his belongings, and when the vehicle arrived and the luggage had been added to it. Another hour, and we bade adieu to a spot where many pleasant hours had been spent, all agreeing in considering it one of the most enjoyable short camps yet held by the Club, and one in which each individual had worked for the good of the

whole party, thus making everything run smoothly. Much of this success was undoubtedly due to Mr. Mattingley, whose knowledge of camping out proved invaluable. The members comprising the party were :- Messrs. A. Campbell, jun., G. Coghill, R. H. Cummins, J. F. Haase, T. S. Hall, J. A. Kershaw, G. A. Keartland, J. McCaw, O. A. Sayce, J. Shephard, H. T. Tisdall, and A. Wallen, with A. Mattingley and F. G. A. Barnard as co-leaders.

I am indebted to members for the following reports on their various branches:-

ORNITHOLOGY, etc.- Mr. G. A. Keartland reports that, owing to the density of the scrub and several minor reasons, the ornithologists of the party did very little collecting, though making some interesting observations. In addition to those birds which are found nearer home, the Gang Gang Cockatoos were fairly numerous. Black Cockatoos were seen, and at least two pairs of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos behaved in a manner which led to the belief that their nests were near. Close to camp a Rose-breasted Robin's nest was seen, and a pair of spine-billed Honey-eaters made such vigorous attacks on every small bird approaching the trees over the tent as to leave it an open question whether they were guarding our domicile or their own. A Laughing Jackass daily perched himself on a branch close to the camp fire, and judging from his grave manner and attention to details was studying the art of cookery. Lewin's Honey-eater and Rufous Fantails were noted near the stream, while in the scrub many beautiful specimens of *Malurus cyaneus* were found. On the hillsides Pennant's Parrakeets, Yellow-breasted Robins, White-throated Thickheads, Shining Fly-catchers, and Brush Cuckoos were fairly numerous; signs of the Lyre-bird were seen in the fern gullies. Altogether about sixty species of birds were observed, but owing to the difficulty in recovering birds when shot they were seldom molested.

Several nests of the Ring-tailed Opossum were found close to the camp, and the dead bodies of two of the animals just killed, were found by the early members of the party whilst pitching the camp. An Echidna was seen crossing the track near camp, and quickly found its way into a box, in which it was forwarded to the Zoological Gardens. Although not seen, there was ample evidence of the presence of the Wallaby, Kangaroo, Wombat, and Native Bear in the locality. No snakes were seen during the outing.

CRUSTACEA.- Mr. O. A. Sayce reports that specimens of the Freshwater Crayfish, *Astacopsis serratus*, var. *yarraensis*, the terrestrial Amphipods *Talitrus sylvaticus*, and two freshwater Amphipods belonging to the genera *Hyalella* and *Atyloides*, were obtained.

PROTRACHEATA.- Several specimens of *Peripatus leuckartii* were obtained.

ENTOMOLOGY.- Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.R.S., reports that insects of all kinds were scarce, owing to a great extent to our visit being a month or six weeks too early, but more might have been done had we not been compelled to confine our search mainly to the beaten tracks, owing to the thick undergrowth. A visit to the same district about the end of December or early in January would, I am sure, prove a profitable one to the entomologist. Of the Lepidoptera, recently emerged specimens of *Papilio macleanus* were seen occasionally, but generally in places where it was impossible to get near them, specimens being met with both in the valleys and at the summits of the highest hills. *Epinephile abeona* was also met with some specimens captured. *Pyramesis kershawi* and *P. itea* were, as usual, common everywhere, while the beautiful little *Xenica hobartia* was found plentifully on the side of Mt. Monda. Examples of *Idiodes apicata*, *Nearcha buffalaria*, and *Hydriomena correlata* were also taken in the vicinity of the camp. Most of the Micros. were well known species, the following being amongst those noticed :- *Cacoecia polygraphana*, *Tortix subfurcatana*, *Dipterina rupicolana*, *Bondia dissolutana*, *Palparia*

euryphanella, *P. uncinella*, *Zonopetala clerota*, *Heliocausta limbata*, *Hoplitica absumptella* *Philobota chrysopotama*, *P. interlineatella*, *Phlocopola confusella*, *Eulechria xylopterella*, *Peltophora articollis*, *Leistomorpha ochrocausta*, *Ocystola paulinella*, *O. malacella*, *Coesyra parvula*, *Pleurota brevivittella*. Several larvae were noticed, but with the exception of one belonging to the Geometridea, which was taken, were all common. The Coleoptera were scarce, although diligent search was made under fallen logs, stripping bark, shaking, etc. *Xylonychus eucalypti* was seen on the summit of Mt. Juliet. Three species of Buprestidae were shaken from flowering shrubs - namely, *Stigmodera bicincta*, *Anthracina cruenta*, and *Cisseis acuducta*. Of the Longicorns, *Stenoderus suturalis*, *Tritocosmia paradoxa*, and *Bethelium significum* were taken. Several species of Carabidae, Curculionidae, Cleridae, etc., were also noticed, and some taken, but all being well known need not be specially mentioned. Of the remaining orders nothing of particular interest was found.

MOLLUSCA.- Mr. T. S. Hall, M.A., reports that the following land Mollusca were collected and have been identified by Mr. C. Hedley :- *Cystopelia petterdi*, Tate; *Chloritis brevipila*, Pfeiffer; *Endodonta subdepressa*, Brazier; and a species of *Rhytida* which has not been determined.

VERMES.- Messrs. J. A. Kershaw and R. H. Cummins report that specimens of the Nemertine *Geonometes australiensis*, and of the Planarians *Geoplana sanguinea*, *G. sanguinea*, syn. *alba*, *G. hoggii*, *G. howittii*, *G. spenceri*, *G. mediolineata*, *G. munda*, *G. adoe*, syn. *frosti*, *G. fletcheri*, and *G. sugdeni* were obtained.

BOTANY.- Mr. H. T. Tisdall reports that over sixty dicotyledonous plants were collected in bloom. In addition to those mentioned in the general report the following may be recorded :- *Hedycarya cunninghami*, *Pittosporum bicolor*, *Cryptandra hookeri*, *Loranthus celastroides*, *Pimelea ligustrina*, *P. linifolia*, *Cassinia ciliata*, and *Atherosperma moschatum* were obtained in fruit. About a dozen monocotyledonous plants were seen, of which the more noticeable were *Dianella revoluta*, *Xerotes brownii*, *Juncus parviflorus*, *Cladium* (*Gahnia*) *psittocorum*, and *Carex paniculata*. Among Cryptogams were about twenty-two species of ferns, including *Aspidium molle*, *Hymenophyllum nitens*, in addition to those already mentioned; also *Selaginella preissiana* and *Dawsonia superba*, the tallest Victorian moss.

Though the scientific results of the excursion may not be very striking, it must be borne in mind that country such as we were in requires time to thoroughly explore, as it is impossible in such a short time as three days to get far from the beaten tracks, consequently only the more prominent objects were noticed. There are also other portions of the district where time could be profitably spent - such as the valley of the Graceburn, Contentment Creek above the falls, Morley's Creek, and Myrtle Creek on either side of the Black Spur - and we trust that the advantages of a camp on the Watts will not be forgotten when future excursion lists of the Club are being drawn up, though it may be that before our next visit to the locality the site of our camp will be beneath the waters of the projected Maroondah reservoir. Finally, we have to thank the officers of the Metropolitan Board of Works for granting us the privilege of exploring their reserves and Mr. Almond, the resident overseer, for his courteous treatment of the party. F. A. Barnard.

1900

Acheron River Watershed Victoria State Forest  
Wednesday 10 th February

Members present - The Hon. A.L. Tucker, M.P. in the chair; A. S. Bailes, Esq, M.P.; J. B. Burton, Esq. M.P.; The Hon. D. Ham, M.L.C.; D. Kerr, Esq, M.D.

The following is a condensed report of the evidence taken by the Forest Commission in dealing with the proposed alienation of part of the Acheron territory, by the Metropolitan Board, for water supply purposes.

Edmund Gerald Fitz Gibbon, Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, sworn and examined: -

By the Chairman - Application has been made by the Metropolitan Board of Works for the reservation of 12,800 acres of land on the Acheron River watershed. It is stated that the Lands Department plans have lately been discovered to be incorrect with regard to the source of this stream and that it is necessary for the proper water supply of the metropolis that this area should be vested in the Board? Yes. The Engineer of Water Supply discovered that the source of the Acheron River, as shown on the plans, is 6 miles out of its true position. He also discovered that there would be no great engineering difficulty in diverting water from the Acheron and connecting it with the Maroondah or Watts River system, and as that would give a material addition to the water supply of the metropolis, it is most desirable that it should be taken advantage of whilst the land is still available, so that there shall be no danger of its being lost by private occupation. I may say that there is now not a single inch of the present water supply that is not in the possession of the Board. Before the Board was created, the Water Supply Department, acting under the advice of the Sanitary Commission which was appointed, and which recommended that there should be no possibility of pollution of the water by any settlement, cultivation, or occupation of the ground, bought up the whole township of Fernshaw and all the rights, which had accrued there. Since then the Board has bought out, at considerable cost, all the people who were upon the Yan Yean watershed, and if this land, which drains into the Acheron, is not secured at the present time, and becomes occupied, it will be necessary at some future time to buy the settlers out - there is now telling at what cost, or with what difficulty. Therefore the Board of Works ask that while the land is still available it may be added to the reserved areas.

Is the Board utilizing any of the timber on present reserves? - No the Board could only utilize the Timber by allowing cutters and splitters to go on the land, which is contrary to the report of the Sanitary Commission. In accordance with those recommendations the Board itself was established.

This area will give an additional water supply of 10,000,000 gallons a day? - Yes I think so. In their second progress report, the Sanitary Commission says :- "When examining the works near Healesville and the valley of the Watts River, we took the opportunity to visit the Victoria Forest, between Vinegar Hill and Narbethong. Unquestionably it is a fine forest, and outside of the catchment area, and it is natural that the saw millers should wish to operate in it. There is one insuperable objection to their wish being granted. The only road by which to bring the timber to market is over the Blacks Spur and across the Watts valley at Fernshaw. The traffic would cut up the road and increase the scouring of detritus into the streams. The crossing place at Fernshaw would undoubtedly be a favorite place for camping; and there would be constant danger of the pollution of the water by men and by dogs. In our opinion these risks should not be incurred"

You do not think absolute purity of the water supply is possible? I think absolute purity is nearly as possible to be obtained in the manner laid down by the Sanitary Commission.

By permitting tracks and roads to exist or be made, absolute purity cannot be obtained? There is no such thing as absolute purity to be obtained but we have arrived as nearly as possible at perfection.



Are they surveyed roads or merely tracks ? There is the Blacks Spur road to Wood's Point It is used by the traffic going in that direction to Marysville; there is a second coach running on it.

By the Hon. D. Ham - Your reserve does not go as far as Marysville ? No we only go 4 miles beyond the Blacks Spur.

William Dowden, sworn examined -

By the Chairman - What are you ? Superintending engineer of the Melbourne water supply.

How long is it since you discovered this error in the plan of the Acheron watershed ? -

About four years ago.

When did you first make the recommendation to the Board that it should acquire this land ? -

Towards the end of 1898.

You knew this mistake in the plans four years ago but only dealt with it twelve months ago ? I discovered nearly four years ago that the plans were wrong by taking a ride through the country, but I had no definite information to how far they were wrong. It was only twelve months ago that I discovered it was possible to turn streams into our area. As soon as I discovered that this land would be of any use to the Board I communicated the discovery.

Do you think it is of importance to the Board that this area should be added to their reserves ? - Yes in a few years, if Melbourne continues to increase, we will have to seek other sources of supply, and that is the cheapest and simplest.

What would it cost you to utilize this water ?

Between 40,000 pounds and 50,000 pounds.

Is the volume of the Acheron River anything like the Watts ? Yes, where we tap it, about the same size, and very much like it.

At present the only steams in the Healesville district you are utilizing is the Watts ? - No; we have the Watts, Graceburn, and Donnelly's.

If this land were kept reserved for forest purposes and free from occupation, would not that satisfy you ? So - long as it is kept free from occupation of any kind it would satisfy us.

Are there any surveyed roads used by the public through it. No There is one track that was cut by the Mining Department last year, running from Marysville to Warburton, which runs through part of it, but it has not been kept open; it is just a surveyed and blazed track.

If the timber area was thrown open and made available for splitting and saw-milling under proper control, would it not be much better for you to have it taken off and the debris burnt, so as to give you a clearer catchment area for water? - No it would be much worse; it would be reverting to the condition in Spain, where the rain comes down and is washed into the channels so rapidly that it cannot be availed of. There would be floods at times, and for a large portion of the year there would be no water at all whereas we have a steady flow all year round.

You have not come into collision with any municipal body? - Not to any serious extent; we have letters from Healesville Council complaining that Morley's Track was not kept clear enough for the people to get along but that was not very serious.

How many years will it be before you utilize this new watershed? - I can scarcely say; we will know better as more houses are sewered.

Is the land good for agricultural purposes? - It would be very expensive to clear. Parts of it would be good for agricultural purposes, and parts of it are very rocky and never would be much good.

John Keppel, sworn and examined "

By the Chairman - What are you ?

A councillor for the Shire of Healesville.

Has your council any objection to the application of the Metropolitan Board of Works ? Yes, they object to this land being reserved, because the effect will be to perpetually close it against settlement. It is considered that when the timber has been cleared from this area a great deal of flat land in the valley of the Acheron can be used for close settlement for the cultivation of hops and fruit, and that settlement will be prevented if the land is invested in the Board of Works.

Do you not think the importance of supplying a great city like Melbourne with water is greater than the interests of the little settlement there ? -

That is for others to say. We are elected to represent our ratepayers and do the best we can in their interests, and we consider it against their interests that this area should be locked up.

Do you think the present reserve is too large ? - I can give no opinion as to that, personally, but in the opinion of the Healesville Council it is much too large. A great deal of the fertile land that might have been settled on has been allowed to revert to wild bush, but whether the area is too large for the city of Melbourne I can express no opinion.

You heard what Mr. Dowden said about the amount of water required for the metropolis; do you think the Board ought to have this land if they will really require it? And that it was only just that I conform to their provincial customs and put up with their clinging hospitality, and over zealous reception. Having reached this just conclusion, I stopped brandishing my stick, letting as many of them rest on my shoulders and back as could find standing room.

Hour followed hour, as I drunk my fill of the beauties around me. Crossing over the slippery stones, of numerous lovely streamlets hidden by jealous ferns, forming verdant canopies at every curve and angle, I became aware of another kind of thirst. I stooped quickly at the very next miniature fountain, sure of getting a nice, cool, refreshing drink. The next minute I drew back in disgust, however, I had almost swallowed an aquarium. The transparent, clear, inviting bubbling brooklet was swarming with tiny, green, transparent tadpoles that I could see, and probably countless other water-dwellers that I could not see. Well, it was a good thing that I had looked, or I might have gone on drinking such water throughout the hike. Fortunately, the sight of the sleek community had quenched my thirst; and hitching the very heavy pack on my very aching shoulders, I resume the walk.

I must have covered about fifteen miles, and was beginning to feel somewhat tired, when a dilapidated coach with an ignoble pair drew up near me, and I was offered a couple of miles lift. Gladly accepting, I somehow managed to scramble in, pack and all.

Curiously I contemplated the superannuated pair of a disappearing order, a shabby white the one, a rusty red the other, and pitiful scarecrows both. Suddenly, I remembered something, my bird problem, and I turned to the bronzed, desiccated, middle-aged rustic at my side, for enlightenment.

"Can you tell me the name of the black birds that turn forest, from carrying on their usual business.

For that reason you would object to the land being handed over, even if you knew there was no closer settlement, or the land was not to be made available for settlement at all ? - I think that council would be willing for the land to be reserved for a series of years, so that the forest might be denuded of the timber that those splitters use.

The forest will never be entirely denuded, because while it is being cut in one part the timber is growing in another ? Two years ago a fire denuded a great portion of that area, and we are sure to have more fires. It is the timber that is matured now that the men wish to get out before any reservation takes place. It may take five or six years to get that out.

Do you want this piece of forest thrown open for settlement, or merely the timber taken off ? The council would sooner see the land thrown open for settlement, but if that is refused they would prefer the present arrangement, so that men can go in and cut the timber they require. We are against the application of the Board on all points.

By Mr Kerr - How far is this area from Melbourne ? - The nearest point would be 49 miles.

Are there any splitters on it at present ? - Yes; I cannot say how many.

Where do they find a market for their stuff ? - They cart it to Healesville, and it ultimately gets to Melbourne. They split 6 ft. pailings. The timber on the reserve is chiefly mountain ash and a little stringybark.

Would your council be in favor of a lesser area being reserved? - Yes, the less the better is the view we take of it.

Is there much good land where the Board wish to tap the Acheron? - No, very little the bulk of the good land is below that point.

By Mr Kerr - Then that would not be touched by this reserve ? No the bulk of the good land is along the river north of that point. The land north of the off-take will be no use to the Board. It would interfere very little with the shire of Healesville if the valley south of that point were reserved, and the land north of it is thrown open for settlement.

By the Hon. D Ham If we thought the land would not be permanently reserved, we would be quite satisfied to let things remain as they are, but we know that when once the Board get the land under their control it will be no use to try to do anything.

Mr Dowden - If we get the land that we want there will not be much of this area left, we have not asked for a great deal more than we want. There is a lot of land below the part that we have asked for that we do not interfere with at all. We start at the splitter's camp and take a line from there to the far end of Lauries selection.

1900

#### Campers' Experiences out Healesville Way.

Good Friday morning broke fine and warm as a party of six young men, fully equipped for spending a few days in camp life, proceeded by train to Healesville, thence by cart to their destination, five miles further on, near the Metropolitan Board of Works weir on the Watts River ( Maroondah Scheme ).

This weir, so beautifully situated on the river, turns the water coming from the mountains around Fernshaw and Narbethong into a large tunnel and thence by pipes to Melbourne. Undoubtedly one of the finest scenes is obtained a few miles further on, where the water from Mathinna Falls tumbles down into one of the affluents of the Watts River. Friday afternoon and evening were spent in trying the streams for trout and blackfish, some very fair hauls being made. The rain on Saturday rather marred the beauty of the scene and spoiled the river for fishing, though a few trout were landed from the weir. The remainder of the day was spent in climbing Mathinna Falls.

The scenery about Graceburn Hill, which at the time of our visit was covered in snow, is beyond description. The valleys are timbered with immense gum trees, tree fern of surprising stature abound, and there is a rank undergrowth of bracken, wild hop and other vegetation.

The heavy rains about the hills caused the river to rise and overflow its banks, and the ford where the cart had crossed was no longer passable, the bridge being under water. The only means of communication was by a log bridge some miles further up. Thither we wended our way,

tramping through water occasionally above our knees. The horse and cart had meantime forded the river, and, loading our equipment, saw the driver once more head for the river now running over the floor of the cart. A staunch horse and "Australian pluck" only saved our things for cart and horse were washed downstream, and after many tries at length extricated cart and all from the river. Yarra flats saw the water up to the top rails of the fences, where only three days before dust was blowing heavily. The rest of the trip was uneventful.

1901

#### A Trip through the Shire

At the invitation of President Sloss, a representative of this journal accompanied the councillors on their annual inspection of the roads of the shire. The councillors undertaking the trip were the President ( Cr. Sloss ), and Crs. Sheehan, McGretton, Boone, Furmston, Keppel, and Nichols, accompanied by their engineer and secretary ( Mr. J. G. Farquhar ) A start was made from Healesville by six of the party in a trap drawn by a pair of horses under the control of the president, at about 10 o'clock on Friday Morning last. Cr. Sheehan following on horseback. The drive to Marysville was a very pleasant one, the scenery to be viewed on the drive up especially that on the Blacks Spur, was much admired by those who had not previously been along the, and the opinion was expressed that it would be hard to get more picturesque spots in any other part of the colony. Cr. Nichols met the party at Narbethong and pointed out several requirements wanted in that locality, and then went home, picking up the company again at Walker's. Marysville was reached in time for dinner, which was partaken of at Keppel's Australian Hotel, and was served up in Mrs. Keppel's usual style. Cr. Keppel here joined the party, and after a short rest for the horses, a start was made for Walker's on the Yarra Track. Cr. Sheehan took charge of the trap at Marysville and on the journey explained to Mr. Farquhar ( who was making his first trip through the shire ) the different requirements on the roads and the names of the localities as did also the president when he was driving. The road was in good order the greater part of the journey, and here again the scenery to be met with at the different points equaled that viewed between Healesville and Marysville, that to be seen at Tommy's Bend and Cumberland Creek being especially pretty. The drive around the different side cuttings on the mountains, with the beautiful view looking down into the valleys below grown with ferns, myrtle trees, and other foliage, was a picture long to be remembered. Walker's was reached about 7 o'clock which was the camping place for the night. The accommodation provided at this hostelry far exceeds what might reasonably be expected at a way-side hotel in the middle of the bush, and reflects great credit on the proprietor ( Mr. D Walker ) and Miss Jones, who attends to the creature comforts of their patrons. An early start was made on Saturday morning for the boundary of the shire, and this portion of the journey had to be gone over very slowly, Crs. Sheehan, Keppel, and Nichols putting the state of affairs as existing in that end of the shire before their newly appointed engineer in a manner that will enable that gentleman to have many much-needed improvements made when the next grant to 4th, 5th and 6 th class shires is made. Shaw's was reached in time for dinner and here again the accommodation was all that could be desired. Dinner and a rest of a couple hours saw a portion of the party on the track to the boundary line, which was inspected in a thorough manner as the other portions of the shire and many alterations and improvements were noted by the engineer for the consideration of councillors. The return to Shaw's was completed just before 6 o'clock. Some of the company expressed a wish to visit Frank's Falls situated about a mile from Shaws

and 700 feet below, the latter being 3,600 feet above sea level. The excursion was made by Crs. Sheehan, Keppel, and Boone, and Mr Bull, accompanied by Mr Frank Jones as guide. The steep descent was accompanied in very quick time, and the fall of water some 70 feet was a very pretty sight indeed, the rocks being covered in moss and in the gully nice ferns were growing. The sight-seers had provided themselves with towels, and three of them treated themselves to a shower bath under the falls. The opinion was expressed that the falls were well worth seeing, amply repaid them for their exertions. Councillors discussed the question of the grants for roads on Saturday evening at Shaw's and drew up an estimate of the amounts to be applied for on the different roads, which totaled 2,200 pounds, but it is probable that this will be increased at the next meeting of the council. An early start was made on Sunday morning on the return journey, Marysville being reached about 2 o'clock, when dinner was partaken of. In the evening the road from Marysville to Buxton was inspected. Sunday evening was spent under the care of Mr. F. Nichols senr., of the Buxton Hotel, who still maintains his jovial disposition. The party was up early on Monday morning, the last day of the trip, and "Bouncing Buxton" was bidden goodbye at about 8 o'clock, and the main road from Buxton to Narbethong with a few bye roads was inspected, the latter place being reached at about 12 o'clock. Dinner was served up at Roche's Hotel, and at half past 2 the last stage was entered upon, Healesville being reached in about three hours time, splendid weather being experienced the whole of the four days of the trip. During the trip various experiences connected with carrying on the Woods Point road were recounted by a veteran teamster of 30 years ago, and judging by the latter day experiences it seems incredible that the obstacles to be met with in those days were surmounted, but it is now a matter of history of this road that such was the case. The pioneers of the road are gradually lessening, and soon there will be none left who were the first to take loading with their teams from Melbourne to the Point. The pioneer referred to was Cr. McGretton, who celebrated his 72nd birthday on the trip, and was the recipient of many congratulations from his travelling companions, and the occasion was fittingly honoured.

The impressions of such a trip through the shire leads one to the belief that we have very little to depend on outside the beautiful scenery that we possess which attracts visitors, and timber trade. That the roads of the shire are bad in some places cannot be denied, but taken altogether they compare favorably with other shires. The Woods Point road was seen at its best, and with a fair grant from the Government should be kept in good order. That this road should be kept in order by the ratepayers money does not seem fair, as there are no rates to speak of coming into the council's funds from the vast territory through which the road runs. The Woods Point traffic is certainly a benefit to Healesville, but not in proportion to the ratepayers' money that would have to be spent if the Government grants ceased, and the council should try and get money from the Government annually to keep this road in repair. The only land used for agricultural purposes is that around Buxton and the homesteads to be seen in that locality show that the land is being used to good advantage. The people of that place are fortunate in having a creamery erected in their midst, but although for a start the people are not supporting it as was expected, it is stated that next year they intend to increase their herds and supply the creamery with milk. The circulation of monthly cheques amongst the farmers for their milk cannot but be of great benefit to the place, and by supporting the industry they are also assisting the locality in which they live. The mining industry on the Yarra Track is another source from which good is expected in the near future, some of the prospectors being of opinion that there will be some good shows yet unearthed in that locality. Of course, this article

only deals with that portion of the shire inspected by councillors, the settlement around Healesville not being referred to.

The annual inspections by councillors are looked upon by some as an "annual spree," but such is not the case, as anyone who undertakes the trip will find out. Every councillor should make it his duty to go on these inspections of the roads, as the information thus obtained is invaluable, and which could not be obtained by a number of years sitting at the council table. The amount of work done by councillors and their engineer on this occasion was of no small moment.

1901

#### Alleged Cattle Stealing

At the Woods Point police court, on 27th, Fredrick Baker was charged on the information of Elizabeth Catherine Smith, that he did on or about the 18 th day of February, 1901, feloniously steal a heifer, valued at 5 pounds, the property of informant.

Constable Crooks, who prosecuted asked for a withdrawal of the charge as further information had been sworn, and he would be charged with stealing two head of cattle, instead of one, valued at 12 pounds. Terena Fehring also being joined with accused on the same offence.

Constable Crooks stated that the cattle had been taken charge of at McVeigh's on the 5th March, but had broken away, and they were therefore at the disadvantage of not being able to bring them there for identification.

T.G. Bolton, constable in charge of Gaffney's Creek, said that on 20th of March he went to McVeigh's on the Yarra Track, and took possession of two head of cattle from Constable Batty. In company of Nelson, of Yarra Track, and Fletcher, of Matlock, he proceeded to bring the cattle into Woodspoint. About 3.5 miles from McVeigh's the bullock broke away, and later on the heifer rushed down a gully into some thick scrub. At daylight next morning they went in search of the beasts, but were unable to find any trace of them. The cattle were last seen by Nelson on Sunday.

Constable Crooks here applied for a further adjournment to produce the cattle, so no mistake of identification would occur. The Bench, after consideration, decided to hear some of the evidence so as to ascertain if the bail for the accused, Baker, could be made lighter, as he had already been in goal three weeks, and also save the expense of bringing some of the witnesses back, as they had to travel long distances. He then called.

Patrick McVeigh, farmer and hotelkeeper, Walsh's Creek, who deposed : I know the accused persons. On 17th February, in company with Philip Hansen, I went to Miss Fehring's place on the Yarra Track. I saw the defendants, with whom I had made arrangements a week previously to have some cattle in for me to look at. The cattle were not yarded on that date, and Baker told me he had seen them the previous Saturday, and said if we went along with him he would try and find them. We went as far as the Oaks, but failed to find them until returning home. We rounded them up, and I asked accused did all the cattle belong to Miss Fehring. He replied, "As far as I know, but we will take them up and she can see them." We drove the cattle to within a short distance of Miss Fehring's place, when a cow and a calf broke away. Accused headed the cow, so as she could get back to the Oaks, and Hansen and I drove the remainder (14 head) along the road. I saw Miss Fehring outside her place, and asked if all the cattle belonged to her. She began to describe the beasts, and I understood they had all been reared by her. The cattle remained about the place that night, but I would not buy them as it was Sunday. Next morning I asked Baker what he wanted for the cattle, and he replied, 2 pound a head. I told him he had offered them previously to Mrs. McVeigh for 30 shillings. I eventually offered 1 pound 15 shillings per head, accused

agreed to let me have five at that price. I also bought a red and white cow, branded J.F. for 5 pounds, a red and white poley heifer, branded like MM on ribs for 4 pounds 10 s, and a red bullock with white face, branded, I think, JF, for 3 pound. That was all I bought that morning. I gave Baker a 5 pound note to bind the sale on delivery at Walsh's Creek. We started about 9 o'clock to drive the cattle to my place. Took all the cattle along we had rounded up the previous day, making 15 head altogether. On the road I asked the accused the price of a cow and calf that was amongst the mob. He said 6 pounds, and I offered him 5 pound 10 shillings. He replied, "I cannot take it, as that is Miss Fehring's favorite cow." I eventually gave him his own price for the cow and calf. There was also a red and a brindle bullock, the latter being branded AS on ribs, but I am not sure about the brand on the red beast. The price I paid for the two was 7 pound. We put the cattle in my paddock at Walsh's Creek, and after lunch P. Hansen, F. Baker, Griff Martin, a man named Carter and myself went down to take the brands. Accused and I took the brands, and Hansen wrote them down. In consequence of something I heard, I did not complete the bargain till next morning, and then said to Baker, "If the cattle are not all right I do not want them, as I don't want to be mixed up in anything not straight." Accused said, "Miss Fehring told me that her son Christopher had bought some cattle from Alex Smith." Mrs McVeigh made out the receipt and accused signed it as agent for Miss Fehring. His signature was not very good.

There were two receipts, one of which I sent to Miss Fehring to get her signature. The receipt was stamped, the other ( which is a duplicate ) I retained. The receipt produced is the duplicate. I paid Baker 34 pounds in all. On that evening Nelson called, and in consequence of what I heard I went to Fehring's next morning, arriving about 7 o'clock. I saw accused, and he asked me where I was going, and I replied, "Just for a ride." He said, "You needn't have bothered coming up, I was sending Terena down." I asked him for the original receipt, which he handed to me. At breakfast I told them there was something wrong about the cattle, as Nelson told me there was not more than three or four belonging to Terena. Miss Fehring replied that Christoph ( meaning her deceased son ) had bought some cattle from Smith I asked about the receipts, and she said she did not know what Christoph has done with them, as he did not let her know about his business for the past two years. I asked her how she knew, and she said "Mr. Crooks, of Woodspoint, had, told her that Christoph had told her that Christoph had bought cattle from Smith." When she told me this I thought it was all right. Miss Fehring and witness came down to Walsh's Creek, and saw the cattle in the paddock. I described the brand to her, and she pointed out three and said to cut them out. In cutting these out eight others broke away, and we were unable to get them back. There were five head left including a brindle bullock, which we turned out, as Miss Fehring did not claim it. I asked her what we should do, and she said I could keep what was left at the price paid. That included one red heifer branded AS on off ribs. I said I was informed that heifer belonged to Alex Smith, and she said she could take her oath it was hers, as she had reared it. We then went up to the house, and my wife made out the receipt. Phillip Hansen witnessed the signature of Miss Fehring. The money paid to Baker was returned later on by Miss Fehring, who said "we will settle up when we see how the matter gets on." Shortly afterwards I went to Melbourne, and on returning found the cattle in the possession of Constable Batty. On Thursday last I saw the red heifer and brindle bullock taken away by Constable Bolton.

Phillip Hansen, laborer, in the employ of McVeigh. corroborated the previous witness's evidence.

A remand was then granted for 14 days to allow the production of the cattle. Bail was allowed in one surety of 50 pounds.

1901

### The Yarra Track Country

Our persistent forecast that Woodspoint could establish its reputation as the centre of one of the most extensive auriferous fields in Victoria is being rapidly realised. The late finds in the vicinity of Shaw's, on the main divide, provide additional justification. Last week we had an opportunity of inspecting the mine lately opened up by the Messrs. Victor, on a spur from the main divide, about three miles from Shaw's hostelry. The reef was discovered by Mr. Thos. Victor, about four months ago, whilst prospecting on one of the feeders of the Upper Yarra, known as Little Damper Creek. The spur is of a very easy grade, and there will be no difficulty in getting down the machinery, which has already been purchased to the site where it is to be erected. The reef was found by loaming, and its cap uncovered at a depth of about 4 ft from the surface. It is a well defined quartz formation between solid state walls, about 8 ft. wide, and has been sunk on a depth of 40 ft., from which about 80 tons of stone have been stacked ready for crushing. As before stated, a battery has been purchased, a portion of which will in a few days be on the mine. A tunnel has been driven about 100 feet lower down the hill to cut the reef worked in the shaft, and it is now within about 20 ft. of the formation. When it is intersected there will be something like 90 ft. of backs to operate on. In the heap stacked ready for crushing, gold is plainly visible all over, and, by the courtesy of the owners we were allowed to pick up a few specimens, which may be seen at the STANDARD office. The owners have no intention of seeking any outside assistance to develop the property, the stone already stacked containing sufficient metal to enable them to pay for the purchase and erection of a complete crushing plant. From what we saw of the heap we judge that there is atleast 1000 pound worth of gold in the stone already raised. The owners are Messrs. T. and J. Victor, A Stiggants and Frank Jones.

About 3 miles west of Victor's mine another new find has been made, and this also in private hands and worked entirely by the owners. Messrs. McNamara and party of three others have a property on Bear's Creek, about 4 miles above its junction with Donovan's Creek. The trial crushing from this reef gave 66 ozs gold from 21 tons crushed, and three prospectors, like the Victors, purchased and have erected their own crushing battery. The battery is one of 10 heads, five of which are now crushing. The power is an overshoot wheel of 25 ft. diameter. The party has 150 tons stacked ready for milling.

Chester and Locke ( after their recent experience with a gentleman from the city ) have done splendid work in sinking, and the claim bids fair to realise all that was promised of it.

1901

### Chesterville

( From our own Correspondent )

May 6.

The long spell of fine summer weather broke on Monday week, when it rained continuously for thirty-eight hours, and then the first snow of the season fell to a depth of three inches.

The mines around here are making good their lost time. McNamara and party are having their second crushing in their new battery, and expect a good return, as usual. Sheehan, Kirwan and party on The Bower are making good progress with the erection of a four head plant, and inside the month expect to put through a trial crushing. The Little Damper show opened by Victor, Jones and party promises something good. They are still



driving the tunnel to cut the reef, which is very rich, and have about eight tons stacked ready for crushing. Tenders were called for cartage of their plant from the Christmas reef, but no tenders were received, and now one of the party is seeking a carter to undertake the work.

1901

Chesterville

( From our own Correspondent )

Fine weather prevails here at present, with frosts and clear mountain breeze, as is always to be found on the Track at this time of year.

The Little Damper mines are busy preparing their plant, which is on the way, Messrs. Clements Bros. being the contractors. Chester and Locke are stopped, the water becoming too heavy for horse power; they have struck the reef which is five feet in width, carrying payable gold. The Federation gold mine has had another successful crushing; this mine is mentioned as the second best in the ranges on account of it being of good width and easy worked; Mr McNamara deserves much credit for the way he has worked it to its present state. Kirwan and Co. are still erecting the battery and expect to be able to make a start crushing soon. Many rumors are abroad of other rich discoveries in the vicinity of Little Damper, but nothing payable has as yet been struck.

Much dissatisfaction is expressed at the Mines Department not completing the track which was let some months ago. There is not an axe mark yet done on it, although it is much needed in the winter months when the snow is deep, while in summer it is with difficulty that a pack horse can manage to force its way through. It is hoped that steps will be taken in the direction mentioned.

The contractor on the road has his job nearly completed, but the road is completely blocked for miles with felled trees, while no attempt is made to provide a traffic way through. As far as I can judge a contractor is his own engineer, as in places he lays his own work out, which has already been marked different by the engineer on his last visit. Is he likely to make another visit this winter? If not, the council's attention will be drawn to the state of fallen trees along the road.

Messrs. Victor and party are now forwarding and erecting machinery for their rich show on the Yarra Track, near Shaw's. The battery will consist of five head and water wheel, and it is expected there will be sufficient water to crush part of the year. Pending the work of erecting machinery, tunneling has been discontinued. When they left off they had not struck the reef in the drive, but had a good sample of stone to operate on.

1901

Mining on the Yarra Track

The following appeared in the "Argus," by its correspondent having reference to mining on the Yarra Track :- The Victors' mine is about two miles from Shaw's on the Yarra Track, and I was surprised to see such a really well grassed country unselected. For fully five miles on either side of the divide the country consists of well grassed ridges, intersected by shallow fern gullies, and is not by any means so steep as much of the selected country in South Gippsland. As the Yarra River is neared the range becomes steeper and the soil poorer quality. The timber, too, is of great height, and consists of blackbutt, swamp gum - light wood - and wattle. There are some extensive patches of hazel and dogwood scrub, and the soil everywhere on the upper portion of the range is of excellent quality, and capable of growing any kind of crop. The greater portion of this part of the range has the advantage of being below the

snow line, except in exceptionally severe winters. About three miles west of Victors' find and passing through country of exactly the same description, another new reef is being worked. This belongs to Mr McNamara and a party of three others, who, like the Victors' are working their mine on their own account. Their trial crushing of 21 tons gave them a return of 66 oz. They have erected their own battery, consisting of 10 head stamps, and use water power. The shaft is sunk 66 ft., and the lode proved in it has been at a depth of 120 ft., by a tunnel 500 ft. in length. About 200 tons of stone have been raised and stacked at the battery. About five miles west of McNamara's, and on the same belt, is the Golden Bower Mine, lately taken up by Mr Sheehan of Healesville, and to which he has removed the machinery lately purchased by him from the Stockman's Company, Big River.

All the creeks rising in this part of the range have been successfully worked for alluvial gold and in many of them sluicing and hydraulic work is still being done. There is now a good road from the Yarra crossing at McVeigh's about 20 miles upstream from Warburton to the divide between Shaw's and Nelson's on the Yarra Track. There is also a tri-weekly coach service from Healesville to Walker's, where Chester and Locke's mine is situated, on the head of Donovan's Creek. The claim like the others described is worked by the owners who have a very complete crushing plant, worked by steam power. Several claims have been taken up in this locality and like all the country traversed by me on this visit, the ridges are well grassed and timbered.

1904

#### Mining Tracks

A good deal of attention is being given by prospectors to the country between Warburton and Matlock and, in consequence, many of the roads are being tested from the surface. While the many tracks cut by the Mines department are proving useful to prospectors, it is regrettable that after the immense sums expended on this work much of the labor is rendered nugatory through the failure of the department to see that the tracks are kept open. Many, if not all of them, are being rapidly overgrown, and will, if not soon attended be impassible. Victor Brothers, who opened up the well known Victor's Quartz, have discovered very rich stone at Alderman's Creek, about seven miles beyond McVeigh's. They have opened up the make for 80 ft., and have sunk 25 ft. on it. The formation is small, and necessarily broken up, but the stone is remarkably rich, and is estimated to go over 50 oz. to the top. They are negotiating for the erection of a battery. Sheehan and Kirwan, at Snob's Creek have driven their tunnel 160 ft., and have cut the reef in dyke formation about 1 ft. wide. They are now rising to connect their shaft with the tunnel. In rising, they washed from two dishes 6 oz. of gold. The formation is very broken up, and carries gold all through it. They are taking out a crushing and have 6 tons of excellent stone, which they are packing to the Golden Bower battery, at Donovan's Creek. They propose at an early date to erect their own battery, and will then have plenty of dirt to work on. At present they have 60 tons at grass, which is estimated to go 1 oz. to the ton, but that will not pay to pack miles to a crushing plant. A number of leases have been marked off at McMahan's Creek, and there is every prospect of good development work in the immediate future.

1905

#### Mount Juliet on a Wet Day

On Monday, 2nd January, a party amongst whom were Dr. Baird, Mr. L. de Garis ( of Narracoorte, S.A., ) Miss Rhoda Green, Miss Millar, Mr and Mrs.

James Milne, and Mr and Miss Pitcher, started off from "Ellesmeres" Healesville, in Sheehan's drag "The Princess," made famous by having been used by the Duchess of York ( now Princess of Wales ) during the Royal visit in 1901. The ribbons were entrusted to that careful and thoroughly competent driver, Pat Cook. At the start the weather appeared doubtful so much so that the doctor prescribed umbrellas for the party. The prescription was faithfully followed by one or two of the party; but as after events proved, macintoshes and galoshes should have been included in the "dose."

After a drive of some six miles, camp was struck, and lunch was partaken of. A start was then made for the summit of the mount. About half-way up the rain descended to cool the parched earth, and at the same time, to somewhat damp the spirits of the climbers, who were making the trip for the first time, and were anxious to see the magnificent view to be had from the top. Notwithstanding the rain, and the fact that some of the ladies wore paper hats - which, by the way, were not fit to be seen the next day - the whole of the party, with the exception of one lady who preferred to wait at the spring, reached the summit fairly well drenched, after a walk of about two hours. The mist and rain, of course, prevented the long-looked-for view. The member who carried the field-glass vainly endeavoured to get a glimpse of the ocean, which could easily be discerned in fine weather. Naturally, a quick return march was ordered. The party was agreeably surprised on returning to camp to find that the doctor, who had gone ahead, and who combines among his qualifications that of an experienced bushman, had a fire burning, and was ready to serve hot tea out to the drenched and mud stained travellers as they arrived. It was thought the doctor must have had something dry up his sleeve to have set such a fire going. A cup of hot tea under the circumstances was truly refreshing. General regret that Ben had not brought his camera with him on this occasion, as a snap shot of the group as they then appeared would have been worth seeing.

A cold drive for six miles in pouring rain was then undertaken, and at length the party were safely home again, none the worse for the trip, which many will think was completely spoilt by the rain. But not so; the party had a most enjoyable time, and were glad, indeed, that they could say they had been to the top of Mount Juliet on a wet day.

1905

#### A Trip to Healesville [By Frank]

I and a party of friends having obtained our annual fortnight's holiday, we decided to take a trip into the country instead of the seaside, our rendezvous in many previous years. Accordingly we prosecuted inquiries as to the place at which most enjoyment could be obtained, and coming across a guide to Healesville, issued by the local Tourists' Association - several of the members of which I afterwards met - Healesville was unanimously chosen as the locality of our rustic holiday. There were three of us : Jim Blank, Charlie O'C and myself. Leaving the dust and bustle of the city behind us, we boarded the 9 a.m. train at Princess Bridge on a bright sunny morning, and we landed at our destination two hours hence; rather late in the day for holiday makers who intended returning the same evening. We had taken the precaution of chartering our lodging beforehand, and, on leaving the station, enjoyed a pleasant drive behind a spanking pair of roans to the establishment that was to be our home for the following two weeks. We received every attention there, and retain very pleasant recollections of the genial disposition generally of the Healesville inhabitants. We were duly initiated into the mysteries of the farm-yard, and the various processes

of milking, feeding, riding etc. Our first ramble was to Condon's Gully, then in all its splendor of towering bush ferns cooling waters and shady walks. Words fail to express the impressions created by our visit to this lovely spot, and in order to realise them it is necessary to make a personal visit. The other places we visited, all equally resplendent in their beautiful green verdure, were Juliet, Donnelly's Weir, the Maroondah Tunnel, Fernshaw, Myers Falls, and the Healesville saw-milling company's mill by kind permission of the manager (Mr. T. Crowley), Malleson's Riddle, The Graceburn, Stevensons and Mattinna Falls, Etta's Glen, The Springs on the Black's Spur, Roorke's bridge, Graceburn Weir, and numerous other little resorts. By kind permission of the superintendent, Mr. Jos. Shaw, we were enabled to look around Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, and were especially interested in all we saw; particularly the ways of the little black children. During our peregrinations we also visited the Mechanics' Institute circulating library and billiard room at the rear. This is a most deserving institution, and it is pleasing to note that it is being well patronised. Our stay was punctuated at intervals with some amusing incidents. On one occasion C.O.C. became quite delirious through an overdose of cold pork which he annexed from the kitchen, and when we climbed Juliet we were wet to the skin by heavy rain, and returned home like "drowned rats," much to the amusement of the wiser ones who stayed within easy reach of overcoats and umbrellas. However we enjoyed ourselves immensely and were very loath to say good-bye to friends we had made and return to the city. We intend running up again at the first opportunity.

1906

A tramp from Healesville to Buxton.

Botanical and Ornithological notes for September.

By A. D. Hardy, F.L.S., and Mrs. Hardy.

(Read before the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, 15th Jun., 1906.)

Towards the end of September last year (1905) we crossed that part of the Dividing Range known as the Blacks' Spur. Our starting point was Healesville, situated at the junction of the Yarra and Watts Rivers, 38 miles from town, and our pace was a leisurely one, as befits the nature student, on foot, by route which passed through Fernshaw and Narbethong to Marysville, and on horses to Buxton, which lies in the Acheron Valley, eight miles northerly from Marysville, on the road to Alexandra. The distance by road from Healesville to Buxton is, roughly, about 30 miles. It will be seen by those who know something of the locality that we had a well formed road all the way, to which we kept, except for the hundred and one small deviations in search of bird or plant life - deviations which added to the length and interest of the journey.

The object of our paper is to tell something of a district which is a little beyond the ordinary holiday rambles of our club, and to assist in recording the regional distribution of plants and birds.

In the immediate environment of Healesville the country is settled, and in many places quite denuded of timber, in other parts only partially, so that in some of the paddocks there still remains sufficient shrubby vegetation to shelter a number of birds.

For one ramble we chose the road to Coranderrk Aboriginal Settlement, but had a bad day for natural history, the muddy road, frequent showers, and wet grass, considerably interfering with our researches.

In this locality the eucalyptus trees are stunted, and of little use for shade or ornament. The largest trees other than eucalyptus were Blackwoods, or Lightwoods, which were in full bloom. *Acacia verticillata*, known by bushmen as Prickly Moses, was just beyond its prime. The two

tea-trees, *Leptospermum lanigerum* and *Melaleuca squarrosa*, were represented. Of smaller plants, those seen in bloom were common enough, but are recorded for the purpose of comparison with other districts and seasons.

In the doubtful shade of some eucalypt saplings the orchid *Pterostylis longifolia* grew well, but few in number. This was the only orchid seen, either on the lowlands or at higher altitudes, during our outing. Other lowland plants were *Wurmbea dioica*, the "Purple Runner," *Kennedya monophylla*, *Hypoxis glabella*, *Drosera whittakeri*, *D. menziesii*, *Craspedia richia*, *Brachycome graminea*, *Viola hederacea*, and *V. betonicifolia*. Along a water-race the ferns *Lomaria discolor* and *Gleichenia* grew luxuriantly, as did also the Maiden Hair, *Adiantum oethiopicum*.

Of the few species of birds seen about Coranderrk and Healesville several were represented by large numbers. Blue Wrens were wherever a patch of scrub or bracken gave that harbour to insects, for which they are ever on the search. The Ground Lark, *Anthus australis*, was plentiful, but only a few of the Spotted Pardalote were visible. A few of two common birds were noticed, these being the Mud Lark, *Grallina picata*, and the White-backed Magpie, *Gymnorhina leuconota*, but the "Kookaburra," *Dacelo gigas*, was numerous, and, though no thrushes were seen, the melody of the Harmonious Trush came from many a clump of scrub near the road.

The walk from Healesville up the Blacks' Spur demands at any time a fair amount of exertion, but on this occasion, with 2 inches of snow on the road at Healesville, the conditions of the tramp at higher altitudes might be anticipated to present some difficulty. Notwithstanding the advice of old residents, who declared the Spur to be impassable on foot, we set out prepared for a rough time, cold feet, and a pedestrian achievement of some novelty. That a member of our Club should be the first lady to cross the Spur to Marysville with a reported foot depth of snow to walk through, and thereby establish a record, was temptation irresistible.

At the Maroondah or Watts Bridge, the former site of Fernshaw, the snow depth had perceptibly increased, and we were soon convinced that botanical inquiry was for the first time almost impossible, as all but tall trees and larger shrubs were completely hidden. Further on small branches from the overhanging eucalypts littered the ground, and here and there a great limb, unable to resist the increasing weight, had fallen and grounded the telephone wire. Creaking and cracking branches overhead warned us to get from the more flexible twigs there came frequent and sudden showers of snow, and often heavier masses that fell without warning and drove one's hat down over the ears in a way that was more exciting than pleasant.

With the crooked horn end of an alpenstock we endeavoured to shake many shrubs free of their white load, in order to recognize them, but the loitering in snow up to the boot tops was not encouraging, and the falling of the cold powder into our sleeves decided to push on, and examine the plants if possible on the return journey. The temporarily altered habit of many plants - in the expression be allowed - was remarkable, as many shrubs of normally erect growth and acutely angular branching now appeared like weeping willows, and some of the smaller eucalypt bushes were depressed and flattened on top in imitation of their alpine kindred. The tree ferns, *Dicksonia* and *Alsophila*, had lost their graceful appearance, for while the circinate young fronds still remained erect the radial, expanded fronds were borne down at a sharp angle from the trunk and weighed to the ground with snow.

When half-way up the Spur we halted for early lunch, which we ate while we perched on the top rail of fence, with very wet, cold feet, suggesting that the halt should be as short as possible. There we measured the snow which capped the fence rail and post tops and noted 12.5 inches. A solitary mosquito, *Culex*, sp., appeared to be benumbed with the cold as

with difficulty it picked its steps amongst the snow crystals. Its appearance surprised us, but on attempting to secure it for our entomological friends at home it flew away as airily and healthfully as though it were a summer evening. A little further on we noticed an earthworm crossing the road on snow over a foot above the ground, but having some difficulty where it sank in some of the newly fallen and powdery parts. There was no disturbed surface within many yards of the creature, and we wondered whether it had strayed or was instinctively pursuing some course with an object in view. After pouring half a flask of whisky into our boots to warm our numbed feet, with successful results in about twenty minutes, we continued, the walking becoming heavier at each mile, ploughed our way through close on 18 inches of snow on the summit, and descended through deep drifts in places, till we reached Mr. Lindt's well-known Hermitage, where wet clothes were soon dried and good cheer obtained. We found Mr. Lindt busily engaged in securing photographs of the snow scenes. The summit of the spur is about 1,960 feet above sea level, and in the three miles from the Maroondah Bridge we had ascended some 1,200 feet.

During the ascent few species of birds were seen. These were mostly robins; but one young Kookaburra, which had curiously watched us at lunch and refused the crumbs we offered it, continued with us a considerable distance up the road, as it flew from post top to post top, and fence to twig, often only a few feet from us.

From the Hermitage a fine view of the surrounding country is obtained. To the south-east Mt. Dom Dom, about 2,600 feet, appears like a blunt cone. Looking north-easterly, a great expanse of undulating country is seen stretching across to the Cerberean Range. In the valleys of these undulations run the various streams from the Blacks' Spur and the foothills of the Cerberean Range, the Cathedral Mount is seen peeping above the low hill of the foreground. A photograph on the table, by Mr. N. J. Caire, taken from a more southerly point - Mt. Bismarck - shows the Cathedral with Marysville in Middle distance.

About the Hermitage and along the road up and down the Spur grow the Golden and Silver Wattle, *Acacia pycnantha* and *A. dealbata*, and we do not remember having seen these wattles anywhere to better advantage. One of the photographs shows the two side by side in cultivation and snow covered. It will be noted that Baron Von Mueller made no record of *A. pycnantha* in the east or north-east portion of Victoria, but Mr. Lindt assured us that these were selected from amongst self-sown plants of the locality, and that they appeared, as acacias are known to do in other parts, mysteriously, after a bush fire.

For some miles our way had been over a porphyritic area, the resulting soil supporting a growth of timber trees for size unequalled in Australia, but the aspect of the vegetation changes considerably as one approaches the lower Silurian country beyond the Blacks' Spur. Axe and fire have left their mark, while the results of different conditions of soil and climate are seen in the plant life. The tall trees are replaced by shorter and scrubbier growths, and the undergrowth is of a coarser and stronger nature. Crossing a few miles of undulating country through which run several headwater streams of the Acheron River, and on one of which (Fisher's Creek) the little village of Narbethong is situated, we climbed a high spur before dropping down into Marysville. This spur has been burnt out as regards all undergrowth, but the large trees had not been altogether destroyed, as from the blackened trunks young foliage was again sprouting. On the ground between the snow concealed very little else than bracken and grass-like plants, with a few hardy legumes, such as *Platylobium*, etc., of very recent growth. About Narbethong there are in cultivation many fine Blackwood trees, *A. Melanoxylon*, in bloom, better than we had ever seen before, of splendid symmetry, and affording excellent shade, in every respect different to their asymmetrical,

straggling foliated kindred of the gullies a few miles away, and suggesting possibilities of successful experiment with other of Victoria's gully vegetation.

Leaving Narbethong and Fisher's Creek behind, we climbed the spur beyond. The third animal, other than birds, we saw here - a Wombat, *Phascolomya mitchelli*, Owen, standing with its legs deep in snow, and with the ends of a grass-like plant projecting from its mouth, being a very conspicuous object. It was far from any cover, and stood motionless, and apparently numbed with cold, until we stood within six feet of it. Our voices, however, caused it to beat a precipitous retreat down the steep hillside, a shower of snow following as the weighted down bracken fronds were released and the stems acted like springs. Everywhere the stems of buried bracken fronds appeared like countless croquet hoops. We followed back the Wombat's tracks to ascertain what plant the animal had been eating, and found it to be *Xerotes longifolia*, of which the leaves had been pulled up, and the sweet, white, succulent parts near the root eaten. Here and there we found this *Xerotes* with the comparatively hard green leaves cropped off to the surface of the ground, the root parts being neglected.

At Marysville on the following day the roadway was free of snow, except for sheltered parts, but the vegetation was mostly covered, so we set off to visit the well-known Stevenson Falls. This once beautiful gully had also been burnt out. It was once filled with tall timber and fern trees up to 40 feet in height, and with much of the best of our valley shrubs, but now there remained nothing but the blackened trunks of burnt trees, and the frondless stems of tall fern trees, which, silhouetted against the white coverlet, stood like sentinels over the grave of the magnificent vegetation which flourished here a few years ago. A solitary group of three young trees, *Panax dambucifolius*, each exhibiting different foliage, grew on a slope, But why the difference of foliage? Being so close together, neither soil nor climate could claim any influence. Bracken, of course grew everywhere, though concealed for the time. The spoliation of this once beautiful valley reminded us of the devastation in the Otway Forest, and especially of the scene where the fine fall on the Little Aire River had been robbed of its pretty and interesting vegetation by bushfires. The horses grew steadily more nervous, because of the insecure foothold, and at last stood snorting and trembling, and refused to be ridden further, so had perforce to be led through knee-deep snow along a track rendered treacherous by holes and boulder faces being concealed by drifts. The only birds seen here were ground Thrushes and Robins, but a couple of Sparrow-Hawks circled overhead. After a fruitless search for mosses and ferns of more than passing interest, and after selecting some probably algae-bearing material for subsequent examination, we returned to Marysville.

1906

#### A Motor Ride

We came from the "sundowner and the sheep" into the freshness of the first cabbage garden (presumably Adam's and Eve's). All the earth was washed with showers and dew and gladness, and it was Cup-time - the holiday of Victoria. After doing that and the sights of Melbourne, we got the morning train and set off for Healesville (we had heard it called the tourist paradise), attended by our suite and "him from further on." After a stoppity-stop journey in the Healesville express, we alighted on the station. Sheehan's motor car was our object, but first we were met by our "country cousins." Ah! to belong to a big family of old times and have "cousins" in every corner of the globe. Well, we boarded the motor, so did the chaff - of two kinds - and set out for the Dividing Range, en

route for Narbethong. Long before we reached Fernshawe we fell in love with our brave "four in hand" that required no feeding all our journey and back again but a little duck's oil. No more horses for us; we commend this kind of steed, and particularly this car and the driver. We climbed up the four pensive "sisters." - we edged along past "Uncle Sam," and swept the gravel round the "elbow" of the old man who carries a pitchfork in warm regions - we saw the picturesque Hermitage; also the Hermit; and as we turned the slight descent toward our destination, on our right, the always beautiful shadow touched mountains lay in all the loveliness that distance lends. This panoramic seen through the tree tops, is well worth the journey, But I "am ahead of myself," as the Irishman said, and have run past the vegetation over the ferns, the tender green, the darker hues, the touch of brown; only the trees could vie with them in schemes of colour. The trees on the Black Spur are particularly striking, here the moss climbs boldly up the trunks, and many varieties of the trees are to be seen. The scarlet of the wattle seeds sent one Kew resident into half forgotten memories of the red flowering gums of Western Australia. But our car pressed on, and about lunch time we were in Narbethong, and met by another detachment of country cousins and with a buggy. The glorious sun of a fine afternoon was over and around us so we picnicked by the old bullock dray and on the big log in Narbethong. Needless to say wit came up and victuals went down. At last we left "sweet William's" side, and driven by "him from further up" reached St Fillans. This stands on an ideal spot, and, with charming grounds, the tourist resident has a picturesque home. Tired but happy, and with adieus to our mountain cousins," we got on the motor car. Leaving Narbethong about 5pm., we had a splendiferous trip back to Healesville. As we started the shadows lengthened, the innocent bunny pushed across the road and sat boldly near to stare at our curious steed. Life seemed estatic existence as we skimmed along as gaily as the poetic swallow. Our driver would not go the longest way, but kept persistently to the ordinary road, so our glorious day came to an end prosaically at the Healesville post office, and out of Sheehan's motor car we got most reluctantly. And all the ladies agreed 'twas back here they would come for honeymoon trips on the motor car.

1907

## A Visit to Yarra Falls

By F.G.A Barnard

To many the whereabouts of the Yarra Falls is almost as great an enigma as the North Pole. They are said to exist at the sources of the Yarra, but what direction to take or how to get there is known to very few. Consequently a few notes from one who was fortunate enough to be one of a party of tourists, who starting out from Kew with hope of reaching the much talked of Yarra Falls, succeeded in doing so may be of service to others who think of venturing into that almost untrodden part of Victoria.

On looking at a map of Victoria it will be noticed that the county of Evelyn runs to a point towards the south-east. Now almost in the extremity of this point are situated the Yarra Falls. So far for locality; now, how do you get there. Train to Warburton, coach to Yarra bridge, and thence by horseback is certainly the most expeditious, but we decided to be independent of everybody and so loaded a two horse van with our camping equipment, provisions, etc., and took to the road.

Leaving Kew about 8 a.m, on a Wednesday morning, we bowled merrily along, two of the party riding bicycles, through Box Hill, Mitcham,



Ringwood, etc., admiring the many views of distant mountains obtainable from the White Horse road, until about midday, we reached a favorite camping ground, the ti-tree sheltered banks of Brushy Creek. Here we had our first meal in the open, and gave our horses a welcome rest. Two hours passed quickly by, and we were once more on the road. The steep hill at the Black Springs caused us to slacken our pace a bit, but only to give us more time to admire the surrounding country. As we passed through Lilydale the weekly half-holiday was being observed, so we had the Main street almost to ourselves. Here a pleasant word or two was passed with an old friend, the post master, and we were wished good luck on our journey. About two miles further the Warburton road was taken and found to be in good order. Everywhere were signs of the prevailing industry of the district - fruitgrowing- as we approached Wandin station and the adjacent jam factory the pleasant odour of raspberries filled the air. Our road led us up hill and down dale through Seville, part of the entrance to Killara Estate, until the shades of evening told us it was time to think about a camping place for the night. The Worri Yallock Creek was close at hand, and having done some 30 miles for the day, we pulled up on the side of the road and soon had a fire lighted and the billy boiling. Our tents were barely fixed before the twilight departed, and then we devoted our attention to attempts to secure a few blackfish for our next morning's meal, but the result was not equal to the effort made.

The night passed slowly as most first night in camp do, and we were up next morning with the first sounds of the magpies and the jackasses. Breakfast dispatched and our van repacked, we got underway and were soon climbing the hill past the Worri Yallock Hotel and store, looking just the same as it did when I passed it in the old coaching days twenty years before. The roads were showing signs of wear, and it was not long before we were in trouble, and had to put our shoulders to the wheel in real earnest. However a friendly teamster came to our assistance, and with the aid of his horse pulled us out of our first difficulty, and ere long Hoddle's Creek was crossed, and the singularly named hamlet of Launching Place came in view.

Here the road, railway and river are a very picturesque combination and crossing the bridge we pulled up under the shade of some trees for our midday lunch. This was our first acquaintance with the Yarra, and for the next 50 miles we were never many yards from its crystal waters. After lunch a start was made for Warburton, but the bad and dusty road through Yarra Junction warned us that we must have more horse power if we desired to get to our destination, and so much time was spent in hiring horses and buying a few necessary articles we found missing in our equipment, that we determined to make Little Yarra bridge our camping spot for the night, having done eight miles for the day, a great falling off.

The day had been warm, but not unpleasant, and as the sun departed the Warburton hills were tinted with a pale purple glow that in a picture would have been called unnatural. A few black fish were tempted from their native stream by the effort of our fishermen, and an additional member of our party arrived by the evening train.

Early next morning the fresh horses arrived and we set off in great spirits through West Warburton, past Millgrove, where the extent of the timber traffic was to us quite a surprise. Passing along the picturesque bit of road between the railway and river towards Warburton and dust was found to be terrible and quite and quite destroyed the pleasure of the many beautiful glimpses of the river rush by. Sluicing on Scotchman's Creek was evidently not in progress, for the stream was clear as crystal as it gurgled over the stones to join the Yarra close by.

Warburton (5 mile) was left about 10.30 am., after adding to our stores; the great mass of Donnabuang (4080 feet), the monarch of the Yarra mountains, showing signs of the timber getters labors, and the

Adventist Settlement near Wonwondah bridge soon left behind. A steep hill with trickling streams was negotiated, and then pleasantly-situated "Sunnydale" came in sight. Just along the river bank, a gushing stream, we decided to halt and boil the billy. Our horses wanted a spell, and we were glad of washing the Warburton dust off our faces.

Two hours were pleasantly spent here and then we were once more on our way. Big Pat's Creek, with its tributary the Mississippi, was passed, also the lonely East Warburton school. Settlement now began to get sparser; our road passed through much unconquered bush. Heading round gullies and crossing creeks, here and there tree ferns appeared, and finally, after about 13 miles travelling we reached Starvation Creek, and though the name was somewhat ominous, decided to camp out for the night.

The creek, and fine stream fringed with ferns, afforded great opportunities for bathing and fishing which were soon availed of, and a passing traveller giving us some information about the road for the morrow, made us hopeful of finishing our drive that day.

During the evening two teamsters with loads of pailings drawn by bullocks, arrived, and in the morning considerable interest was created in watching the methods of yoking up the beasts.

Saturday morning broke fine and fair; and a couple of hours drive brought us to McMahon's Creek, 61 miles from town, the last store and post-office up the Yarra.

On this stage we passed over the so-called "peninsula," and had some pretty glimpses of the Yarra as we wound along its banks. The store was the last chance of replenishing supplies, and was made most of. Another hours drive took us to Reefton, now almost deserted, and once a busy mining village. At a pretty bend in the river we pulled up for lunch. A bridge crosses the Yarra here, and a track leads up to the Yarra Track or Marysville to Woods point road, some 12 miles distant. Around us were a number of prickly box, in full flower, and full of insects of various kinds seeking for honey among the blossoms. As we were finishing lunch a couple of cyclists came along and an offer of tea induced them to stop for a while, when it was found they were also making for the Falls, so they were persuaded to join our party. Just as we were starting again a snake incautiously put in an appearance, and was promptly dispatched.

We had now now a five mile drive before reaching our destination for the night, but it took us some time, as the road though not hilly, was very rutty, and required careful driving. The country was very poor, the trees consequently being of only moderate size, while the native heath, pink and white, was still in bloom. At length, about 5 p.m., we crossed the Yarra Bridge and pulled in at McVeigh's Upper Yarra Hotel, the sole building in the district. The river here was a rushing, shallow stream some 30 ft. wide. We made our camp a few yards up the Woods point road on the side of Walsh's Creek some 66 miles from town.

Enquires were now made as to our chances of getting to the Falls, still some 18 miles distant, and we were told that trees were down across the track and there was little hope of going through with the horses. However, we were not to be put off, and next morning (Sunday), after several delays we got away at 10.30 am on the track to Contention Creek, which winds along the southern side of the Yarra, sometimes almost at the water's edge and at other time rising to several hundred feet as it rounds a jutting spur. This part of the journey was done on foot with our horses carrying packs. Pretty glimpses of the river with its fringing of trees and shrubs were everywhere obtainable. We soon got over the three miles to Alderman's Creek where another track branches off to the southeast over the ranges to Neerim in Gippsland, but our route was to follow the Yarra. Fern scenes become frequent, some showing signs of last season's bush fires. At about 8 miles we reached Contention Creek, now the scene of the workings of Bromley's reef, a mine which at present is attracting some attention.

A halt was called for lunch and a little time devoted to the inspection of the water wheel, battery etc. But we had still a long way to go, and bidding the miners goodbye we plunged into the uninhabited country beyond, hoping to get to Falls Creek, eight miles further, that evening, but we were disappointed; the track is often blocked by fallen trees, and this day was no exception.

After heading numerous beautiful fern gullies we came to a fine stream rushing down from Mount Horsfall, and saw the first myrtles, or more properly beeches. Perhaps half-a-mile further a fallen tree blocked the track, necessitating so much delay in cutting it through that we decided to make camp at a creek close by for the night. And a memorable camp it was for in the night one of the horses rolled into the creek and was with great difficulty, by the aid of candle light, rescued and got on its feet again, next morning it had to be got up out to the track again.

We still had some three miles to go to reach the junction of Falls Creek and the Yarra, and had barely made a start when the advance party reported another tree across the track, in such a position as to render the passage of the horses impossible. There was nothing for it but to unpack everything, take on sufficient provisions for the day, and leave one of the party in charge of the horses and camp equipment. An hour later we had reached the junction just at the level of the river and almost 1000 feet above sea level. Here we found the initials of previous visitors cut in a fine sassafras tree, thus making us certain of our position. Leaving some baggage here, we started up the steep spur on the other side of the creek so as to get to the head of the falls. The track was very steep and indistinct, but after half an hour's hard work we were rewarded by seeing and hearing the Falls Creek dashing down into the rocky gorge on our right on its way to join the Yarra. Finally the top of the spur was reached at nearly 3000 feet above sea level; further on the track led to the Thompson River, and Mt. Baw Baw. A detour to the right brought us to the topmost fall, and a pretty sight it was as the water came dashing down some fifty feet of sloping rock. Our photographers were soon at work, and venturing down further into the gorge secured pictures of some of the other leaps. Time would not permit a full exploration of the gorge, which is a mile or so long, the falls in six or seven leaps being about 750 ft. from top to bottom. On the spur we were about 2750 ft. above sea level, but owing to the timber, could not get an extensive view. The Falls Creek was at one time thought to be the main source of the Yarra, hence the name Yarra Falls, but it is now regarded as perhaps its largest tributary near the source. It starts in the high plateau on the northern side of Mt. Baw Baw, and, as we saw it, a fine stream, some eight to ten feet wide and a foot deep.

Who first saw these falls I have not been able to ascertain, but they were visited by Prof. Kernot in the eighties, and a small party from the Field Naturalists' Club reached them via Marysville and the Yarra track in November, 1891, and secured perhaps the first photographs taken. Since that time few tourists seem to have visited them until Mr. A.J. Campbell, the well known ornithologist, spent a week there with some friends in December, 1904, and took an extensive series of views. The first ladies to see the falls had only been there this Christmas, while our party of ten claims the record of being the largest party that has yet attempted the trip. The spot will probably be a difficult one to get at for many years to come owing to its distance from main roads, but should the Warburton railway be extended to Yarra Bridge, as is fondly hoped, and a narrow gauge line run over the divide to Woodspoint, then the Falls can be approached along the divide through much better scenery than by the track along the Yarra Valley. At any rate the Lands department is now about to improve the present track and join it to the track to Mt. Baw Baw from Neerim so that visitors can make the round trip if so desired, Baw Baw itself being worth visiting owing to its elevation and striking

difference to the surrounding country. After lunch, close by the foaming cataract, we retraced our steps, some by the way we had come others descended still further into the gorge, and picked up the track lower down, and by four o'clock were once more at the junction.

Eight miles lay between us and Bromley's Reef, where we intended to camp for the night, as there was no feed for the horses at any other part, so no time was lost in getting back to the horses and packing up for the final stage. Bromley's Reef was reached in time to put up the tents in daylight, and the miners hospitably added to the resources of our larder which had become somewhat depleted during our trip.

Next morning (Tuesday) the manager of the mine showed the party the underground workings before leaving for Yarra Bridge. Three of the party elected to climb the steep spur on the opposite side of the river, down which the machinery for the mine had been lowered, and in two miles reached the Woodspoint road about 10 miles from McVeigh's, and returned by it to the camp. They were loud in their praises of the fine views obtained from this road, and, though the climb of about 2,500 ft. was rather stiff, considered they were amply repaid by the grand over mountain, valley and creek obtainable in every direction. The afternoon was spent in fishing and preparing for the return journey towards Warburton on the morrow.

Wednesday afternoon saw us once more on the road, and bidding good-bye to the McVeighs who had been extremely kind to us, we soon left the peaceful locality of Yarra Bridge. A short halt was again made at Reefton, also at McMahon's Creek, and our former camp at Starvation Creek was reached in time for a late lunch. Getting under way again, we reached Big Pat's Creek, about 16 miles, at sunset, and in the midst of some thick ti-tree pitched our camp for the night.

Leaving early in the morning, Warburton was soon reached. Here letters and telegrams awaited some to return by rail, but as there was no train till the afternoon we kept together until reaching another former camp at the Little Yarra Bridge, where, after lunch, some of us bade good bye for the present to our companions of the past week, and returned by train from Yarra Junction. The others decided to spend a day or two longer in the Cockatoo Creek district and try and improve their fishing records.

Taken as a whole the outing was a most interesting one, and though there were certain discomforts in the way on dusty roads, still after all that is better than rain of which we had none during our nine days of travelling. However, for preference I would advise visitors to make the trip in November, for then though the roads may be a bit soft, the bush would be gay with wild flowers, and present a better appearance than it does in January. The scenery does not equal that of the Black Spur and Yarra Track, still there are many beautiful bits of the Yarra as it rushes merily along between high ranges clothed with trees to the water's edge. Large trees are fairly numerous, and some of the fern scenes passed would be hard to beat, while everywhere there is an abundance of running streams of beautiful water at the service of the traveller or his horses. On a first visit to such a district one is naturally anxious about his travelling capabilities, and whether he is following the right track so that a second trip with more time at one's disposal would probably reveal many picturesque parts unnoticed on the present occasion.

1907

Melbourne Water Supply

Need for Extension

O'Shanassy River and Upper Yarra to be Tapped

## Preliminary Survey Authorised

At a meeting on Wednesday of the Metropolitan Board of Works, a report was received from the water supply committee stating that in connection with the augmentation of the Melbourne water supply, it was considered necessary that a detailed survey of the O'Shanassy and Upper Yarra scheme should be made without delay, and recommending that authority be given to the committee to carry out such a survey.

Mr Voice, in moving the adoption of the recommendation, said at present time the board had an ample supply for 580,000 people. The population of the metropolis now stood at 540,000 persons, so that with an additional 40,000 inhabitants the board would reach the limit of its present supply. The committee has given its closest attention to two schemes for obtaining an additional supply - one from Maroondah, and the other from the O'Shanassy river and the upper reaches of the Yarra. The Maroondah scheme would involve the construction of a concrete weir about 100 feet high across the valley of the Watts river, to form a storage reservoir which would increase the capacity of the present Maroondah channel from 25,000,000 to 50,000,000 gallons a day. To fill this reservoir the Coranderrk and Acheron Creeks would be required. The estimated cost would be : Maroondah dam, 230,000 pounds; completion of aqueduct, 130,000 pounds, Coranderrk channel, 20,000 pounds, Acheron channel 60,000 pounds; making the total 440,000 pounds. This expenditure with the Maroondah storage up to a 440 feet level would ensure an extra supply of 25,000,000 gallons a day for 100 days. If the dam was raised to 460 feet a supply for 160 days would be obtained, but at greatly increased cost. After further consideration the committee had directed its attention to the Upper Yarra scheme, which provided for the construction of an aqueduct from the Upper Yarra above McVeighs Hotel to the O'Shanassy River to carry 50,000,000 gallons and another from the O'Shanassy river to near Launching Place, capable of carrying 90,000,000 gallons from which iron siphons would be laid to a distribution reservoir at Mitcham.

The engineer had submitted the following report :-

In my opinion the most desirable course to adopt is to carry out the O'Shanassy scheme first for the following reasons :-

1. It will control every portion of the metropolitan area, which the Maroondah storage dam will not.
2. It will deliver 25,000,000 gallons a day throughout the whole year, whereas a dam 100 feet high would only provide for 100 days supply with a maximum of 160 days, if the height of the dam were increased to 120 feet, but of course at an increased cost to Maroondah.
3. It will furnish a completely independent supply to the metropolis, capable of governing the whole area in the event of an accident to the Yan Yean or Maroondah systems.
4. It will provide for better water supply for all the rapidly advancing eastern suburbs.
5. It will form portion of a scheme which can be increased in sections as required up to delivering 90,000,000 gallons of water a day.
6. Even if the Maroondah storage dam were constructed now it would only delay the execution of the O'Shanassy scheme a few years, depending upon the rapidity of the increase of the population in the metropolitan area.

7. If necessary, the townships along the route in the Yarra Valley could be supplied with water.

8. It would be necessary to utilise the Acheron for supplementing the water supplied to the Maroondah storage dam.

It was therefore evident, Mr Voice continued, that while the Maroondah scheme costing 440,000 pounds would give increased water supply for 100 days, the board by an expenditure of 675,000 pounds on the Upper Yarra proposal, could secure a daily supply of 25,000,000 the whole year round, with a possibility of enlarging the quantity to 90,000,000 gallons.

The recommendation of the committee was adopted, as was also a further one by the same committee to the effect that an Order in Council be applied for authorising the compulsory purchase of Land at Mitcham for the purpose of a reservoir.

#### Statement by Mr Thwaites

Mr Twaites, chief engineer to the Metropolitan Board subsequently stated that it was not proposed to carry out the scheme in its entirety at once. A supply from O'Shanassy river would likely prove sufficient at first. As the population of the metropolis increased, the several connections with the Upper Yarra could be constructed, and he had estimated that there would then be a water supply available sufficient for two million people. The Upper Yarra scheme would make the metropolis independent of the Yan Yean, and the elevated nature of the proposed area and the reservoir would result in the highest portions of the eastern suburbs being amply supplied with water, while the system, if it were so desired, could be extended up to Maroondah.

1908

#### Healesville Water Reserves

##### Protest Against Further Reservation

A deputation from Healesville Shire Council interviewed the Minister of Forests on Wednesday, to protest against any further permanent reservation of land in this shire for Melbourne water supply purposes.

Mr E.H. Cameron introduced the deputation. The residents of the district, he said, knew as well as the board the quantity of water the Yan Yean would yield, and the quantity obtained from the Maroondah reservoir every day of the year. There was no scarcity, and he was satisfied that if not a drop of rain came there was enough water in the two supplies to keep Melbourne going for six months. They protested against another large area being closed up by the Metropolitan Board.

Cr Sheehan, president of the shire said that already an area of 75,000 acres in the shire was under the control of the board. The council opposed any further permanent reservation in Healesville, though it did not object to a temporary reservation. The present reservation in the Watts Valley was a great disadvantage, and full use of that reservation should be made before any further areas were shut up. At present the supply of water drawn from the Healesville district was 20,500,000 gallons in 24 hours. That was without any attempt to conserve the winter storage. If all the winter water were impounded, as had been proposed under the original scheme, there would be a very great increase in the supply from the present area.

Cr Nichols said the O'Shanassy Valley should on no account be handed over to the board. Much of the land was first-class quality, and was timbered with a virgin forest of mountain ash, messmate, yellow box, blue

gum, blackwood and myrtle. The land was also auriferous. There would be ample time to work the forest out before this area would be wanted for water.

Cr Tevlin said the information given by the deputation corresponded with the information in the possession of the Department. That land carried timber resources that were sinfully allowed to go to waste. He had repeatedly told the board that these timber resources could be made available without detriment to the water supply. It appeared to him ( Mr McLeod ) to be a sinful waste to allow magnificent areas of timber to rot and form a harbour for vermin. He was fully impressed as the necessity for a pure water supply, but the policy of the board was unnecessary. When the Forest Act was before Parliament he steadily resisted the wish of the board to have the whole of that land put under its control. He believed what the deputation had said, viz., there was a great deal of unnecessary talk of a shortage in the water supply, especially in view of the large areas, now available, from which the supply could be increased. Before any further areas were handed over the Government must be satisfied that full use had been made of the present areas. The Government was not going to hand over to the board, without good reason, large areas of land to be shut against the public and to have the development of the valuable resources upon it blocked. The enormous natural resources of the area in question would not be sacrificed unnecessarily.

1908

#### Millgrove

The Healesville Shire councillors have been attempting to do a bit of amateur engineering by condemning the O'Shanassy in favour of the Maroondah water supply scheme, and this in the face of reports of the highest engineering talent in the State. It has been clearly shown that the Maroondah scheme is inadequate for future requirements, and useless for supplying water to high levels in suburban districts. It is satisfactory to notice that the Upper Yarra councillors have decided to let this thing severely alone, and that they seem inclined to safeguard the O'Shanassy scheme by striving to prevent the wholesale locking up of the immense tract of country desired by the Metropolitan Board. If they can battle to some purpose in this direction they will deserve the thanks of the whole community, for if the Board once gets possession of the forests they are gone -absolutely and for ever.

1908

#### Water Supply Problem

##### Different Schemes Considered

In a report which was laid before the water supply committee of the Metropolitan Board on Monday. Mr. E. G. Ritchie, engineer of water supply, discussed various schemes for augmenting the water supply of Melbourne. After showing that the population has increased by 27,000 since 1904, he mentioned that the average consumption of water amounted to 65 gallons per head per day, and was in excess of the rate for most English and European cities, but considerably less than that of most large cities in America. If the board could obtain permission to divert the Acheron River, this scheme, Mr Ritchie said, would be by far the readiest and least costly. Alive apparently to the difficulty of overcoming the objectors to the diversion, he disposed of the matter in a few lines.

Summarising his observations with regard to the Maroondah storage reservoir scheme, Mr Ritchie said it would produce an average daily supply of 5,500,000 gallons throughout the year, or 11,000,000 gallons for six summer months only, equivalent to a supply to 85,000 additional population. It would be necessary to pump nearly the whole quantity to the higher levels. The total cost of applying the water to the areas in which it would be required was at the lowest estimate, 740,000 pounds. Reliance cannot be placed upon filling the reservoir without the aid of supplementary supplies from the Acheron or O'Shannassy rivers.

For carrying out the O'Shannassy scheme he gave the following principal estimates :-

a) Channel of 25,000,000 gallons per day from O'Shannassy River to Worri Yallock, so constructed as to be capable of future enlargement; steel main to deliver 25,000,000 gallons per day from Worri Yallock, with steel main there from to deliver at first only 15,000,000 gallons per day to Mitcham and Surrey Hills, with reservoir at Mitcham 25,000,000 gallons, 610,000 pounds.

He adduced the following argument in favour of the O'Shannassy scheme:- It will result in a minimum supply of 20,000,000 gallons per day throughout the year - or nearly four times that to be obtained by building Maroondah dam. It will command the whole of the metropolis by gravitation. The cost of delivering 25,000,000 gallons per day into Surrey Hills Reservoir is estimated at 675,000 pounds. The Maroondah dam and enlargement of channel, without considerations as to pumping, would cost 480,000 pounds. But nearly four times the volume of water so realised could be obtained by diversion from the O'Shannassy into the Maroondah channel at a cost of 576,000 pounds. It will always be possible, by using surplus winter flows, to fill a Maroondah reservoir. The areas now furnished with Yan Yean water the whole year round can be supplied instead by the O'Shannassy. It will thus be possible to conserve further supplies at the Yan Yean. It will provide a third and entirely independent supply of water. It will be possible, if desired, to supply all the towns in the Yarra valley with water. Mr Ritchie went on to state that he had no hesitation in declaring in favor of the proposition to tap the O'Shannassy River under estimates "A" or "B". He considers estimate "A" to be worth the extra cost as against estimate "B". The additional population which could be independently served by estimate "A" is at least 235,000 persons, and that which could be independently served by estimate "B" at least 175,000 persons. It was manifest that the board must obtain, without delay, a large supplementary supply of water, and the O'Shannassy River was the locality from which that supply should be derived. If the O'Shannassy diversion under estimate "A" were carried out, the total supply to Melbourne would be equal to a population of at least 800,000.

In order to provide for a greater populace inhabitants at Melbourne should be possessed without any possibility of revocation, of still further resources from which the water supply might be augmented, and the permanent reservation of the Upper Yarra, above Walsh's Creek should be at least secured. It was considered that the diversion of this stream would independently supply a further population of at least 300,000. The aqueduct to convey waters of the O'Shannassy would be constructed under estimate "A", so as to be capable of enlargement for the purpose of taking the inflow of further waters from the Upper Yarra and its tributaries above the confluence with the O'Shannassy. It was therefore absolutely necessary that the board in incurring that expenditure in advance, should be assured that it would not be fruitless, but that waters of the Upper Yarra would be available when required.

The Acting Engineer in chief ( Mr C.E. Oliver ) agrees with Mr Ritchie's view and lays stress on the fact that while the city is likely to spread mostly in the higher levels, such localities cannot be reached



with Maroondah water without pumping. He also refers to the necessity of the board securing the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra and Armstrong watersheds. Pending the completion of the O'Shannassy scheme, he advises that the sides of the Maroondah Channel be raised, and that the Coranderrk Creek be taken in to it.

The committee adopted both reports.

1908

### The Upper Yarra

By Professor W.C. Kernot, M.Inst. C.E., F.R.G.S.

The tracing of notable rivers to their source has always been an attractive task to the explorer, and if these rivers should happen to pass through large centres of population the interest becomes so much the greater. Our familiar Yarra is far from being one of the great rivers of the world. Compared with the Mississippi or the Nile, or even with the Thames or the Severn, it is but a diminutive stream. Nevertheless, considerably over half a million civilised human beings spend their lives within its basin, and at its mouth exists one of the great seaports of the Empire. Hence it possesses an interest and importance far superior to that of many a vastly larger stream. The thousands of young persons that are born and brought up on or near its banks must occasionally, one would think, ask where does the Yarra come from, how is it fed, what scenes of beauty and interest does it pass through on its course? But if they do so ask, I fear there is but a meagre answer given them by their instructors for it has always appeared to me that there is a remarkable want of knowledge and absence of reliable maps in our school and elsewhere as to this part of Victoria especially.

Coming up the bay from Queenscliff or Geelong, or standing on the open plains about Williamstown or Footscray, on any fairly clear day, the north-eastern and eastern horizon displays a wealth of mountain scenery that goes far to atone for the comparative monotony of the foreground. Great blue peaks arise one behind the other, forming vistas and perspectives that seem to beckon the traveller on, and invite him to explore their hidden beauties and mysteries. Amongst them the Yarra has its rise, and from their shady glens, moist slopes and snow-clad plateaux comes that abundant supply of water that keeps it flowing when other streams are mere chains of pools or even dry channels.

The Yarra was first seen by white men in January, 1803, when inspected by Mr. Grimes, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, who had come to Port Phillip in the sloop Cumberland for the purpose of reporting on its fitness for settlement. He explored the river up to Dight's Falls, but no further. Thirty-two years later John Batman was near the Yarra, in the vicinity of Heidelberg, but apparently did not see the river itself at that point. On Melbourne being established, exploration and settlement went on rapidly until the open country as far as the sites of the present towns of Lilydale and Healesville was known, and to some extent utilised; but the rugged densely forested mountains beyond still constituted a mysterious terra incognita. Early in 1845 Mr. Robert Hoddle, the first Surveyor-General of the Port Phillip district, conceived the idea of plunging into the trackless forests of Melbourne's river. Provided with a strong party, and backed up by the financial resources of the Government, he cut his way by slow degrees through the dense thickets up to the elevated plateau where the ultimate sources exist, carefully surveying his route as he went, so that on returning he was able to plot a map that the writers own observation nearly 40 years afterward proved to be most accurate and complete.

About 1860 there were extensive gold discoveries in the valleys of the Goulburn and Thomson Rivers, and Wood's Point, Stringer's Creek (the present Walhalla), Matlock, etc., came into prominence. These places were reached either from the north, the country about Mansfield, or from the south, the country about Sale and Traralgon, in either case.

Communication with Melbourne was difficult and circuitous. Hence many attempts to reach this Eldorado were made by the Yarra valley or the ridges bounding it on the north or south. The main Healesville, Marysville and Wood's Point road was explored under the inducement of a large Government reward, and made at great cost over the Blacks' Spur and other difficult stretches of country. Attempts were made to navigate the Yarra itself, and a Gippsland lady of the name of Bowman, at her own cost, had a track cut along the southern watershed line, starting somewhere near Berwick. Naturally, all this led to attention being given to many auriferous spots on the Upper Yarra, and scattered camps of miners were to be found at many points along its course. That veteran geographer and eminent member of this society, Mr. J.A. Panton, for some time held the position of Goldfields Warden for the district, and in the course of his official duties had to travel much along the river's course. During these journeys he compiled an approximate map that was published by the Crown Lands Office, under the title of Panton's Sketch Map of the Upper Yarra. To extend this up to the source he made an adventurous exploration, in which he identified and named Mt. Lexy and Queen's Birthday Creek, both of which, I regret to say, have been ignored in later maps.

Panton's Sketch Map was really a most excellent production, and gives an idea of the mountainous character and scenic beauty of the Yarra valley that no other map succeeds in doing. Probably this is partly due to the draftsman, who has made it one of the most magnificent pieces of hill shading that have ever come under my notice. Considering the intricate, rugged, and densely forested nature of the country, it is indeed a triumph of cartography. The title is as follows:-

SKETCH MAP  
UPPER YARRA WATERS AND THE NEW BRIDLE TRACK  
TO WOOD'S POINT.  
FROM LILLYDALE TO TRAVELLERS' REST,  
ON GREAT MOUNTAIN ROAD.  
J.A. Panton, Warden.  
3rd August, 1865.

Panton supplies no scale to his map, but by comparison with the well-known distances shown on it I find that his Mt. Lexy is four miles north-west of the trigonometrical station on Mt. Baw Baw. Strange to say, on the latest Government map, with up-to-date information from recent geological surveys, this point is marked Mt. Whitelaw. It would appear, therefore, that the older name has been overlooked, and unintentionally, no doubt, a serious wrong done to our old friend, who by his own zeal and labour did such excellent service in the early days. Further, Panton's Queen's Birthday Creek has been lost sight of, although a careful comparison of his and later maps renders it almost absolutely certain that it is identical with the present Falls Creek, on which occurs the splendid cataract that is the glory of the Upper Yarra valley.

In common justice, I think measures should be taken to restore these ancient names. Surely the right of fixing a name lies with the earliest explorer, and the fact that his work was a labour of love, and not a mere salaried service renders the claim all the stronger.

The writer's own experiences in exploring this interesting district have been as follows:-

In January, 1873, in company with Mr. J.B. Gregory, the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and Mr. Arthur Topp, of the "Argus" staff, he made

his first attempt. The railway then did not extend further than Hawthorn, and Lilydale was accessible only by a slow and rough coach journey. Beyond that point no definite information was available, except what was given by Panton's sketch map. The party carried its full equipment, tent, bedding, clothes and provisions, and these, especially when wet with rain, as was often the case, formed a very heavy load to carry over steep hills, and the miles seemed inordinately long. Leaving Lilydale by the present Healesville road a point known as "The Lodge" was reached, somewhere near the present Coldstream railway station. Thence a very rough bush track led us over the Warramite Hills, the steepness of which, and the weight of the burdens we carried, made progress very slow. After some hours of travel we camped on the bank of the Wandin Yallock Creek, where the writer had his first view of really large eucalyptus timber, and was much impressed thereby. The next camp, after a long detour, owing to missing the way, was at Launching Place, which we were told received its name in memory of an unsuccessful attempt to navigate the river with a large load of groceries and other stores for the Wood's Point diggings, near which the source of the river was erroneously supposed to lie. After spending three months dragging the boat up 300 rapids, and covering a distance of about 30 miles, the ill-starred expedition was abandoned.

The next day was extremely warm, and after again losing time by missing the track, we reached Upper Warburton, a mining township amongst the hills, a few miles south of the present Warburton railway station. Some miles before arriving we passed the end of the dray track, beyond which goods could be carried by pack horse only. It was marked by a huge heap of broken bottles that evidently had contained strong liquids. We were much exhausted on reaching Upper Warburton, but the local hostelry soon ministered to our needs, and thoroughly reinvigorated we spent the evening in studying the gold workings, which were fairly extensive. Next morning we made a very early start, and proceeded through beautiful mountainous tree fern country, reaching the Yarra at Four-mile Creek; thence we followed the main stream by a narrow pack track through dense scrub. Toward nightfall the sky became overcast; rain set in, and we became doubtful of our way. Hurriedly we camped near Starvation Creek, the name of which was not very encouraging to weary wayfarers that imagined themselves lost. This ill-omened name, it may be parenthetically remarked, was due to the fact that a flock of sheep that were being driven to the Wood's Point diggings had perished there, being unable to sustain life on gum leaves and bracken fern.

The following morning was fine and bright, and we speedily reached McMahon's Creek, where Host Ridgell provided a good meal of corned beef and pudding, that formed a most pleasant change to our camp fare, in which Liebig's essence of meat formed the only animal portion. Although the inscription on the little pot averred that its contents represented the nutriment of many pounds of beef, we found that somehow it was far from giving us the muscular strength that the actual meat supplied, and this was most serious when we had to carry heavy swags over interminable steep hills. We camped that night pleasantly and early, and next day reached Walsh's Creek, where McVeigh's Hotel now stands. Here we found some miners, who entertained us royally and insisted on our spending the rest of the day with them. That night was spent in the miner's hut, there being six men, three cats, several dogs, and a large but not accurately ascertained number of insects in one small room. Next morning we said farewell to our hospitable friends, and proceeded northward by a faintly defined pack track that

ultimately reached Wood's Point road, on the summit of the main Dividing Range, and thence by Marysville to Healesville, whence we took coach to Melbourne.

A few years after this expedition the newspapers brought us the information that Mr. O.P. Whitelaw, surveyor, of Walhalla, had been employed by the Government to cut a track from Reefton, on the Upper Yarra, to Aberfeldy, near Walhalla, in Gippsland, and that he had found some fine scenery near the source. The result of this that in January, 1883, in company with Messrs. Gregory and D.B. East, I made another visit. On this occasion we had a pack horse to carry our equipment, and so could travel much more rapidly, and with less fatigue. We found that Whitelaw's track left the Yarra at the spot where we had camped ten years before, on the night previous to our memorable experience of cats, dogs, etc. It then ascended 1400 feet to a dry ridge, which after a few miles became covered with scrub, interlaced with grass. This had, of course, been cut through by Whitelaw, but had sprung up again, closing the track most effectively. As the work of breaking through was slow and laborious, and as there was an utter absence of accessible water, we abandoned the attempt, and spent the rest of the holiday elsewhere.

In January, 1884, however, we made another attempt, and this time we provided arrangements for carrying 40 lbs. weight of water on the pack horse; further, we had an addition to our party in the person of Mr. Robinson, a State school teacher from a country part, and a most excellent bushman. In fact, to him the success of the expedition was really due. We succeeded in breaking through the dense scrub, and reaching the head waters of the Yarra, so clearly shown on Hoddle's map of 1845. We found traces of Whitelaw's work, and identified some of his camps, but apparently no one had used the track, which was completely closed by scrub, wire grass and large fallen trees. These last proved most formidable obstacles to our horse, and one steep ascent, on which he fell more than once in attempting to scramble over them, I named Mt. Horsfall, which name it retains to this day. The difficulty of the journey may be judged by the fact that it took over three days of incessant labour to cover a distance of only 20 miles by Whitelaw's survey.

But it was worth the labour. We really saw the sources of the Yarra, and partly explored the magnificent waterfall, now rendered accessible by recently constructed tracks. We crossed the creek above the fall, and followed it down. By much climbing we reached a spot 550 feet by aneroid below the lip, whence we could see about 200 feet more of fall, but our view was greatly impeded by dense vegetation. That we were not the first to visit the spot was proved by the name A. Burns cut on a tree at the lowest spot we reached. I marked a tree at our camp above the fall, and in 1902 two of my students, Messrs. Dow and Lyons, succeeded in reaching and photographing it. From their account I concluded that the country was much more open than in 1884.

In 1886, in company with Messrs. Gregory and Lucas, I again visited the fall, but this time saw little of the Yarra, as we merely made a slight deviation in a tour that otherwise lay entirely outside its basin.

In conclusion, I desire to supply a few numerical facts, and make certain recommendations.

The Yarra, excluding the Saltwater River, drains an area of between 1500 and 1600 square miles. Its source is distant in a straight line 70 miles from its mouth, the direction being a few degrees north of east. The actual length of the river is, owing to its windings, probably at least 150 miles. It rises in a plateau which is snow-clad during the winter months, and between 3000 and 4000 feet above the sea. After flowing for about 3 miles, it makes a sudden descent, by falls and cascades, of about 1000 feet. In the next ten miles it falls another 1000

feet; while the final 1000 feet of fall is spread over the remainder of its course. It has numerous tributaries, those on the north being, as a rule, the larger, and draining more elevated country. Gigantic eucalypts, fern gullies, and in some parts lovely beech forests abound in its basin. As a source of water power it is rather disappointing, as the principal falls are usually in inaccessible gullies, far from centres of population, and, further, are liable to great reduction in quantity of water during summer. Still, no doubt, as population extends, numerous small water-power installations will come into use, as, for example, at Warburton, where a large printing establishment is at present so actuated.

Recommendations.- I think that justice should be done to Mr. Panton by the restoration of his names of Mt. Lexy and Queen's Birthday Creek. Also, in view of what he did in exploring and map-making in the early sixties, I think some prominent features such as a mountain or large creek well up toward the source should be named after him. In a country where

fine peaks abound in all directions, there should be little difficulty in finding one to be called Mt. Panton. I should have no objection to having my Mt. Horsfall, the name of which merely records a trifling incident in a long-forgotten tour, altered to Mt. Panton if no other suitable peak can be found.

I am glad to see that efforts are being made to open up the head of the Yarra as a tourist and scenic resort, but I am inclined to think that some of its tributaries, especially on the northern side, a few miles above Warburton, would also be worth developing. Several of these have a fall approaching 3000 feet in a straight line distance of 8 or 10 miles, and should have fine cascades on them, more easily reached than the source of the Yarra. Lastly, considering the very large population in or adjacent to the Yarra valley, I think a really good topographical map on a fairly large scale should be made for use in schools and elsewhere, and if this could be accompanied by printed matter, such as that dealing with the basin of the Thames in Huxley's Physiography, it would constitute a most valuable addition to the geographical training of young Victoria.

Finally, although Robert Hoddle's survey of 1845 was made at Government cost, it still seems hardly fair that his name should be found only at a creek entering the Yarra considerably below the point where his exploration commenced. I would, therefore, further suggest that some prominent feature at or near the source should bear his name.

1909

Melbourne's Water Supply

Maroondah or O'Shannassy

Commission at Healesville

The Commission, Messrs. Fowler and Garson, appointed to take evidence regarding the relative merits of the Maroondah and O'Shannassy water supply schemes, visited Healesville on Tuesday, and in the evening at the Terminus Hotel examined three local gentlemen. Mr Davidson, the third commissioner, was unable to be present owing to his presence being required at the Bent Land Commission in the city. Engineer Ritchie accompanied Messrs Fowler and Garson. Mr F. W. Fricke is secretary to the Commission.

Mr Sheehan, shire president, was sworn. He said he wished to protest against any further reservation of land until full use has been made of the present Maroondah reserve, of which very little use or none was being made now. It was an intermittent stream, and no provision had been made

in any way for the storage of its water. By his local knowledge he knew that there was an immense volume of water going to waste which should be impounded and made use of before any other territory is handed over to the board. Portion of the O'Shanassy Valley was included in the Healesville shire, which was one of the objections to that scheme. The Maroondah aqueduct, Mr Sheehan continued was designed to carry 50,000,000 gallons. A large sum of money was spent in constructing the works to take water from Healesville to the Preston reservoir; the sides of the channel had since been raised and the syphons duplicated, and if storage was not provided the money already expended had been, he contended, expended uselessly. The Commission could not have come at a more favorable time to inspect the streams, for in the Maroondah, Graceburn and Badger immense quantities were going to waste. The present reservation was a detriment to the shire, as no rates were derived from the land, and it was a great draw-back to the district generally. The original Maroondah scheme provided for a reservoir, and a site was, 20 years ago, specially selected on account of its natural advantages, and unless it was made use of the money already expended had been thrown away. Just now there was an immense quantity of water going down the stream, but a few months ago not a drop of water was allowed to pass any of the weirs, and he maintained that the local people had certain rights, and they should not be absolutely deprived of the water in those streams. This depletion of the streams was a menace to the people of Healesville. The interests of the shire were also affected by the way in which the Metropolitan Board had blocked the traffic from the forest reserve on the other side of their territory, which also contained an immense forest if exploited would be a great benefit, not only to Healesville, but to the whole state. The position the board took up now practically precluded that timber being used. Recently a sawmill license had been granted in that area, but he ( the speaker ) believed it was so hedged around with difficulties that he doubted whether the man would be able to go on with it. The 8000 pound spent on Badger scheme, was, he said, an absolute waste. At the present time it was not wanted, and it would not be wanted for probably the next six months; for six months of the year the work was absolutely useless, and of no benefit whatever to the Melbourne water supply. There were probably 20,000,000 gallons running to waste, and the board could only take 3,000,000 gallons. It was impossible, Mr Sheehan continued, to get water without discoloration if the water were sent direct into the channels. If the reservoir were built there would be advantage of being able to impound the winter's water, sufficient to fill any reservoir built there, and it would give an assured supply to Melbourne of as much as could be got from the O'Shanassy. The water was most needed in summer, and that was the time when the O'Shanassy, as well as the Maroondah, was at its minimum flow. The O'Shanassy was estimated to give 20,000,000 gallons per day, but if the Maroondah water were stored it would give a lot more than that, and in addition there would be the advantage of an assured continuous supply. There was no reason why other reservoirs should not be made if necessary. The same remarks applied to the Graceburn and the Badger. The original Maroondah scheme was estimated to cost 380,000 pounds, and one of the big items of expenditure would be the clearing of the site of the reservoir, but in view of the increasing demand for all classes of timber, he thought that the site could reasonably be cleared for the timber on it. Mr Sheehan pointed out the fact that already provision was being made for supplying the townships along the line of the O'Shanassy scheme, whereas Yarra Glen had been trying for some time to get a supply from the Maroondah aqueduct and had so far been unsuccessful. If it were necessary to go to Upper Yarra for water the upper stretches of the Yarra should be taken before the O'Shanassy; the timber was not so valuable there as in the watershed of the O'Shanassy.

Mr Sheehan also answered a number of questions put by Messrs Fowler and Garson.

Mr Tevlin reiterated Mr Sheehans evidence. He said local people recognised the importance and necessity of a reliable supply of water being secured for Melbourne, and he was satisfied that if the water going to waste in the Watts valley were put into consumption there would be sufficient for a full supply for Melbourne. The discoloration of Maroondah water was worse now than the inception of the scheme, but discoloration would still be worse in the O'Shanassy water on account of the numerous tributaries. It was rather far-fetched to say the Maroondah scheme would not supply the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The waste of water was something frightful; that sort of thing was not management; it amounted to a crime. He agreed that the site of the Watts reservoir could be cleared for the timber standing on it.

Mr Sloss said that he had measured the Badger that day. It was running 10 to 12 feet wide, and 15 in to 18 in deep. He didn't know how many gallons that was per minute. The clearing of the reservoir site would, he thought, cost 12 to 15 pound per acre. He would not give an opinion as to whether it could be cleared for the timber.

The enquiry then closed.

Subsequently, and informally Mr Fowler stated that even if 50,000,000 gallons per day could be put in the Yan Yean, it could not be used in consumption on account of the existing system of reticulation.

1910

Correspondence

"Fernshaw"

To the editor

Sir,- I have just been shown an article written by Mr E.S. Fysh in your issue of the 25th., in which he says that Fernshaw should be spelled with a final "e". My family was one of the pioneers of the district and Fernshaw was my home when a child, consequently I may have more knowledge of it than most people.

The name "Fernshaw" was given to it by a surveyor named Mr Maine. Later on the "e" was added by the postal authorities, but the correct name is "Fernshaw." There is one mistake I notice in the guidebook. The Trucaninni Falls are miscalled the Truganinni Falls. This spot was named by my mother after a girl who bore the name Trucaninni, she being so called after the last Queen of the Tasmanian Blacks.

Yours

Etta Foster

1910

Buffalo V Juliet and Another

By E.S.F.

In comparing for scenic beauty one district or resort with another, one would naturally expect that a certain amount of knowledge of the places compared, and a certain standard judgment, would be called for from those who make the comparison. That this is not necessary, however, is clearly shown in two newspaper articles which appeared last week, one in the columns of the "Age" and the other in the "Healesville Standard." The article in the "Age" is written by a motorist, who, as the result of

careering through Healesville, Marysville, Mansfield and Yea, was moved to communicate to the public his hurried impressions, with the result that his reader is likely to get rather mixed in the rapid transit from Healesville to Marysville and beyond. But the most glaring example of the conceit motoring breeds in otherwise well informed people is the statement slavishly copied by the "Standard" that Mt Juliet is as grand as Buffalo; the forest and fern scenery are incomparably finer." This is so obvious the language of ignorance that only the "Standard" could be capable of corroborating it. It requires ignorance alike of Juliet and of Buffalo, and only a mind that races through scenery or sits at home with its eyes closed in a brown study, oblivious to the claims of truth, could possibly quote with approval such an egregious perversion of plain fact. For what are the facts? Juliet is the most barren peak of all our Healesville mountains. The view at sunrise from the summit is very fine indeed, and on a clear day a charming outlook over undulating foothills, and the valleys of the Graceburn and the Acheron, may be had, at the expense of a stiff climb, while thirty or forty miles away the waters of Hobsons Bay may be seen shimmering and flecked with ships. It is a most charming view. But on the slopes of Juliet itself we may look in vain for the rugged and precipitous rock gorges of the Buffalo, where down a canyon scarpe and sheer, you look across to forest clad hills, and finally see Kosciusko looming stern and wild from the ranges of the Snowy. Nor does Juliet retain her marvel of the snow so long as Buffalo, nor offer all the varied entertainment thus rendered available for tourists to that noted range. Juliet is only 3602 feet high whereas Buffalo is 5,400. Moreover even in Healesville Juliet has not the finest of our scenery. Mts Monda and Tooleybewong each offer attractions of fern gully and panoramic grandeur far more superb, and Tooleybewong already has a splendid mountain home in "Nyora" established by the enterprise of Messrs Robarts. Were the Government led to consider the establishment of a chalet on our mountain tops, Mt. Monda would probably be the site chosen. Its northern slopes are beyond the pale of the board's control, and already well defined tracks lead from its summit to the many wonders of the Blacks Spur, to the Hermitage, to Etta's Glen, to Mathinna Falls and Condon's Gully, the top track to the Blacks' Spur road being easily adaptable to vehicular traffic. But why this cry for a chalet is raised or re-echoed in Healesville at all is past understanding, seeing how easy of access from the township itself or from outlying houses now in being all our beauty spots already are. "The Hermitage" practically fulfills all the requirements of a first class chalet adjacent to Mt. Monda, while it is unlikely that any sane person would wish to abide for any length of time on the somewhat barren and uninteresting top of Juliet, apart altogether from the very cogent obstacle likely to be pointed out by the Board of Works. As a matter of ordinary observation in the first place, it would be well if those who seek to boom Healesville would desist from their fulsome efforts to compare our quite, restful and lovely hill and gully scenery with that of the more bold, rocky and magnificent peaks and defiles of the Buffaloes, the Blue Mountains, and other tourist resorts which from time to time our local magnates seek to decry. Healesville has its own peculiar charm to landscape lovers. Many of our foremost artists have been nurtured in its solitudes, have heard the symphonies of its bush, or learnt new tints from its autumnal foliage. Patterson, McCubbin, Mathen, Ghee and many others have found in Healesville fit subjects for their art, and all agree that for quite restful loveliness, our scenery has a charm altogether its own. Few areas in Australia can show so many creeks to the square mile as are marked on the map of Healesville. The Mosquito, the Loafer's the Badger, the Graceburn, the Piccanniny, Donnellys, Myers and Watts, with many a lesser tributary, wind in and out among our rounded hills, each with its leauge long gully full of ferns,



and makes our scenery rich in beautiful and sequestered nooks," full of sweet dreams and health and quiet breathing." Ferns embroider the hillsides sassafras and dogwood perfume in the air. Lofty gum overtower the mountain roads and little cascades and cataracts leap down between the hills in a joyful mood. Nature was on holiday when she completed Healesville. Therefore, to compare our scenery with that of the Buffaloes is as if we should say point-lace is superior to architecture. No one with a genuine feeling for either would thus compare the two. It is proper for every resident and lover of Healesville to blow its trumpet, but not in defence of other tourist resorts. The Buffaloes and the Blue Mountains are places to explore and to admire and even to stand in awe of, and fortunate is he who can afford to visit them, but Healesville is a place where hundreds can permanently reside, and find fresh loveliness in every day for years. It is a lovely place where one can make home. The others but show places, Nature's coup de theatre resorts, whither one goes for a fortnight and departs. Not a monstrous mis-called chalet, but a thousand little mountain homes are wanted to complete the hillside scenery of Healesville, and to cope with the punblind perversity of our present misguided administrators.

1911

#### Track to Donna Buang

During the week the news circulated through the town ( Healesville ) that there was a far easier road obtainable to Mount Donna Buang from the Healesville side than from the Warburton approach. The name of Ernie Robarts was used freely, and on Thursday we called him in and he confirmed the reports. By sticking up the side of the range from Panton's you strike some steep pinches, but once you get to the top of the main range the grades are fairly easy, until from the foot of the mountain there is a gradual slope. At present this is a two days journey, and fairly rough at that. By the opening out of a few trees a view could be obtained of the whole of South Gippsland right across to Westernport. A companion of Mr Robart's who was with him said that although he had a very rough time he would do the trip again any day, the views were so well worth the effort. At present there is no track up to the top of the main range from Panton's, about 1 and a half miles from fern-hook country, making fairly easy walking, but impossible to ride. The committee discussed this in various aspects, and finally decided to write to the Minister of Public Works bringing these facts under his notice; and to further deal with the matter a special meeting of the committee is called, when Mr Robarts will attend, and personally describe the nature of the country traversed.

1911

#### The Mountain with a Future

##### Ascent on Horses

Early on Monday morning a party of about 42 mounted on horses rode out along the main road ( of Healesville ) on the first stage of the first ascent of Mount Donna Buang of a party of horsemen. By steady climbing they reached the top at about noon, and were met shortly afterwards by a party of about 40 on foot from Warburton. The Healesville party was led by Mr. G. Burns, assistant forest officer, and with it was Mr Fricke of the Public Works Department, and one lady rider, Miss Sheehan. The morning was fine but dull but at eleven o'clock after the Healesville party had got well into the snow, the sun shone brightly, flashing back

from the snow crystals a thousand rainbows with many different hues. The track followed up the Badger Valley, where there is only a bridle track and some steep climbing and the trouble of surmounting logs across the track impeded progress somewhat. Snow was met with at 2000 feet altitude, and from then to the time the summit was reached the horses had a trying time. A couple of parties on foot were met on the way, and several others on foot arrived later. The distance from Healesville by present track is 14 miles and it is proposed to cut a new track through from Pantons by the Ben Cairn Rock. The snow on the summit was 3 ft 6 ins deep, and first to break the crust was Mr G. Burns, followed closely by Mr W. Nichols. What had long been in the minds of many as a desire perhaps never to be realised, they stood enjoying as an accomplished fact. Some of the Warburton people rode till about half way up the mountain, and then could proceed no further. The Healesville contingent rode right on to the top - convincing proof of the greater ease with which a buggy track could be obtained from this side.

With the Warburton party were the Hon. W.H. Edgar, Acting Minister of Public Works, Mr Catani, engineer in chief, and Mr J.C. Boyce, of the Victorian Tourism Bureau. On the Summit of the mount a clearance is being made at present to enable visitors to get a view of the sea. The officers conferred as to the routes to be followed by the new tracks. The Rev. Mr Thomas of Warburton, and Mr Storey of Warburton Progress Association, Mr W. Nichols, president of the shire of Healesville; and Mr S. H. Bradshaw, president of the H.T.P.A. addressed the assembly. The Hon. W.H. Edgar replied and said that it was the intention of the Government to link up all the beauty spots in the district by tracks passable by vehicles and motors.

The aneroid showed the height of Donnabuang as 3,700 feet but the official height is 4080 feet. About six miles were ridden through snow varying from 1 to 4 feet in depth but it was much deeper in the drifts.

On the return journey Messrs W.H. Edgar, Fricke, Anderson, W. Nichols, and Burns came by way of the track to be followed by the proposed road via Pantons and the Ben Cairn Rock their intention being to spy out the land.

The way in which the Healesville horses and men managed the obstacles on the roads - fallen trees, boulders, snow, and pitfalls - was marvellous. There were one or two spills. The president of the Tourist Association came a cropper, but was unhurt, save for a slight scratch. The party arrived minutes before 5 o'clock.

1911

From Healesville to Mount Donna-Buang.

By Reginald Kelly

(Read before the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, 11th Sept.)

On hearing of the proposed visit of the Ministerial party to Mount Donna Buang on the 26th June last, a horseback party was hurriedly arranged in Healesville to meet the visitors on the snow-laden summit. The official party went from Warburton - a stiff climb of about four miles; the Healesville trip, by present route, though less steep, is about fourteen miles. About 8.30 a.m. I left Healesville with the first troop of 42 horsemen, led by Assistant Forest-Ranger Burns. It was a cold, sharp morning, with every promise of a bright day. Each man carried his own provisions and a pannikin.

The Don road, which we traversed as far as the Badger River, is well known by many members of this Club, and those naturalists whom I had the pleasure to accompany to the Badger Weir on the 31st January, 1909, will remember where we crossed the stream half way up from the road. Here the

river was a raging torrent after the recent floods. The sloping banks were laid with corduroy, but it was loose and slippery. Many of the horses balked, plunged, and caused confusion, but all crossed. The track from this point went up the Badger valley for a short distance, bearing away gradually to the right till out of the characteristic gums and wattles of the flats. These principally consisted of *Eucalyptus viminalis*, *E. gunni*, with a few *E. obliqua* and *E. amygdalina*, and of *Acacia melanoxylon* and *A. dealbata*, with here and there a *Hedycarya Cunninghamii* and *Pomaderris apetala*.

Leaving behind the vegetation of the river flat, a bridle path goes east by south along the lower undulating slopes on the east side of the hills, over which goes the road to Malleson's Look-out. To the casual observer these slopes were simply waving fields of bracken, *Pteris aquilina*; but that it was once densely timbered is soon learned by one who leaves the track, for this bracken is a tangle of dead boughs and tree-trunks. These, too, at times stretch across the path, and unfortunate is it for him whose horse cannot negotiate them, for so full of obstacles and pitfalls is the way that he must go over or go back. Towards the end of the fields of bracken, and through the last mile of it, the track ascends, slightly winding, up a stiff pinch, difficult to negotiate, as one must keep on the track to lead one's horse, the sides being too tangled for walking; the horse naturally rushing, and the leader naturally puffing, the animal runs him down. Fortunately, my light weight and my horse's strength saved me from this dilemma, for after a short struggle, I remounted and finished the climb with more comfort for us both.

After this toilsome part of the journey we encountered a more gradual but rougher way. Loose stones and slippery outcrops of dacite, with logs, from saplings to trunks of the largest trees, strewn the way. Here, as we rode, still in Indian file, along the backbone of the ridge running westerly from the Dividing Range, which separates the head waters of the Graceburn and Watts from the Badger, and in which the high peak called Donna-Buang occurs, the flora and the scenery began to change. Looking away westerly towards Yarra Glen, large sheets of flood waters, lake-like on the flats, could be seen, whilst across them the morning train was steaming along the viaduct. On our left front, whilst looking towards Yarra Glen, was Launching Place, plainly visible; and to the right, the highest houses of Healesville, appearing as outposts at the foot of Mount St. Leonard. Thus, *Eucalyptus amygdalina* gave way to *E. regnans*, while *E. obliqua* took on the mountain form that bushmen call "Menindie," and which, in my opinion, is *E. haemastoma*. Riding in close quarters, back and front, with no chance to go aside, note could be taken of nothing smaller than medium sized shrubs. Among these were *Olearia* (Aster) *argophylla*, stunted, and with many stems, and what was apparently *O. (Aster) stellulatus* in alpine form; *Acacia dealbata*, whose foliage was so like that of *A. mollissima* as almost to convert one to Maiden's grouping of these two varieties of *A. decurrens*; but, as there was neither blossom nor bud, it is safer with such casual observation to reserve identification.

At this stage, which was about half way, someone ahead had halted the troop - a fallen tree was being negotiated. Suddenly a voice at the back called out, "Look at those holly berries! Get some." One of the party moved into the scrub. I guessed what the hollies were, and had some passed along; they were the fruit of *Coprosma hirtella*, and magnificent specimens, too - luscious, and about twice the usual size. Many a stunted bush of this plant had been passed recently. The next plant to attract my attention was an *Eriostemon* in bud. Scattered along the way, high up on the ridge, were several bushes. I could reach them from the saddle, but they were too tough to pick. Several stems sprang from each root. The leaves were very large and thick, emitting a foetid smell when crushed.

My nearest companion secured two pieces for me (I had but one when I returned, and that I take to be *E. myoporoides*). A little further on we came to the first snow - light flakes sparsely scattered. The aneroid showed 2,000 feet above Healesville (267 ft.), and we had come but little more than half way. It was not the first snow that we had seen, for on the peaks ahead, and to our left front, where the Divide lay behind Mount Riddell it was massed in dazzling whiteness in the sun, which about 11 o'clock, shone brightly. Each step the white carpet became thicker, and covered the horses' hoofs, but those ahead had trampled trail for us. Here we came to a magnificent grove of the Mountain Wattle, or Hickory, as it is sometimes called, *Acacia penninervis*, somewhat resembling, and taken by many to be an alpine form of *A. pycnantha*. To our left, which would be about east of north, ran a deep valley running almost east and west, and, strange as it seemed to me, the bottom of it was filled with snow like a frozen river, whilst on the lower hillsides beyond there was none. The snow on our track soon became much deeper - almost to the horses' knees. The lesser logs were covered save where the foremost horses had bared them. The larger ones were banked up; sometimes two lying parallel made jumping a care. There was little opportunity for botanical observation, save of the larger objects, and none for examination.

Fine old beeches, *Fagus Cunninghami*, hoar-tipped and festooned with moss, the dark green of the leaves brightened with weepers of the moss *Hypnum denticulatum* and blue with lichens, now came in view. The euvery bird under the sun. He is some mimic alright."

"What is he like, small or big?"

"The female is like the ordinary fowl, dark and plain, but the male is a beauty. He has a wonderful tail, like a lyre when he spreads it out. Only one never seldom sees him. Some people have lived here all their life and have never seen one."

Hurriedly and most vividly I described the reception committee to him. For the first time, I saw a country man's features liven up and heard warmth in his usually lifeless voice.

"By Jove, Miss, you have seen a rare sight. I never heard tell of many lyre-birds being together. You know. they lay only one egg a year, and they are very scarce. You were very lucky. Where did you see them? You must have walked very quietly not to have frightened them away."

"Yes, I was walking quietly on the grass, and they rose up from the bushes right in front of me. It was a beautiful sight."

Right then we reached a crossing and the driver pulled up.

"I am sorry, Miss, I turn off here; I have to deliver some letters. Good luck to you, I hope you reach Walhalla alright."

Somewhat rested, I resumed the now lighter pack and the walk.

When I looked at my watch, I was surprised to find that it was already four. Still having eight miles between me and the hotel, I began to hurry more and observe less. Nevertheless, I could not help stopping from time to time, to admire the whispering waterfalls, the luxuriant foliage, the green hills, the misty mountain ranges, and the muttering river. If anything, the continuous rain enhanced the beauty of the scenery, by cleansing the woods.

Fresh, bright, rejuvenated, pulsating life was everywhere.

Quite unexpectedly, I came upon half a dozen houses around a noisy creek, cradled in a ring of verdracefully from decaying tree-limbs, but now the smaller plants were hidden. Overhanging boughs and tangles of prostate trees and projecting limbs covered with snow impeded our progress at times, occasioning sometimes a delay in crossing, sometimes an ugly flounder as we crossed, and once, at least, a dismount. An occasional patch of mire changed the colour of things. One in particular was blackness itself. It was a slough, but not of despond. We and our hopes were getting higher. At noon we reached the summit, 4,080 feet

above sea level - a fitting hour for that achievement. The snow at the top, after being trodden hard, was about three and a half feet deep, while the drifts were very much - perhaps in places two feet - deeper. At the place where we met the Warburton party a large space had been cleared, and we were enclosed by a ring of timber, so that no views were obtainable. The opening up of vistas, however, is fast being proceeded with. Within this circle we tethered our horses to trees and fallen boughs, and lunched. A fire was roaring in a snow-pit formed by a hole recently occupied by the roots of a large eucalypt, and a plentiful supply of tea and hot water was available.

After remaining on the summit a couple of hours and listening (or not listening) to speeches typical of such occasions, we sought our mounts, many of which had sunk to their girths in the snow. The return journey was not *facilis decensus*, but it took rather less time than the ascent. On the way up we had seen the tracks of wallabies in the snow, and fresh tracks were noticed on our return. In the neighbourhood of Ben Cairn Rock, which lay at some distance to the south of the track, a small party detached themselves from the main body and made a detour to see if a road could be found via that interesting object. I believe their expedition promises a successful issue. This plateau (3,350 ft. above sea-level), it will be remembered, was visited by a Club party from West Warburton in January 1910 (*Vict. Nat.* xxxvi., p. 185). About this point we passed through a thick mist, which hung only to the highest levels. The down grade riding at the stony patches and the steep pinch I mentioned before required considerable care, but, with no mishaps of any consequence, we reached home about 5 o'clock.

As I write this a party of ornithologists is visiting the mount from the Warburton side. It is hoped they will be rewarded with a sight of something in their own particular line, for neither going nor returning did I see a feather. This trip, as you will see, was not one that could by ordinary canons be called a naturalists' excursion, but was undertaken by a party who were otherwise not naturalists, with the object of getting there to meet political visitors and point out the claims of the Healesville route.

Whilst on this subject it may not be out of place to discuss the name of the mountain peak. I have used the name Donna-Buang, as that is the one now adopted, but in my opinion carelessly. In the first place, there is no "d" in the aboriginal language. That word "Donna" is, as one of our daily journals says, the name in the language of our natives as in Spanish, is ridiculous. That the name in any form applies to this peak is more than doubtful. The nearest approach to "d" is "th." The range just above Malleeson's, and between that and Worri Yallock, is "Toole-be-wong." I have made careful investigations, and find that the last name is a nearer interpretation of the word, and onna-Buang is a corruption. Toole-be-wong faces towards the aboriginal station at Coranderrk. It and the ranges behind are the homes of the floating mist. The old Yarra tribes included this part of the horizon in one sweep with an expression which is nearly interpreted as "Thuonna-be-wong," meaning "the place of the mist."

Aboriginals, like many coloured races, have a weakness for acquiescence to suggestion. For instance, the nearer the range is pointed out and the question is asked, "What name that?" "Thuonna-be-wong," or the ear may catch it as "Thounna-be-wong," or the ear may catch it as "Toole-be-wong." The peaks beyond are pointed to; the same answer is given in slightly different inflection of voice, and perhaps by another individual. It is all the land of the mists. Bearing out this view, it is significant that in Brough Smyth's "Aborigines of Victoria," vol. ii., p. 188, Mount Riddell (which is in that sweep of hills which, as viewed from Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, extends from Mount St. Leonard to Toole-be-wong) is called "Koranderrk" or "Turnim-be-wong." On page 162 of the

same work the word "boo-rong" means mist. The same word on page 135 is given as "the firmament."

The late Mr. Joseph Shaw, for many years superintendent of Coranderrk, always considered that the natives applied the name "Thuonna-be-wong" to the eastward extension over Malleson's Look-out of the part now called Toole-be-wong. Some say that the name Donna-be-wong or Donna-buang means "Queen of the Waters"; others that it means "the place of rotten wood"; but in favour of these definitions no evidence has been adduced.

1911

Over the Black's Spur

From the Yarra to the Goulburn Valleys

Healesville's Chief Attraction

To the majority of people the main attraction in visiting beauty spots is to obtain a view of immense perspectives. They like to see over long distances, for choice to stand on some mountain top if it be not too hard to get there, and scan the lowlands spread out under their gaze. There is something that fascinates, that is almost awe-inspiring, in the viewing of immense mountains, yawning chasms, or undulating downs, stretching for miles before your gaze. The writer has felt this, when standing at the edge of the Grand Canyon of Colorado, in looking down its sides hundreds of feet to the stream flowing at its base. It is in moments such as this that a man gets his true perspective in the order of things in Nature. But we're not. That sounds like heresy, and you may not like it. Nature, with all her wonderful resources of energy, her calm grandeur, her silent strength, exerts on us a soothing, healing influence. But see her in anger, when she is roused." The howling tornado; the sweeping mountainous billows; the rolling; rocking and crashing of the earthquake; the death-dealing hell-fire of the volcano - and you just about get the size of a man's importance in the eternal order of things.

But to return to the subject Starting from Healesville, one is in the Valley of the Yarra, and driving up the Fernshaw Road, up over the Black's Spur to Narbethong you find yourself in the valley of the Acheron, on the fringe of the great Goulburn Valley.

It was a bright, sunny day when we made the trip, and as each bend in the road brought fresh views of beauty to the eye, exclamations of pleasure broke from the passengers. The hills, the trees, the ferns, the gullies, all added their quota to the scene. The wild flowers, the singing of the birds, the lanes of light that streaked the roads, the exhilarating air, all spoke of Nature's health-giving life.

Just above "Gracedale House," one crosses one of the most interesting of the journey's incidents, and yet is not conscious of it - the first feeder of the water supply of the Metropolis. But that will be dealt with another time.

The One Mile Bend, with its beautiful fern covered banks, and delightful shade, entices and bewitches the traveller. Round a sharp curve, and a backward view shows Healesville snugly resting amongst innumerable mountains. This is a magnificent view, and one that should not be missed. Still further on, and the down run to the side of the old township of Fernshaw is commenced. This used to be a thriving tourist resort, but when the growth of the State's Metropolis demanded new catchment areas to cope with its thirst, the mountainous country that fed the Watts, the Graceburn, the Badger, and Donnelly's Rivers were reserved to supply the additional water required. It was necessary, therefore, to preserve the streams from all impurities, and the township of Fernshaw had to go, and go it did. To-day there is only the clearing to show

tourists that there ever existed habitation of any kind. Fernshaw, as its name implies, abounds with ferns. The Watts is, at this point, probably the prettiest stream in Healesville's district. Bubbling over a pebbly bed, it makes music fit for the Gods. It is with regret that the tourist moves on, and commences the steep climb to the summit of the range. A short distance up, a stop is made at a lovely gully of myrtle and ferns - Etta's Glen in all reality a glen of fairy - like sweetness and charm. To miss this is to miss a sight as welcome to the tourist as a refreshing drink on a sultry day. Round the Devil's Elbow, a sharp, dangerous angle of the road, the journey brings the traveller farther into the big timber country; and some magnificent specimens of mountain ash and messmate are to be observed. The road gets less steep, a short rise is traversed, and the driver says, "You are now on top of the Black's Spur." There is nothing black, only the scarred tree trunks and one passenger says, "Why is it called the Blacks' Spur driver," that it was at the top of this range that the Yarra Valley tribes of aboriginals used to meet the Goulburn tribes and fight, and that's why it is called the Blacks' Spur." "Oh!" says the passenger, and she seems perfectly satisfied.

1912

#### Excursion to Warburton.

The main object of this excursion being the ascent of the newly opened up Mount Donna Buang, and the railway timetable not allowing sufficient time for that to be accomplished in the interval between the arrival and departure of the daily trains, it was necessary to take the evening train to Warburton on Friday, 15th December. Our party consisted of seven members and friends, to several of whom the adjacent country was already familiar. The Friday was rather warm and close, with every appearance of a thunderstorm, but we reached Warburton (48 miles) about 8.45 p.m., before the threatened change. However, during the night we were awakened by thunder, presently followed by rain. Some were up early to reconnoitre and discuss the weather. A three-mile walk before breakfast up the Yarra valley served to show that since the last Club excursion to these parts civilization had made great inroads on the primitive bush, though, as a compensation, the numerous timber tramways enable one to penetrate to considerable distances into the forest with less trouble than formerly. After breakfast, just as we were setting out, a smart shower of fine rain came up from the south-west, and, as there was every appearance of others to follow, we made a descent on the local store, and each secured a yard and half of American cloth, which, with the aid of a safety-pin, formed a very serviceable "ponch," and, if it did not shield us entirely from the rain, it at least had the merit of keeping our shoulders dry, and was found to be considerably lighter and easier to carry than an overcoat. After making enquiries as to tracks, we decided to follow the tram line leading to Richard's mill, distant about a mile, but situated at least 1000 feet above the township, on the northern side of the Yarra. Several smart showers occurred before the mill was reached, and we were glad of an excuse to watch the huge logs being cut up into various-sized planks and boards. From the mill two or three tracks lead higher up, but we decided to keep to the tram-line, which presently became still steeper. The views down into the Yarra valley were very fine, but partly spoiled by the mist of passing showers. Presently we found ourselves among the clouds, cut off from all below. Onwards and upwards, in about another mile we reached the terminus of the tram-line, close to the new bridle-track in course of formation by the Public Works Department for the convenience of tourists, at a point about six and a half miles from its commencement, and three and a half from the summit of Mount Donna Buang.

This track, it may be mentioned, starts from the bridge over the Yarra at the Adventist printing works, near Four-Mile Creek, and, to gain the summit on an easy grade, has to make a considerable detour - first to the east, then north to Cement Creek, where the four-mile mark is situated; it then turns due south again, gaining almost the crest of the range, just where we struck it, at six and a half miles. The position of this track is marked on the new tourist map of the Healesville district. When this fine piece of work is completed the ascent of the mount will be an easy matter, though occupying perhaps a little more time. The vegetation on the way up had been of the usual type to be found in the forest country along the Yarra valley - hazel, musk, mulberry, blanket-wood, Christmas tree, etc., among the remains of an old eucalyptus forest long since vanquished by fire and axe; but, owing to the wet state of everything, we had to be content with observing it from the tram. Just where we left the tramway were two or three beeches, *Fagus Cunninghami*, popularly known as myrtles. Other and extensive myrtle groves are in the gullies of this mountain, but our way did not bring us near them. The track now turned but our way did not bring us near them. The track now turned to the west, compelling us to face the showers. Winding along the face of the range, in about a mile we struck the old Marysville mining track, and found that the construction of the new track ended there at present. In a few yards we crossed a small stream, one of the heads of the Yithan, which a little higher up emerged from a grove of beeches, where, on our return, a number of seedlings were secured for home cultivation. We were now fairly on the crest of the range, which apparently forms a considerable plateau, with an average height little less than that of Donna Buang itself (4,080 feet). On this plateau was the sight of the day - one worth all the trouble of getting there, notwithstanding the wet. The Ivy-leaved Violet, *Viola hederacea*, was flowering in millions, and monopolizing acres of ground. It at first glance appeared like masses of snow drifted against the stones of fallen trees, etc. The flowerstems were longer than usual, and so closely crowded together that a score of flowers might be gathered in one handful. At about a mile from the little creek the track led up a stony hill, which turned out to be the vantage spot we had come so far to seek - about 3,500 feet above our starting-point, Warburton. Just then occurred the only break in our misty surroundings which happened during the day. We ascended the look-out, which, utilizing the standing trunks of four tall trees, enables one to get another thirty or forty feet above sea-level. On a fine day the view would doubtless be ver extensive, but on this occasion few of the mountain peaks could be recognized with absolute certainty. Juliet, four or five miles away to the north-west, was the most prominent. To the north-east was our clearest outlook, where what we took to be Mount Arnold, near Marysville, appeared as a prominent peak. As it was past mid-day, the shelter of some felled timber was sought, so that we might dispose of our luncheons in comparative comfort. This being accomplished mementos in the shape of specimens of the dacite outcrop were secured by those who think nothing of adding a few pounds weight to their burdens. We retraced our steps more rapidly than we had made the ascent, for the rain still persisted, noting but little in the way of unfamiliar vegetation, except a solitary specimen of an *Eriostemon*, which could not be found when sought afterwards for identification. Near the junction with the mining track the party became separated - two returned the way they had come; the others got on to an old timber track, which brought them out at the mill. It proved a sloppy walk, but led them through some good vegetation which they greatly regretted could not be explored on that occasion. At the mill we reunited, and our troubles were over, for the weather cleared, and, taking a shorter track down the mountain, we were back at the hotel having afternoon tea before starting on the return journey for town.



Mount Donna Buang  
ITS PAST HISTORY  
( By J.A. Panton )

A recent visitor to our state being desirous of visiting Mount Donna Buang, the proposed new health resort and having hopelessly searched for it on our published maps, asked me if the position of this mountain were shown in our geological survey maps.

I had to inform him that there was no geological map of this part of our State, and although we possess some excellent geological survey maps left us by the late Alfred Selwyn and his staff of able geologists { with the exception of some maps of fragmentary work occasionally issued by the Mining Department }, the geological survey of our State had been hung up or abandoned - some say it has been starved through the ignorance of the importance of such a department. In the Upper Yarra district gold to the value of over half a million has been obtained from the alluvial, and there are yet several localities remaining to be opened up by the prospector which might be indicated on any map of this country compiled by a geological surveyor.

Donna Buang is the highest peak in the mass of obtrusive rocks, consisting of porphyry and fine grained granite, embracing Mt St Leonard, Mt Monda, Mt Juliet, Donna Buang, and the range westward to Nyora, which has forced its way up through the silurian beds, extending from Toolangi south past Healesville and the western slope of Nyora to Hoddle's Creek and McCrae's Creek, where an area of granite is found extending eastward crossing the Little Yarra about six miles above its junction with the Yarra, and thence along the Dividing Range into the Gippsland and Yarra Waters to the south of Mt Lexie and thence to Baw Baw.

North of this granite the upper silurian rocks occupy nearly the whole of the Upper Yarra basin. Alluvial gold has been found in McCrae's Creek, Hoddle's Creek, at Warburton, in Big Pat's Creek, Starvation Creek, McMahan's Creek, and Alderman's Creek, all southern tributaries of the River Yarra, taking their rise in the granite country and flowing through a bed of silurian rocks to the River Yarra; also the Upper Yarra basin and on the northern watershed the country east of Cumberland Creek towards Donnelly's Creek, has been proved to be more or less auriferous. Gold was discovered in this district about the middle fifties on a small watercourse first called Yankee Jim's Creek, on the face of a hill situated about due east of what is now the Little Yarra bridge crossing, where a patch of alluvial about fifty yards in width, was worked for a distance of about half a mile down the creek, and yielded an immense quantity of gold, some claims being comparable with the best at Bendigo.

It was the success of the small goldfield, which was named Warburton ( after the Commissioner, Mr Warburton Carr ) that lured the miners to push further afield. They then cut through the dense scrub, and were encouraged by the colour of gold wherever they prospected in the creekbeds already indicated, and as the locality became fully occupied by a mining population and all goods had to be sent on pack horses over difficult mountain paths, attempts were made to supply the district by means of boats on the river, the boats being brought from Melbourne by dray and launched on the river at the point then, and now, known as The Launching Place.

A little gold has been found in one of the small creeks on the southern slope of Mt St Leonard, north by east from Healesville, and in a quartz vein, I believe, on the western slope of Nyora. No systematic prospecting has yet been attempted in the country affected by the group of obtrusive rocks I have already referred to, and now that public attention has been

drawn to Mount Donna Buang by the proposition of the Public Works Department to establish a public health resort on its summit, it is to be hoped that the Mining Department may be directed to extend the geological survey to the Upper Yarra district, a work that ought to have been completed years ago.

The geological section of the Wallaby Club will find the road to Donna Buang from Healesville, via the Don road, and a new  
bridle track to Ben Cairn, full of interest, good indicators of gold bearing country being observable in the descent in the Badger watershed after passing Mr Guillerme's house, about a quarter of a mile from the River Badger. On the ascent of Wade's Lookout, at a quarry opened for road metal, a good example of metamorphic schist is to be seen; and near to this, further along the road there is a peculiar undular and rough claystone bed ( rare in silurian rocks ) exposed in the cutting, identical with a similar bed met with on the Yea railway line eastward of Mount Tullaroock. On the ascent below Malleson's Lookout, the road is cut through decomposed porphory, and fifty chains beyond Nyora Railway Junction, at the cutting metamorphic rock is again met with.

1912

Motorman and Snake

Car comes to Grief on Blacks' Spur

A little incident in which a motor, a motor expert and a snake are concerned occurred recently on the steep slope of Blacks' Spur. Mr E. Schultze, engineer and motor agent, of 33 Stanley street, West Melbourne, took his brother and children out for a run in his motor. While coming down the Spur, where the grade is 1 in 5, he spied a black snake, and being one of those who make it a point of duty never to pass a snake without killing it, he jumped out of his car, after bringing it to a stop, and fixing the machine so that it would not continue down the hill, he made for the snake, followed by one of his sons. The stick came down smash upon the back of the reptile, and just as Mr Schultze was turning to his son to tell him that was how to do it, a shriek came from behind where the car was, and the machine came racing down the hill. It crashed through the fence guard on the edge of the hill, and then ran against a big tree. Had the tree not been there the car must certainly gone over the precipitous side. Being considerably damaged by the collision the car was immovable, and was per force left till it could be bought into the town the next day. Mr Schultze preserved considerable reticence regarding the incident, but the adventure leaked out, and he is now resenting with such good humor as he can command all the chaffing hints given him on snake hunting by motor. He denies that any of the inmates were hurt.

1912

In Search of Trout

Over the Divide from Healesville

( By Frank May )

One of the most enjoyable fishing trips in the State is that from Healesville via Alexandra to Thornton. The scenery on the route is magnificent, the roads are good, and there are many well stocked trout streams within easy walking distance of the main track. The Maroondah or Watts River, which flows near Healesville, is probably the most popular trout stream in Victoria. Over forty years ago the late Mr A.C. Le Souef,

when on a visit to the district, was so impressed with the suitability of the Watts for trout that he imported 500 brook trout fry from Tasmania, and placed them in the river reaches at Fernshaw. A few years afterwards some fine specimens of 4 lb and 5 lb weight were taken, and the Watts attained popularity with anglers, which it has never lost. In recent years many thousands of young trout have been distributed over its waters. The river is in such close proximity to a popular tourist resort that it is fished continuously every year, especially in the holiday seasons. There is thus little chance of trout reaching the size of former years. The angling societies would do well to have a limit fixed to the number of fish taken by an individual angler, or the stream will soon be depleted. Yabbies and grasshoppers are favorite baits on the Watts, but it is gratifying to note that the artificial fly is coming more into general use. The Watts is suitable for the artificial fly, as it consists mostly of broken water. The "fly" whether fished "wet or dry," is considered the most sportsmanlike of all baits, and it would be an interesting experiment to reserve portion of the river for use of "fly" only.

Wading is the most successful way of fishing the Watts. Here and there are small openings in the dense scrub where the angler may obtain an occasional cast from its banks, but when a trout is hooked it is difficult to land it. The Maroondah weir, about five miles up the river from Healesville is worth visiting. The water generally contains a few trout. From the weir upwards for miles the stream is ideal for fishing. Just above the bridge at Fernshaw, Morley's track takes off from the road, and runs alongside the river to its upper waters. Close to Healesville the Graceburn falls into the Watts. This is a picturesque little stream and convenient to fish. Higher up the river Chum Creek joins it. This creek has a reputation of holding some fine blackfish in its upper waters. Many good baskets were taken there last season. An occasional trout also falls to the rod of a skilful angler. Near the lower portion of the Watts there are two or three lagoons which contain trout. In these plenty of mud eyes ( the larvae of the dragon fly ) in all stages of growth can be obtained with a long handled landing net of fine mesh. Mud eyes are excellent bait for trout in the Watts and its tributaries.

1912

#### Our Mountain Tracks

#### State Improvements

At the instigation of the Minister of Public Works (Mr Edgar) considerable activity is being displayed by the state authorities in the construction of new roads and tracks for the use of tourists in the mountain country of the Healesville, Warburton, and Marysville district.

The new vehicular road from Warburton to Donna Buang is now in course of construction, and the Minister, by arrangement with the forests Department is having a track constructed from the summit of the mountain down the Acheron River valley to Narbethong. It is expected that this will be completed in a few days.

The consent of the Metropolitan Board of Works has been given to the construction of a road through a corner of its territory on the top of the range, between Healesville and Warburton, which will connect Healesville with Donna Buang. This work will be put in hand as soon as the Healesville Shire Council and the local progress association agree to contribute towards the cost.

Toolangi and Mt St. Leonard which have hitherto been accessible only by a very bad road from Yarra Glen, are being connected with Healesville by

a vehicular road along Myer's Creek which will shorten the distance from the railway by about five miles. It is intended that this road shall eventually be continued along the top of the divide to Kinglake and Whittlesea, thus connecting the terminus of each of the Whittlesea, Hurst's-bridge, Healesville, and Warburton railways. The whole length of such a road would pass through most interesting mountain and forest scenery, though it would at no point be more than 50 miles from Melbourne.

Mr Edgar also proposes to have a pedestrians track prepared, which will open up entirely new mountain scenery between Mount Donna Buang and Marysville. This track will commence at the terminus of the new road to Donna Buang at an elevation of 4,080 feet, and will keep to the top of the range at the head of the Acheron River, following the eastern watershed of that watercourse to Mount Strickland, travelling along the top of the Divide at the head of Wilks Creek to the summit of Mt Bismarck (now Mt Kitchener), and thence to Marysville. The distance from Warburton to Marysville by this track is approximately 25 miles, about 15 of which, from Donna Buang to Mount Bismarck, will have an elevation of between 3000 and 4000 feet. It is Mr Edgar's desire to have this track open for walking enthusiasts during the early part of next summer, and he asked the tourist committee to furnish him with an early advisory report on the subject so that the work may be put in hand as soon as the weather in the mountain district will permit.

1913

The Royal Oaks

To be planted next Wednesday

Elaborate Preparations

Word has been received by the secretary of the Tourist Association (Mr Andrew) that the date for the official planting of the royal oaks at Fernshaw to commemorate the visit of the present Queen to that place during her trip to Australia, had been fixed for next Wednesday, 9th April inst.

Lady Denman, accompanied by Lord Richard Neville, will perform the ceremony and the greatest enthusiasm prevails locally as to honor the occasion,

On Monday, the President (Mr Bradshaw), vice-president (Mr J. Cornish) and secretary of the Association waited on the Shire council in reference to celebrating the distinguished event. Mr Bradshaw explained the object of their visit, and said the Tourist Association had been negotiating to have the occasion celebrated in a manner which would do credit to Healesville. This would necessitate some little expense, and they looked to council to lead the way in such a matter of importance and that was the deputation's object in waiting upon them. He hoped the council would see their way clear to co-operate with the Association as they all recognised the great importance and advertisement to the district the event would prove. If the council were in sympathy with the proposal, it would be necessary for another meeting of the Council and Tourist Association at an early date to consider what form the celebrations should take. The time was short, and as the event would be a great advertisement to the place, they should rise to the occasion and make the most of it.

1914

Melbourne's Water Supply

## Another New Storage Dam to be Built

Commenting on the above subject "The Age" says that the spell of hot weather which followed the Christmas holidays had the effect of demonstrating to the commissioners of the Metropolitan Board of Works that, despite the approach to completion of the O'Shanassy scheme, Melbourne is not at all in an enviable position as regards water supply. The report goes on to point out the great increase in the consumption of water, and the seriousness of the position if increased provision is not made. After quoting figures in proof of statements, the report reads:- "In view of this large increase, and the possibility of a similar increase during the present year, the water supply committee of the board, despite the assurance of the officials that there is nothing to fear in the way of a water famine, has instructed the board's engineer to prepare a report as to the advisability of building a large dam either at Moorandah (sic) or in connection with the O'Shanassy River, to meet future demands. The O'Shanassy scheme, its members have to admit, will not supply much more than sufficient water for present day requirements, and, with the increase of population and rapid extension of the residential areas around the city, it will not be long before the board is faced with a serious problem should not some arrangement be decided at once to add to the capacity of the catchment areas.

1914

## Marysville

### Death of an Old Identity

On Wednesday last Constable Deeley, on receipt of information given by Mr Robert Humphries, of Donovan's Creek, proceeded to that place, which is 18 miles from Marysville to bring in the dead body of an old age miner James Fahie. He found on making inquiries that deceased had not been seen since Friday 13<sup>th</sup> inst, and Mr Humphries caused a search to be made, with the result that his dead body was found in an unused tail race about half-a-mile from the Golden Bower gold mine.

Deceased had been working over old ground preparing to sluice it, and had apparently slipped and fallen a distance of eight feet into the tail race below.

The body, which was in an advanced state of decomposition, was brought into Marysville, where an inquiry was held by Cr J.R. Crooke J.P., who after hearing the evidence of Mr Humphries and Constable Deeley, recorded the following verdict. That deceased, James Fahie, was, on or about 13<sup>th</sup> February 1914 accidentally killed by falling into an unused tail race.

Deceased at one time held the position of Inspector in the Roads and Bridges Branch of the Public Works Department, and many of the most important works on the Healesville - Woods Point road were carried out under his supervision.

The body was interned in the Healesville cemetery.

1914

## Destructive Bush Fires

The watershed in the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board's territory has suffered greatly through the devastation of bush fires during the past few weeks. The bulk of the damage has been done on the Blacks' Spur and its immediate vicinity. The fires have burned back along some of the

smaller streams which add to the water supply, and the flows from them have greatly diminished as a result. Employees of the board have been hard at work fighting the fires in an endeavor to protect the reserves, and their efforts although not fully successful, have resulted in the saving of many beauty spots famous with the tourist. On both sides of the Blacks' Spur road for miles huge trees have been destroyed, the undergrowth burnt out, and in many places the telephone wires are down.

Mr Gibbs visited the locality on Sunday and he says that in some cases the road served as a fire break, but in others the flames leaped right across it and went surging up the hill. The worst damage was done near Fernshaw, but, singular to relate, the destruction of trees and undergrowth near the road, about a mile beyond Fernshaw, has opened up to views acres of hitherto concealed fern tree country, which affords magnificent views. "The sight was magnificent," said Mr Gibbs, "and the contrast of the fresh green fronds and the blackened withered burnt trees was remarkable. Perhaps the most beautiful of these newly opened beauty spots is near the valley of Myrtle Creek." The fires in the locality have pretty well burned themselves out, but they have reformed again right at the top of Mount Dom Dom.

As the result of Mr Gibbs' visit he will consult the board's engineer-in-chief regarding a suggestion to increase temporarily the supply of water in the Maroondah channel to a small extent.

1914

#### Melbourne Water Supply

Reports received yesterday by the Metropolitan Board of Works show that blocking of the water channels at Maroondah last week was more serious than was expected, and that no water from that source will be available until Friday. In the meantime there will necessarily be a heavy demand on Yan Yean Water.

The depth of the reservoir was increased by 3.5 in., as a result of the storm, but it is feared that a drop of about 6 in. will have occurred before the Maroondah water is again available.

The engineer in charge of water supply (Mr Ritchie) returned on Tuesday from a visit of inspection to Maroondah. He reported that a considerable quantity of debris, mostly charcoal, leaves, and twigs, had been washed into the tunnel, and into much of the main channel, which had been blocked at either end. Men had to work waist deep in water in cleaning the channel from which many logs were removed and probably the remainder would have been taken out by now. The aqueduct was in working order as far as the channel, and would probably be free as far as Yarra Glen on Wednesday, but the city could not receive the benefit of the Maroondah aqueduct until Friday. In consequence of the trouble at Maroondah more water would be lost from Yan Yean Reservoir than had been gained.

However, the heavy rain has had beneficial results. The consumption of water in the metropolitan area had been reduced as a result of the change in weather, and the watersheds had been saturated, so that the full benefit of succeeding rain should be gained. Though the storm had caused trouble at Maroondah, it had done much good by washing away debris caused by bushfires in the watershed areas.

1914

#### Minister of Forests visits Donna Buang

On Friday 24 th ult., the Minister of Forests (Mr Drysdale Brown) accompanied by Mr Barnes M.L.A., Mr Mackey (Conservator of Forests) and

special reporters from Melbourne's leading dailies, motored to Warburton, leaving Melbourne at about 7.30am. and arriving here at 10.30am. Lunch had been arranged by our Progress League at the Alpine Retreat Hotel. The visitors were well catered for by Mrs Leith junr. Horses were provided for the occasion by Mr Lithgow, and a start for the Mount was made at about 11.15 am., followed by a drag and four horses driven by Mr Waters. Messrs Story, Hope, E.A. Robinson and the secretary of the Warburton Sawmill and Tramway Company (Mr Hocking), also met and accompanied the Minister on his trip. The Minister was so impressed with the beauty of our district that he refused to return until he had ascended the Mount. The drag halted at Cement Creek, and awaited the return of the leading party. Refreshments were awaiting their return.

Interviewed later, Mr Brown stated that money should be spent in this district. He was not aware we had such beautiful scenery so near a great city. Our reserves are not sufficient; he stated, and what we are asking is justified. He would see what he could do on his return to help such a deserving body as the Warburton Progress League. The Minister has ordered lunch to be ready on his return, and he invited the officers of the Progress League and Council to meet him. Mr Barnes M.L.A. deserves much credit and thanks for bringing about such a successful trip.

1914

#### A Trip over the Divide

#### Glorious Scenery From the Ranges

(By F.R. Kempson.)

Mr Lyn Watt and myself made the above trip a few week-end ago. We traveled by train to Healesville, and walked from there to Narbethong, a distance of 14 miles. We walked along the main road, which was in good order, despite the recent rains. After passing Gracedale House, about 3 miles out the road begins to wind in and out of the hills, and the country looks prettier. The next place of importance is Fernshaw; here the road crosses the Watts river, and we stop and help ourselves to a mouthful of its delicious water. Hill climbing now begins seriously. Three miles of stiff walking brings us to the top of the Black Spur. It is now too dark to see the ferns etc that grow in abundance on the Spur. Having previously done this trip in the summer, we are able to speak of the beauty of this part when we find ourselves commencing to descend, because, on account of the darkness and the road not now being so good, walking is made slightly unpleasant. We pass the Hermitage, where everything is in darkness and perfectly quiet. What a contrast to the time we passed it in summer! Then the place was a mass of brilliant light with a number of people strolling about and chatting quite gaily. We are now only two hours from Narbethong, which we reach a few minutes before 8 p.m. We stay at the Black Spur Hotel for the night. Having written to Mr J. Roache the proprietor, that we were going to bombard his larder, he right royally defends himself with a well spread table, upon which we make a vigorous attack. After a time we retreat to his parlor fireside, more than satisfied with the spread provided for us. We retire to bed early to be nice and fresh for next day's walk. The following day, Sunday is the shortest of the year, and we are up at daylight, 6.30 a.m. and ready for the track (for it is not by road this time) at 7 a.m. we are bound south for Warburton, via a track which is not too distinct, along the top of the ranges. We make for the top of a ridge, which continues on to the spur, known as Vinegar. We follow a track along Fisher's Creek which is used by the timber cutters, for about three miles, and then come upon Marchbanks' timber mill. The country round about the mill being cleared,

everything is covered with a thick white frost. We make enquires as to the track that we should take, but the most intelligent reply we could get was "Step it out, and you will get there." From here we could hear the lyre-birds in the gullies below whistling to their hearts content, it was most beautiful and certainly was worth going a long way to hear. Leaving the mill, we crossed a creek and looked for a spot to boil the billy and have breakfast. Having performed this duty, we have to search round for a track that will take us direct to the top of the range. We try several timber tracks but they all run into dead ends, and we finally decide to fight our way to the top. We came upon three men chopping a huge tree. Probably they had lost count of the days; at any rate the men seemed rather surprised to see us. We could not obtain any information from them; they even admitted that they did not know there was a track that way to Warburton. We continued our climb, and when about half-way up we alarmed a walaby, he calmly made straight up the hill, jumping logs and other obstacles as he went. We began to wish that we had some of the walaby's jumping powers in our legs. At last we reached the top, and what a magnificent view! Looking in a north easterly direction we could see nothing else but what appeared to be a sea of white fleecy clouds, with the tops of the hills peeping out here and there. With the sun shining bright and clear above, it was a grand spectacle. Then, turning around in the opposite direction, a lovely clear view of the Yarra flats is obtained. I do not think there can be another spot amongst the mountains where two fine views can be seen at once.

We battle our way along the top of the mount, through wet undergrowth, but are unable to pick up the track. We peg away for four or five miles, until near the end of the ridge we suddenly come upon the long-looked-for track which takes us down hill for a while, and up another hill opposite. Now and again we find pieces of snow about the size of a plate sheltered away from the heat of the sun, and with these we quench our thirst. After a while we come to a spot where the track branches out to Marysville. Having filled the billy with snow, we soon had it converted into boiling water and lunched at this spot. We next make for the not-well-enough-known Donna Buang. We descend again for a while, then up once more, till we reach the top, which is covered with snow 5 to 6 inches deep. To our surprise we see the lookout on Donna Buang about two miles distant, being further away than we anticipated. Owing to the track being obliterated with snow, we have to keep a careful watch for the blazed marks on the trees. As time is now getting short, we have to step it out, this causing us to miss the blazed trees. We are approaching a rise, so decide to go right ahead to the top. Upon reaching there we are unable to see the Donna Buang look-out. It is now close on 5 o'clock, and will soon be dark. We have a consultation, and we decide we have to go south for Warburton, so make for the first peak south, chancing whether it is Donna Buang or not. Progress is now very slow. Nearly every yard logs have to be crawled over. This position is a bit too serious to allow us to admire the snow clad hills.

We are anxiously watching for the look-out, and are greatly relieved when at last we see it, because we are now on Donna Buang and know where we are. It is ten past five and we have 55 minutes to catch the train, with 4.5 miles still to do. We start off at a run, round the trees and through the snow. Before we commence to come down we have a look round. The wind is now blowing very strong and cold. The neighboring hills cannot be seen for the big, dark heavy masses of cloud hanging over them. The sight sends a shiver through us, as we think of what might have happened if we had not got back on the track again.

We are now nearing the end of our trip and can see the lights of Warburton ahead of us. With about three quarters of a mile to go we hear the engine whistle, and see the train move out. As it is useless now to



hurry, we slowly pick out the track in the darkness; and at last find ourselves in the main street of Warburton. We make for the Alpine Retreat, where from past experiences we know we will be well received by Mr and Mrs Haig (although it is 7 o'clock). We have that Mrs Haig has provided for us. The next and last item on the programme is bed, and we retire quite happy and in the best of spirits, satisfied that we have had a glorious time and splendid trip.

Next morning we are up at 5.15 to catch the 6 o'clock train for good old Lilydale. People can boast of the beauties of Healesville and Warburton, but I prefer pretty Lilydale, snugly situated and surrounded by a number of green hills and the distant mountains, rising up and putting a finish to as pretty a picture and panoramic view as one could wish to see.

1914

Plant Distribution in the Healesville District.

By Reginald Kelly.

(Read before the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, 20th April, 1914.)

THE Healesville district is so well known as a tourist resort to the majority of the members of this Club that little need be said as to its position or characteristics; but, as the Naturalist has readers outside the limits of this State, it will be necessary to briefly refer to the main features of the district. The area to which I propose to refer covers about 150 square miles, and may be roughly defined as bounded by a line drawn from Toolangi (about 10 miles north-west of the township of Healesville) to the Blacks' Spur, thence to Mount Donna Buang, west to the Yarra, along that stream to the railway tunnel, then north to Toolangi. The details of this area can be readily seen on a large scale map, such as that recently issued by the Lands Department for use of tourists.

Healesville, about 40 miles almost due east of Melbourne, is surrounded on its northern, eastern, and southern sides by ranges of hills varying from 700 to 4,000 feet above sea level, the township itself being situated on the banks of the Watts River, about 270 feet above sea-level. To the west are the extensive flats stretching towards Yarra Glen, through which the Yarra meanders, and which in winter are often submerged and appear like a huge lake. The district is a well-watered one, permanent streams occurring in every direction. The lower part of the area was apparently at one time under landlocked water, which was banked back into the present mountain gullies, and formed arms or inlets like those of Lake Tyers, or, in miniature, Sydney Harbour. The water was supplied by heavy rainfall in the mountains now included in the water reserve under the control of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and which formed the watershed of the Yarra and Watts rivers. These rivers, instead of having an outlet from the Healesville basin, close to their confluence near the railway tunnel, were probably there blocked by a range of hills, and, indeed, did not exist nearer than those points where they fed the lake at a level corresponding to the lowest point on the confining range of hills. In course of time the lake disappeared, from two causes - erosion at the present outlet and silt deposit in the lake itself. On the high banks of the gap through which the Yarra now flows, on the west side of the town, can still be seen wave marks, and similar signs are observable also on the sides of many of the promontories. Rock formations are exposed on both north and south banks at this spot, though not directly opposite. It is conceivable that the point of issue was like the

lip of a basin, at which the lake, when in flood, overflowed - probably into another lake covering the Yarra flats below. The wearing away of the soft rock was inevitable, and left a depression like the waist of an hour-glass, through which the Yarra now flows. As this opening was wearing the bed of the lake was filling up, until the water was so shallow that, seeking levels, it cut channels in the mud, forming river-beds which changed from time to time as various obstacles blocked the course, or the level varied. The lake is now often partly reproduced at time of flood. The old river-beds, still plainly observable, on the flats in the form of depressions and billabongs, are first filled up; then the waters, spreading, often reach the old shores and there lap and recede as they did of yore on a much greater scale. As the waters receded vegetation appeared.

The course of vegetative progress may be roughly recast by examining the growths in the present streams and various billabongs and branches in ascending order from those with permanent water to practically dry beds, proceeding from plankton to benthos. Series after series of unicellular and unattached multicellular plants, fresh-water algae, and mosses which grow on stones in the running water in the upper feeders, such as *Fissidens rigidulus* and the wet-ground moss, *Rynchostegium muriculatum*, were probably among the first forms. In the side washes of the lake, that at low water were still, grew *Potamogeton*, *Lemma* (Duckweed), and in the shallower moving water the long trails of *Triglochin procera*, with *Ottelia* and *Vallisneria*, which adjust themselves to varying depths. As the water found an outlet and gradually subsided, associations of *Myriophyllum variifolium* and various *Ranunculi* appeared, with *Typheta* of *Typha angustifolia* and the panphyton *Arrundo phragmites* - forms, some of them wide apart in evolution, but the ready representatives of existent flora. The habit of the yellow-flowered gentian, *Limnanthemum exaltatum*, is peculiar, in that it does not form part of but has risen superior to, the *Limnea* formation, and occupies - sometimes almost entirely by itself - isolated indentations, which may be permanent pools or merely moist saucers. As the waters still further receded, raised portions of the old bed became comparatively dry land, and were strewn by seeds from all sides, many of which found suitable soil and environment. Thus were formed, in addition to the *Typheta*, *Junceta* and *Scirpeta* in the remaining swamps, whilst the drier parts selected such portions of the invading flora as were adaptable. All these portions have since received into their formations and associations a large number of acclimatized and naturalized aliens. Some small swamps along the railway line are almost wholly tenanted by exotic mint, *Mentha pulegium*, *Pennyroyal*.

The upper story of the vegetation is entirely eucalyptian, and the first sub-story is, in the main, the same, but in association at various points with the tallest acacias, *Atherosperma*, and *Fagus*. Most of the high land is covered with a series of open associations, except in such spots as have been cleared or cultivated, and there with close associations of the lowest stories only. In other words, it is heavily timbered with thick undergrowth, and known as bushland and forest formation, with its usual complementaries - moss and lichen, tundra, and dwarf shrub heath.

Distribution of Eucalypti.- *Eucalyptus coriacea* is found outside the area under review, its range being limited to the undulating ground between Yering and the Tarrawarra station. The trees are much scattered, evidently many having been destroyed in clearing. They favour the Silurian knolls surmounting the Yarra flats, and avoiding the alluvial deposit. These knolls were possibly islands in, or banks of, a lower lake formed when the Yarra waters were dammed back. Under present conditions the trees grow above flood-level. They do not extend as far back as the railway tunnel, and do not appear at all beyond it. The accompanying allies of the lower country, *E. rubida*, *E. viminalis*, and *E. Gunnii*,

persist beyond this point. The first-named seeks the higher level of the foothills and spreads out on the rises to about 300 feet above sea-level, and ends beyond the town at this height, and gives place then in the *Leiophloia* to *E. goniocalyx*. *E. viminalis*, superficially so like *E. rubida*, but so different in timber and the later juvenile, adolescent, and recurrent foliage, follows the river banks, keeping mostly to the alluvial flats and valleys, grows to a great height, and shows but little of the rugged bark and stunted conformation of its seaboard variety. *E. Gunnii*, has much the same distribution, but usually grows away from the main stream and spreads farther afield, but always keeps to lower ground than *E. rubida*, choosing the more acid and slightly higher flats. A corresponding difference of distribution is found in the three acacias, *dealbata*, *mollissima*, and *melanoxylon*. The first-named follows the rivers, the second is distributed similarly to *E. rubida*, whilst *A. melanoxylon* follows the lines of both *E. Gunnii* and *E. viminalis*, but continues to greater altitudes. As with the three eucalyptus these three acacias are in association at the Melbourne end of the tunnel, but all diverge to their various altitudes from that point.

The distribution and form of the Apple Gum, *Eucalyptus Stuartiana*, is most interesting. Taking as the type those trees that grow near Ringwood and Croydon, with large juvenile leaves, and similar ones covered with a glaucous bloom that spring from suckers and fractures - trees that, when older, are umbrageous, whose mature leaves are leathery, somewhat lanceolar, and whose branches put out at the tips new leaves, soft, narrow, and beautifully coloured with tints of blue and purple - *Eucalyptus Stuartiana* of that type gradually disappears and is lost at Christmas Hills and at Lilydale, where the railway turns to the Yarra flats; the species is picked up again, not recognizable at a glance, on the rising ground near Healesville. Only an occasional glaucous leaf or bunch of leaves betrays it. The foliage is more of the *viminalis* type. the seed-cases fewer, the bark cleaner, the wool softer, and cutting (in the sapling stage) like cheese. A connecting link is found in the elfin forms on the Chum Creek slopes. Here dwarf, gnarled, crooked trees show the external features of bark, leaves, and fruit, and the gradual variation can be traced in from the foot of Toolangi Hill, where it may be confused with *E. dives*, to similar heights around Healesville, branching out to Myers' Creek and over to the Coranderrk and Don roads, and penetrating in wedge-shaped distribution to the foot of Mount Riddell, but never ascending to greater heights than about 600 feet. If you take a branch of one of the trees in the Healesville area and place it alongside one taken at Croydon, it is hard to believe they belong to the one species; but, by placing side by side pieces gathered over the tract described, the links are obvious and the identity undoubted. This variation all occurs within a direct line of 20 miles. The Croydon type is thickly fruited even on small bushes. On the Healesville form it is sometimes difficult to find one fruit except on old trees. The Chum Creek link is fruited and leaved midway between the two description.

The narrow-leaved Peppermint Gum, *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, is plentiful and evenly distributed within and without the area; within it varies considerably - from the broad-leaved type to the "variety *microphylla*." In the former the leaves are broad, the fruits sparsely clustered, and the bark cleaner in colour. In the latter the bark is dark, the leaves very narrow, and the fruit in thick, fan-like clusters. These two forms are shrubby, and locally known as white and black peppermint. The latter features are those of the intermediate or normal type - a compromise between the two extremes. This median form ascends to the highest ranges, and grows there as a very tall timber tree side by side with *E. regnans*, another species from which it is so distinct that one cannot conceive that the late Baron von Mueller, when he called both of them *E. amygdalina*, could ever have seen them growing in company but identified

them by herbarium specimens only. He must have got a shock when he saw what he had done, both with his black and white amygdalinas and his black and white leucoxylons. "By their fruits ye shall know them" - and sometimes be misled. The best contrasts between the tall amygdalina and regnans are to be observed near Narbethong.

*Eucalyptus obliqua* is veritably a messmate to all those mentioned, being found in association with them, and usually the dominant partner, from the lowest to the highest ground. It is found on the river banks, sometimes hanging over the water in almost willow-like form, and at the tops of the mountains as a straight-trunked, magnificent timber tree. It is most luxuriant at mid-distances on the mountain slopes, its height being practically in proportion to altitude of situation, its straightness, as would be expected, is just ratio to closeness of growth and advantage of moisture and soil. *E. macrorrhyncha*, the true stringybark, is found in the clay-stone lower hillsides in company with the mid-forms of messmate and peppermint. It is fast disappearing, as, growing in unreserved country, it has been ruthlessly cut down for its general utility, and is a shy reproducer, though it seeds plentifully. *Eucalyptus eleophora*, or *E. Cambagei*, D. and M., the local "bastard box" of the bushmen, is found usually in association with *E. Stuartiana*, and is the lowland variation of the highland *E. goniocalyx*, which is here called "blue gum," and sold for timber under that name.

The upper branches of this first story form the first break of resistance to the rainfall so necessary in the watershed of the territory reserved for the conservation of the water supply for the city of Melbourne. It is well understood that if this story were destroyed, or even reduced, the reserve, as a collecting area for water, would be proportionately less valuable. At this upper plane of vegetation the force of downpour is partially broken. The shorter trees of this story receive in many of the gaps their share, both stages steadying the fall on the denser leaf-surface of the second story.

This, in the water reserve, consists of smaller trees and shrubs of a considerable number of genera and species. Some of these genera are botanically far apart but close in association. In parts, particularly the gullies and their slopes, the roof of this story is mainly formed of large fronds of the tree-ferns *Dicksonia Billardieri* and *Alsophila australis*. It is an uneven and sloping roof, for not only do these tree-ferns vary much in height, but so also do the other components of the story - not only between the species, but amongst themselves. The advantage of this variety of growth is manifold. It is of not incalculable advantage on steep hillsides, where the trees of the lower parts, nourished by moisture, grow higher, and form a series of compact surfaces or corymbs springing from the earth, meeting side-blown rains with an almost unbroken front and a vertical downpour with a fully graduated series of steps from which the heaviest storm-waters can only drip to the lowest stratum.

The trees forming the lower division of the upper story and graduating to the second story consist mainly of *Sassafras*, *Atherospermum moschatum*, Myrtle Beech, *Fagus Cunninghamii* and the rarer Native Olive, *Notelaea linguistrina*, which are restricted to the highest gullies and sources of streams. The Blackwood, *Acacia melanoxylon*, and Silver Wattle, *A. dealbata*, are found in company with the former three, but are not similarly restricted. They descend to the lowest flats of the area and beyond it, as also does the Sweet Bursaria, *Bursaria Bedfordii*. *Hedycarya Cunninghamii*, *Pomaderris apetala*, *Senecio Bedfordii*, *Prostanthera lasiantha*, and *Coprosma Billardieri* occupy both the high position and follow the rivers to lower levels. *Coprosma hirtella* favours higher gullies and rocky hillsides.

The *Lomatias*, *L. Fraseri* and *L. longifolia*, are denizens of the highest gullies, but the former disperses laterally to the hillsides; the latter

goes downward with the streams. *L. ilicifolia* occupies drier sites on the hill side, and is more shrubby and prostrate. *Myrsine variabilis* is an occasional shrub, almost solitary as a species, but associated with other genera in its incidental occurrence from the heights down the river bank. *Banksia Collina* is endemic on low ranges towards the head of the Chum Creek and on the stony ranges near the Yarra towards Launching Place, the extreme north and south of the area. In the Chum Creek habitat it is associated with the endemic *Grevillea repens* and *Oxylobium procumbens* - plants of the ground floor. *Pittosporum bicolor* is an occasional shrub found mainly on Myers Creek, Condon's Gully, Mathinna Falls, and upper gullies and stream sources of the water reserve.

In these ranges are several kinds of acacias. On the highest tops, notably Mount St. Leonard and Mount Juliet, is the distinct *Acacia penninervis* - never found on the lower levels, and rarely on the lesser heights. As a genus *Acacia* is ubiquitous, its species varying from the highest mountain tops to the plains beyond. The principal mountain gully kinds are *A. melanoxydon*, *A. dealbata*, trees; *A. leprosa*, *A. stricta*, *A. verticillata*, *A. linearis*, and *A. oxycedrus*, shrubs; but these with many other species are found also at lower levels. One isolated patch of *A. vomeriformis* appears on the hillside at the south of the town, but this is fast disappearing, and the individual plants degenerating. *Acacia juniperina* grows in two places - along Chum Creek road and on the upper roadside just beyond the cemetery; but the allied species, *Acacia diffusa*, flourishes in several places, particularly in patches scattered on the lower clay hills, and openly distributed on the rises between the Chum and Myers Creeks before they junction. Singularly, the only proclaimed acacia, *A. armata*, is very rare, though hedges of it thrive on the Yarra flats; there is only one bush near the railway tunnel and a couple together in the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of works channel reserve, just where the aqueduct crosses the Long Gully road. The two occurrences are over two miles apart, on practically the same range, on the west side of the area, and both where earthworks have been carried out.

Of the other acacias, it is noted that *A. stricta* is found in several patches at about the same height, particularly at the railway tunnel, where it takes duty as a chasmophyte and luxuriates as a secondary rock covering. When with *Acacia leprosa* it is the dominant partner. Of *A. verniciflua* there was only one bush seen, in a paddock off the Chum Creek road, near the Board of Works tunnel. This has been destroyed by fire. A specimen *A. retinodes* was brought to me from near the Badger Creek State school, and said to be from a solitary plant, which I have not been able to find there, nor any other in the district, and presume that one has been destroyed. *A. penninervis* grows freely on Blacks' Spur, Mount Juliet, Mount St. Leonard, and from Toolangi down to the *Grevillea repens* patch, where it is stunted. *A. myrtifolia* does not approach nearer than the Lilydale-Wandin district. *A. melanoxydon*, Blackwood, flourishes all over the locality as a tall tree on the highest mountains and deep gullies, but smaller on the lower ones. A particularly fine group may be seen near the crossing of the Badger, on the Don road. *A. oxycedrus* forms a belt from the Graceburn Creek following the pipetrack to the Maroondah Weir, and is also part of the dense undergrowth skirting the Fernshaw road. *A. linearis* forms the dense scrub on the lesser hillsides and gullies, and is usually predominant. It sends forth plentiful suckers and adventitious shoots, often forming a tangle with *Erharta juncea*, *Comesperma volubile*, and the dodders. After the most severe fire it springs up green from the roots as quickly and freely as bracken. *Acacia verticillata* is a part of the general formation, mountain, hill, and gully, but rarely on the flat. *Leptospermum lanigerum* associates with *Kunzea peduncularis* on the Yarra, and continues to fringe the banks of the Watts and the mountain streams, where it is first associated with the

Tree Violet, *Hymenanthera Banksii*, and grows along with many riverside shrubs and trees, but no *Kunzea*, which, at the junction of the Watts and the Yarra, has taken the place of *Melaleuca ericifolia*, a species that does not come within the area. Dwarf forms of *L. lanigerum* are also found on the Chum road in dry ground, not fat, however, from the luxuriant front of the creek. In this place, and in company with these, are *L. myrsinoides* and a few stray bushes of *L. attenuation*, *L. scoparium* usually keeps away from the main streams and favours rising ground. The piebald paper-bark, *Melaleuca*, is represented just outside the area by *M. ericifolia*, where its distribution ends on the Yarra and its flats near Tarrawarra. Inside the area the only species is *M. squarrosa*, in patches, of which the principal is at the back of Gracedale House, in the gully through which the Badger aqueduct pipe is laid by syphon under the Fernshaw road, and by the pipe-track it may be easily reached. In close association with it is *Acacia verticillata*, *Baueri rubioides*, and occasional clumps of the tall Coral Fern, *Gleichenia circinata*.

It is interesting to review and follow the association and diversions of the various tea-trees (including paper-barks). Following that somewhat artificial course, the railway line, the Woolly Tea-tree, *L. lanigerum*, persists, sometimes as a dominant and at others as a subordinate, all the way. Allowing for clearing, it is now patchy up to Mooroolbark, where *M. ericifolia* predominates. This relationship continues across the Yarra flats right to the junction of the Yarra with the Watts, and there, on the course of the former, *Kunzea peduncularis* takes the place of the *Melaleuca*, which drops out. *Kunzea* does not, however, go up the Watts at all, and *L. lanigerum* has no tea-tree associate, except in occasional patches of marsh, where *M. squarrosa* is met with. Along the flank of this line of march on the higher ground, and descending to the banks of streams at intervals. *L. scoparium* is constant. These plants, and those midway between the second story and the ground floor, lead us to consider plants more or less isolated.

#### ISOLATED PLANTS.

Although *Prostanthera melissifolia* is found in abundance at the head of Myers Creek and on the slopes of Mount St. Leonard, only one solitary specimen grows on quite low-lying ground a short distance from the junction of the Chum and Yarra Glen roads. Near this spot, too, is one plant of *Viminaria denudata*, which otherwise approaches no nearer than Coldstream. *Casuarina suberosa*, Sheoke, grows close to the tunnel, mostly on the Melbourne side, and there is open association with *Banksia marginata*. It is only found within the Healesville area on a small clay hill near the foot of Mount Riddell, where there is no *Banksia*. The principal habitat of *Hibbertia fasciculata* is the neighbourhood of Chum road, where it associates with *Eriostemon corraefolius*, which also grows along the Fernshaw road. *E. myoporoides* favours the heights near Mount Donna Buang. *Comesperma ericinum* is a sparsely scattered plant found at long distances apart, and usually on the dry, lesser hills, as also the green variety of *Correa speciosa*; the red is rarely found here. *C. Lawrenciana*, a large shrub of the second story, frequents streams of the upper mountain gullies, but is most plentiful on the Graceburn, near the weir. The only plant of *Kennedya rubicunda* found in the district was a young one growing in a ploughed paddock near the town. It was removed to the owner's house, and has grown to a great size over a trellis. *Pultenaea Gunnii* is very generally distributed, but more freely at the mid-elevations, favouring the poorer hillsides. *P. scabra* is mainly confined to the western slope of the Myers Creek gully (facing east). *P. Muelleri* favours south-east slopes, and is there usually dominant. *Daviesia latifolia* grows at the tunnel cutting, and stray plants are found along the west edge of the bank, but it scarcely encroaches upon the area proper. *D. corymbosa* is found side by side with *D. latifolia*, but individual plants are scattered sparsely through the area. Both are

secondary chasmophytes. *Gompholobium pedunculare* is found on the east slopes of the north-west boundary. Facing west, on the eastern bank of the Myers, is the only place that I have found *Hovea longifolia*. *H. heterophylla* is fairly common on some of the lowest hills.

In the *Platylobium* association outside the area, on and near the railway enclosure through Ringwood, the dominant species is *P. oblongum*, and within it *P. formosum*. This last named species, like the former, is a prostrate form. It is plentiful on the sides of the road as far as Fernshaw, and on a slope from that road to the Watts Weir, where the growth is slightly more upright on a north-east aspect. After Blacks' Spur is crossed, and beyond the Hermitage to Narbethong there is an extensive association of *P. formosum* in partially shrubby form growing on a north-east aspect. The plants grow to over three feet in height, with perhaps an average of extends quite a mile or more with little interruption, in copious bloom in November, 1911. It extends inwards from the road some distance, for I walked through it a mile or so from the road in a semicircular route from Narbethong to the Hermitage a few years before, about the same month. *Bossiaea cordigera* is principally found on both sides of the pipe track leasing from Echo Tunnel to Watts Weir, and on the road below and in a patch on the Mount Riddell road between the Don road and the Badger aqueduct. It flowers between October and December, and seeds are found ripe on it in the end of the latter month and in January. Many of the pods are covered by a pretty, cup-shaped yellow fungus, which prevents the formation of the seed, and identified by Mr. C. C. Brittlebank as *Accidium eburnum*. *M. Alp. Dillwynia floribunda* is plentiful in the Chum Creek and *Grevillea repens* formation, whilst *D. cinerascens* and *D. ericifolia* are plentifully distributed on the lower hillsides. *Indigofera australis*, in its normal colour, is scattered throughout the district. Here and there is seen a white variety, but very rarely. On the west bank of the Myers Creek road, between McDonalds and the falls, it is very plentiful, and, plentiful, and, growing close together, are the white, pink and dark blue varieties, the last predominating. Intermediate shades are to be seen there, forming complete colouration links from the purest white to deep indigo. In view of the fact that colour, which was as one time thought to play an unimportant part in the character of flowers from a botanical standpoint, has now attained greater significance as indicating distinct constitutional changes, it may be well to mention that white varieties are also seen here of blue or pink flowers, such as *Wahlenbergia gracilis*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Glossodia major*, *Erythraea australis*, *Viola hederacea* (the white is not quite pure), *Tetratheca ciliata*, *Kennedyia* (*Hardenbergia*) *monophylla* (with an intermediate pinkish colour), several of the *Brachycomes* (but not to pure white), *Isotoma fluviatilis*, and a strong tendency to white is noticeable in some of the *Lobelias*.

*Cryptandra Hookeri*, the only one of the genus here, is in company with *Pomaderris apetala*, a denizen of the highest gullies and streams, and is very plentiful, and in that sense scarcely an isolated plant. *Astrotricha ledifolia* is found on the sides of the Fernshaw road and stony hillsides above the town in similar situation to the Yellow Waxflower, *Eriostemon corraefolius*. *Panax*, in the upper and some of the lower gullies, grows in its two forms, *P. sambucifolius* and *P. dendroides*, and on the Toolangi side of Mount St. Leonard are a few specimens of *P. Murrayi*. Most of the plants representing the *Umbelliferae*, as *Hydrocotyle* and *Xanthosia dissecta*, belong to the carpet vegetation. *H. geraniifolia* frequents the banks of small watercourses in the upper ranges; *H. hirta* and *H. laxiflora* the banks of lower streams. *Exocarpus cupressiformis* is a member of the association on lower hills of eucalyptus and the scrubby acacias, *A. linearis* and *A. stricta*, and is probably semi-parasitic on their roots. The beautiful flowering *Lythrum salicaria* grows in or near the water of swamps, generally amongst reeds, *L. hyssopifolia* on the

moist grass flats; but as these plants are also well known in European floras there is more than a suspicion that they have been introduced.

The Chum Creek flora is different in many respects from the rest of the area. The banks bear different plants from those on streams running east to west. Of these, the most noteworthy are *Pomaderris prunifolia* and *P. vacciniifolia*, whilst it has also *P. apetala*, which is common to all the streams. *P. subrepanda* occurs on the Yarra near the confluence of that river with the Watts. Several of the orchids found along this road are rare or unknown in other parts, particularly the longleaved Duck Orchid, *Cryptostylis longifolia*.

The arboretum is elfin, and the carpet is in places lycopodinous. It is worthy of separate investigation and description. At the time of writing large fires are destroying the flora, and there is every reason to suppose that in the near future it will be almost entirely destroyed. Some plants have already been burnt and dug out altogether, the most to be regretted being *Clematis aristata*, var. *Denisia*, of the adjacent Long Gully.

Lianes.- Climbing on the trunks and massing on the lower limbs of the higher trees, and sometimes covering those of the lesser ones, the mountain streams produce *Tecoma australis*, beautiful both in foliage and flower. Of more extended range, and more delicate of habit, is *Clematis aristata*, to a less extent a moisture lover, whilst frequently on river banks and moist places, from the lowest flats to the highest gullies. *Lyonsia staminea* is seen, the older plants having, for a height of 20 feet or more, scarcely a leaf, whilst the foliage forms a nestlike top amongst the boughs of its supporting tree. The flowers of the *Lyonsia* are somewhat insignificant, the remarkable feature of the plant being the long pod-like fruits which when ripe, open and expose their white pappus-covered seeds. The tangle further consists of several *Cassythas* and the grass *Ehrharta juncea*, *Hardenbergia monophylla*, *Glycine clandestina*, and the Love Creeper, *Comesperma volubile*.

Another form of association is that which might be termed after-fire societies. These are composed of thickets which spring up after bush-fires, and are composed of quite different units, which undoubtedly obtain their position from opportunity. It is difficult at first to reconcile the facts that the same actuating cause results in one place in a thick growth of *Cassinia*, which springs from light and flimsy seed such as fire would easily destroy, and in another a thicket of acacia, whose seeds may have long lain in the ground awaiting fierce heat to scarify their tough integuments. In both cases fire is a distributing and collecting agent; but in the case of *Cassinia* it is a destructive agent also. The interesting feature is that whereas the action of the fire destroys seed and roots of many grasses, and by the annihilation of humus prevents their repatriation for a long period, yet the same burnt soil is sanctuary for *Cassinia*, *Acacia*, *Eucalyptus*, and the harder-seeded leguminous and myrtaceous plants, as also for the extremes - mosses, ferns, fungi, and *Marchantia* - particularly the latter. Fire thus accounts for the total or partial elimination of some species and the predominance of others. It has also another mode of causing a change in the relative proposition of trees by its effect on mature forms,

1915

#### Blacks Spur Deviation

Now that there is such an amount of unemployment in the country, and the cry of Government is for works to be undertaken to alleviate the trouble, opportunity has been taken by the Shire council to bring under the Public Works Department's notice the great desirability of providing a better road over the Blacks' Spur. Mention was made in these columns



some time ago of the many advantages the proposed deviation up Morley's track would have, and the few residents who have been actively working in the matter have been sticking persistently to their agitation, with the result that success now seems in sight.

Cr Sheehan moved (at Monday's meeting) that council approach the Minister of Public Works and ask that he should use his influence to have the road over the Blacks' Spur regraded. The speaker said it was a really important question which should be pushed forward as much as possible. The matter had been taken in hand by some ratepayers, and he thought it was now time the Shire council should give an expression of opinion on the subject. The Country Roads Board, in laying off the main road to Alexandra, had left out the portion over the Spur within the Metropolitan Board's area. 3,000 pounds had already been spent for work on the other side of the Spur, and it seemed ridiculous to aim at a grade of 1 in 20 on each side of the Blacks' Spur when there was a patch there 1 in 6. A move must be made by someone to reduce the grade and get a better road. If the Government were anxious to provide work for the unemployed the chance presented itself now.

Cr Constantine seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

1915

### Keppel's Falls

With the war still raging and the prices of commodities soaring, most people are curtailing expenses on sight seeing. There is a chance, therefore, of Victorians seeking out in much stronger numbers than in the past the unrivalled beauty spots of their own State. Hitherto there has been a disposition to travel afar to view places with only half the attractions to be found in the comparatively easy distance of Melbourne. In this connection I know of no more beautiful spot than Keppel's Falls, in the Marysville district. Discovered some years ago, it was a considerable time before a track to them was opened, and they remained unvisited excepting by a few. There is now a good motor road to a spot within a mile and a half of them. No Victorian with an eye to the beautiful in nature should miss seeing these lovely falls. Marysville itself nestling in a basin in the heart of the Dividing Range, is as prettily situated a hamlet as one would wish to see. It's quiet, peaceful beauty has appealed to visitors from all parts of the world, and is a most delightful place from which to set out for the falls. The five miles motor road from Marysville is through typical Australian bush. As it leaves the Wood's Point road it is known as the "Talbot Drive." Farther on it goes through "Murray Pass." Every yard of the drive is interesting. It runs through the valley of the Taggerty, a clear, swift-flowing stream, icy cold, fed by mountain springs. Its soothing murmur as it rushes over its rocky bed is present during the whole journey through the valley. The defile is narrow, and on the opposite side of the river to the track, rises a precipitous hill, covered with mountain ash, messmate and peppermint, interspersed with tree ferns. The mountain ashes, with their white straight boles bare of limb for 40 ft. or 50 ft., are the more numerous, and they stand like so many sentinels keeping guard over the beauties lower down. Blackwoods and wattles are occasionally seen. The undergrowth is principally Christmas bush (which a flowering season must lend additional attraction), dogwood, wild raspberry, and bracken. Some large trees are still standing but many forest giants have long since measured their length on the ground. They have been torn up by the roots by some storm of the past. It is granite country, and the rich red oversoil is so shallow that the roots, instead of going down spread near the surface. The wearing of the

track discloses a network of them. With a frail hold, a tree grown to gigantic proportions offers but a feeble resistance to the might of a storm. Many of these monarchs had to be sawn through in order to make the track. When the motor road is left what is known as the Forest of Arden is entered. It is mostly beech, or as many people prefer to say, myrtle. Some of the finest specimens in the State of this grand tree are here to be found. Their dark green leaves afford a pleasing contrast to the lighter green of the peppermint and ash. Two or three hundred yards before the falls are reached is the spot known as "The Meeting of the Waters." The stream divides there for some distance, and two tributaries come in. A little island is formed, on which has been erected a most picturesque pavilion octagonal in shape. Rustic tables and seats are provided for the convenience of picnickers and on the "mainland" (which is joined to the island by a pretty bridge) is a fireplace, where the billy may be boiled. Some people may prefer the quiet beauties of this spot to the falls themselves. It is certainly a charming resting place. The "Meeting of the Waters" and the falls combined provide twin attractions hard to excel. The falls rush over gigantic granite boulders worn smooth by the action of the stream. The body of the water may not at this time of the year be large. There is a series of cascades, which as they sparkle in the midsummer sun form a scene of entrancing beauty. Seen from a rustic bridge about 50 yards below, they make a lovely picture, to which the beech trees form a unique framing. No more delightful spot to rest the eye could be imagined. If for its beauty alone the spot be not visited, anglers will find a further attraction in the excellent fishing the river affords. It is well stocked with rainbow (which grow the faster) and English spotted trout. Two rods on the day I visited the falls accounted for 22 beautiful fish, ranging from a pound to two pounds in weight, caught on grasshopper. The lovely reaches in which they were hooked were at breakfast next morning pleasantly brought back to mind.

1915

#### Water Supply Provision for the Metro Polis

#### New Scheme Proposed

The position of the metropolitan water supply is causing anxiety to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and already steps are being made to increase the provisions. It was estimated that when the O'Shanassy scheme was in operation the requirements of Melbourne would be met for some years, but owing to the abnormally dry conditions which have prevailed, the O'Shanassy supply has fallen far below expectations. From gaugings over a period of 20 years officials of the board estimated that 20 million gallons daily would represent the minimum supply from the source. The scheme is not actually completed, but recently the belief was expressed that the estimate was much below what the result would be. In the absence of rain, however, recent results have been very disappointing, and now it is admitted that the maximum quantity available is only 12.5 million gallons daily, and that with a continuance of dry weather the position will gradually become worse. Serious consideration has been given to the question of late by the water supply committee, and it is now stated that the construction of a storage at Maroondah must be undertaken at some future date. Inquiries are now in progress with the object of providing auxiliary dams in the Healesville district for storage purposes.

The question of utilising the waters of the River Yarra will be discussed at the meeting of the board on Tuesday, when the water supply

committee will recommend that application be made to the Governor in Council to vest in the board, for water supply purposes, a forest area of about 96,000 acres, comprising the northern watershed of the River Yarra, including its tributaries, eastward of the junction of Doctor's Creek and the River Yarra. This area is portion of an area of 115,000 acres, which was reserved for water supply purposes, and is included in the Upper Yarra scheme. The area stretches from about nine miles beyond Warburton to the ranges where the Yarra takes its source. The Yarra waters will be taken through the O'Shanassy system. A tunnel will be made through the hill, and a syphon through the O'Shanassy river valley leading to the O'Shanassy aqueduct at a point about one mile below the weir.

1916

An October Week at Marysville.

By F. Pitcher and J. Strickland.

(Read before the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, 8th March, 1916.)

Having decided to spend a week's holiday in the Marysville district we left Melbourne, accompanied by Mrs. Pitcher, by the morning train for Healesville, on 13th October last. It was a beautiful morning. The orchards around Croydon, as we passed through, were most picturesque, being then in full bloom, promising what they have since yielded - heavy crops of fruit. In addition to the ordinary spring flowers, which were in profusion along the railway line, the creamy white bottle-brush spikes of bloom covering the tops of the Swamp Melaleuca, *M. cricifolia*, near Mooroolbark and along the Yarra valley at Yarra Glen, as well as towards Tarrawarra, covering miles in extent, was a glorious sight from the train as we passed along.

Reaching Healesville soon after 10 o'clock, we sought the motor coach by which the journey to Marysville is completed. With six passengers, and a varied assortment of luggage and packages for delivery along the road, we left the township just before 11 a.m., and, travelling at fair speed, passed through favourite old Fernshaw, which we all knew under different conditions over thirty years before. Our motor had no difficulty in ascending the well-made road over the Blacks' Spur, with the Devil's Elbow and numerous sharp curves and turns, up to the remains of the once famous monster eucalypt of the forest here, "Uncle Sam." We stopped at this notable spot for some minutes, in order to give the motor water and allow the engine to cool, and, at the same time, enable the passengers to stretch themselves and view the surroundings. Then we continued our journey, thoroughly enjoying the beautiful fern and bush scenery close at hand and the magnificent views of apparently interminable forest-clad hills and lofty mountain ranges in the distance to the north, east, and south. The level summit of the Blacks' Spur is at length reached, the altitude being nearly 2,000 feet, then down the other side, past the well-known house and grounds of "The Hermitage," into the village or hamlet of Narbethong, which is reached by half-past 12 p.m. While remaining there for an hour for lunch we visited the post-office and conversed with the postmistress, a Mrs. Williams, 88 years of age, who performs all the duties of the office, together with those of electoral registrar for the district, in a manner which our chauffeur described as being unexcelled in any similar place on the road. Soon after leaving Narbethong we made a detour along the by-road leading to the well-known tourist resort of "St. Fillan's," which was formerly the country residence of the late Hon. James Munro. Returning to the main road, we journeyed for six miles over hilly and picturesquely beautiful country, for the last two or three miles along roads edged with abundance of

flowers, the most prominent being the rich Golden Goodia, *G. lotifolia*, bright purple Indigo, *Indigofera australis*, pink and white forms of "Pink Eyes," *Tettatheca ciliata*, golden-brown Bitter-Peas and Bush-Peas, *Daviesias* and *Platylobiums*, yellows of the *Acacias* *A. stricta*, *A. longifolia*, var. *mucronata*, and *A. verticillata*, and the pink and white forms of Native Heath, *Epacris impressa*; then, descending, reach Marysville by half-past two p.m. The village is located in a valley almost entirely surrounded by mountain ranges, and specially nestled on the Steavenson River, as the foot of Mounts Grant and Bismarck. It is authoritatively stated by Mr. J. G. Saxton, of the Lands Department that Healesville, which is about 40 miles from Melbourne, was so named in honour of the Hon. Richard Heales, Chief Secretary of Victoria, 1859, and Marysville, which is 22 miles from Healesville, after Mary the daughter of Mr. Heales.

We were not very long in finding what proved to be comfortable lodgings at "The Chestnuts," so named after two fine specimens of these English trees immediately in front of the house. They form part of a row of those trees which are planted along the main roadside. After a late luncheon we viewed the surrounding scenery with much delight, crossing the bridge over the Steavenson River, where it was flowing through the village in a bright, sparkling stream about 15 feet wide, and were soon at work searching for naturalists' treasures along the Alexandra road as far as the bridge over the Taggerty River, about two miles from Marysville. The most noteworthy of plants, in beautiful full bloom, was *Acacia pravissima*, which abounded on either side of the road. The prevailing eucalypt in this locality was the Narrow-leaved Peppermint, *E. amygdalina*; it was being cut for palings for fences by splitters whom we saw at work there.

On the morning of the following day we decided to visit the famous Steavenson Falls. A tourists' and vehicular track on a very level grade has been formed from the village to the site of the falls, a distance of nearly three miles, and they can be comfortably reached with easy walking in an hour and a half. The beautiful "Pink Eyes," with both prostrate and erect stems, clothed with its light pink blooms in their very best condition, and ranging in length from six inches to three feet in length, abounded all along the route. These lands, in bloom, lent a bright colouring to most of the various roads and tracks subsequently traversed by us. Large patches of *Acacia leprosa*, var. *clongata*, were met with in full bloom, and also the Pointed *Acacia*, *A. longifolia*, var. *mucronata*, the Silver Wattle, *Acacia dealbata*, Black Wattle, *A. decurrens*, and the Blackwood, *A. melanoxylon*, were found with an occasional spray of bloom still on them. In many cases the stems of the native shrubs were clothed with the pretty blue Love-Creeper, *Comesperma volubile*. All along this valley walk the Steavenson River is not very distant from us. The spaces between the track and the river are covered with bracken, and in places large patches of the Common Lomaria, *L. discolor*, with the Shield and Bristle Ferns, *Aspidium aculeatum* and *Blechnum cartilagineum*; while here and there were groups of the soft-stemmed Tree-Fern, *Dicksonia antarctica*, and, standing sentinel-like at spots all along the valley, the very stately Spiny-stemmed Tree-Fern, *Alsophila australis*, held aloft its beautiful crown of fronds amongst the eucalyptus. Many of the other flowering plants noticed on our journey to Marysville were in evidence here also, while the bright red-coloured foliage of the very young sapling eucalyptus helped to make the forest appear quite brilliant. Numerous mountain shrubs and plants similar to those met with in the Dandenong Ranges were noted here, such as the Native Musk, *Aster argophylla*, Woolly Tea-tree, *Leptospermum lanigerum*, Manuka, *L. scoparium*, Blanket-tree, *Senecio Bedfordii*, Hazel, *Pomaderris apetala*, Christmas-Bush, *Prostanthera lasiantha*, Native Mulberry, *Hedycarya angustifolia*, Common Cotton-wood, *Cassinia aculeata*, Elderberry Ash,

*Panax sambucifolius*, and the Black Sedge, *Galinia radula*, White Elder, *Sambucus Gaudichaudiana*, Tough *Pimelea*, *P. axiflora*, and the Sedge Grass, *Carex vulgaris*, var. *Gaudichaudianum*. At one spot an exceptionally extensive area of large and robust plants of the Native Hop, *Daviesia latifolia*, was rendered very distinctive by its silvery-grey foliage.

The Falls are in view for a few hundred yards before we reach the end of the track, and the roaring, foaming mass of water tumbling over the topmost cascade at the height of about 300 feet, is a fine sight. The Falls consist of a series of five cascades. The various widths of the stream as it breaks itself up is from three to twelve feet. The last fall has a drop of about 70 feet to the river-bed at the bottom. We have to stand and admire its beauty for some time, and so much enjoyed was the sight that, within the week, we visited the spot on three different occasions. Scrambling up on the hill at the side of the Falls we find the stiff-foliaged Alpine *Westringia*, *W. senifolia*, Spreading Heath Myrtle, *Baeckea diffusa*, Bush-Pea, *Pullenaea daphnoides*, Mountain *Grevillea*, *G. alpina*, Pale-fruited Balart, *Exocarpus stricta*, Small Grass-tree, *Xanthorrhoea minor*, Box-leaved Native Hop, *Daviesia ulicina*, var. *ruscifolia*, the Small-leaved *Podocarpus*, *P. elachophylla*, the Purple Coral Pea, *Hardenbergia monophylla*, Snowy Bush-Heath, *Lencopogon virgalus*, Shrubby Everlasting, *Helichrysum ferrugineum*, and Billy Buttons, *Craspedia Richea*. After a stay of half an hour we returned to the village at mid-day. In the afternoon we decided to visit Mount Bismarck (2,500 feet), about four miles from the township, in order to view the district and more distant country from what is known as "Keppell's Lookout." The track thither is due south, past the State-school ground, and through another eucalyptus forest, principally consisting of Yellow Box, *E. melliodora*, Messmate, *E. obliqua*, and Narrow-leaved Peppermint, *E. amygdalina*. It is skirted for a good distance by a creek, with here and there broad areas of tree-fern groves and gullies. A particularly dense mass of the tree-ferns (*Alsophila* and *Dicksonia*), of varying heights, together with fine specimens of the large-boled King Fern, *Todea*, and numerous smaller ferns, with tracks leading to the creek and groves, is well named "The Beauty Spot." It is apparently a favourite resort for visitors to the district, being only about a mile out from the village. A race also runs alongside the track for a distance, which conducts water to some of the homes in the township. This race provides a suitable nursery for many of the smaller ferns, such as those of the genera *Gleichenia* *Lomaria*, and *Aspidium*, to luxuriate. It is a place where, later, we easily secured some good specimens for our ferneries. By a circuitous track - which at places is not too well designed, although it forms portion of the main track between Marysville and Warburton - we gradually ascend and get well on to the summit of Mount Bismarck through forest land and open country. We soon after reach a cross path, which, although not so indicated, we judge to be a side track leading to our objective. Following along this narrow path on the side of the mountain, we come to a clear spot where there is a fairly broad outcrop of granite, and which we find to be "Keppell's Look-out." A remarkably grand view is to be had from here of range after range, and peak beyond peak. The Cathedral Range, with its striking pinnacles, and Mount Margaret, are immediately in front of us, while Mount Grant (3,300 feet), Mount Arnold (4,300 feet), and Lake Mountain (4,800 feet), may be seen to the north-east. The valleys of the Steavenson and the Acheron Rivers are traceable out in the direction of Alexandra. Around this Look-out two *Acacias* (*A. pravissima* and *A. leprosa*, var. *elongata*) were in luxuriant flowering condition, and specimens were gathered for our herbaria. After staying some time on the site, we looked around the top of the mountain, but did not find any plants not previously met with. On our journey back, however, we found some nice young plants of the white-flowering form of

*Tetratheca ciliata*. Flower specimens were taken, and some plants noted for subsequent transfer to Melbourne.

On Friday we decided to visit the notable Keppel Falls, but, after journeying along the route for about five miles, heavy rain set in, and we were forced to seek shelter for a long time under the beech myrtles, and afterwards to get back to our lodgings as best we could. We reached Marysville about 5 p.m., soaked through by the rain, but fully determined to venture on the trip another day.

Although heavy rains had continued to fall the previous night, Saturday morning broke fine. We decided to take a walk along the Wood's Point road via Robley's Spur, leading up Mount Grant. About 3.5 miles out we came to a spot indicated as "Nichol's Look-out." From here long-distance views of ranges on the north and north-east are to be had. Some of the highest ridges were fairly well covered with snow, which, when the sun at intervals, shone upon them, made very picturesque scenes. The various cuttings on the roadsides were well covered with nice young plants of the Spiny-stemmed Tree-Fern, *Alsophila australis*, with stems six to twelve inches long; these, being well fronded, considerably added to the picturequeness of the road. The Hicory Acacia, *A. penninervis*, Mountain Pepper, *Drimys aromatica*, Kangaroo Apple, *Solanum aviculare*, Prickly Coprosma, *Coprosma hirtella*, with a number of the plants previously met with, were noted in full bloom along the roadside. In the afternoon we searched the country back along the Narbethong road for two or three miles, but found nothing of particularly distinctive interest. The Blue Pincushion, *Brunonia australis*, and other small flowering plants were noticed growing freely in the local cemetery grounds, and remarkably abundant growths of young seedlings of some of the English heaths planted on some of the graves were observed in this area. A beautiful spot within a quarter of an hour's walk of Marysville is known as "Michael Dene." It is close to the entrance to the Talbot Drive, opposite to the "Kerami" boarding establishment. It is a natural tree-fern grove and gully, well shaded by the forest eucalypts and for about a mile in length leading from the Wood's Point road to the Taggerty River. Foot-tracks are made through the grove, and occasional rough seats provided. This spot is probably well patronized by visitors in the summer season. The weather on Sunday was showery throughout, but in the afternoon we were able to walk for the second time to the Steavenson Falls, and again admire them, although the rain was falling when there, and the forest vegetation around the Falls and along the track was saturated with it.

Although heavy showers fell again early on Monday morning, we decided to visit a spot known as "Bald Hill," when the tourist' plan stated, a very fine view could be obtained. This spot we found was most easily reached with certainty by following the Narbethong road back a distance of 2.5 miles. This we did, and noticed beautiful displays of flowering plants previously mentioned at different spots by the wayside, which reminded us of the Grampian natural flower gardens. A notice board indicated where we should turn in and reach Bald Hill at a further distance of about 2.5 miles. The track thither was marked by blazed trees. Nothing uncommon in flowering plants was noticed, excepting the very large flowering forms of the beautiful purple Native Violet, *V. belonicifolia*, which was scattered about over the ranges here. When Bald Hill was reached, and we sauntered along to the extreme end of the ridge, there appeared quite a magnificent garden or carpet of what looked like Marguerites. These proved to be plants of the Tall Native Daisy, *Brachycome diversifolia*. They were about six to twelve inches in height, with white and yellow flowers 1.5 inches across, and at the time of day, about 2 p.m., they were fully out, making a glorious show of bloom. They covered quite an acre of ground. These plants were interspersed, here and there, with dwarfed specimens of the Snowy Bush-Heath, *Leucopogon virgalus*, and young, rich red-coloured foliage springing from the bases

of the various sapling gums that had previously been cut down. From the Bald Hill we obtained one of the finest views of the mountain scenery we had yet enjoyed. The Cathedral Range was seen from a different aspect to that from Keppel's Look-out, and all the various peaks included in it showed out in bold grandeur. The valley of the Acheron River and the adjacent mountain ranges could be traced right around from the Marysville road, on the south to the west and north, the view extending to the Strathbogie Ranges. This constituted a wonderfully beautiful panorama worth traveling a long journey to see. After admiring the scene for some time, we returned through the forest, mainly composed of Messmate and Narrow-leaved Peppermint, and collected good specimens of the Purple Coral Pea, "Billy Buttons," Pink Fingers Orchid, *Caladenia carnea*, Spider Orchid, *C. Patersoni*, Hop Goodenia, *Goodenia ovata*, Australian Indigo, and others en route. On returning to Marysville, about 1.5 miles out, and near Wilkes Creek, we pass through another of the numerous wild-flower gardens, made up of masses of the different plants previously mentioned, all in combination and in full bloom. The colour effect was ever so much increased by the rich brilliant red tips of the young eucalyptus foliage springing up among the flowering plants. Fine sprays of bloom and foliage were brought for the decoration of our lodgings each evening.

A bright, clear, frosty morning greeted us on Tuesday, the 20th, and after having procured a few young plants, before breakfast, for taking back to our Melbourne gardens, we did ample justice to our morning meal and then started on our journey for the second time to Keppel Falls. At a spot about half a mile along the Wood's Point road, after crossing the bridge over the Steavenson River at the north end of Marysville, tourists and others cannot fail to observe a well-painted notice board, indicating that it is the commencement of what is known as the "Talbot Drive," which eventually leads to the celebrated Keppel Falls, which are distant about 7.5 miles. The "Drive" is so named in honour of a former State Governor, Sir Reginald Talbot. For a mile in length and about 60 feet in width it has been entirely cleared of all timber and scrub. The track then becomes an ordinary but well cleared and fairly level vehicular one, through one of the finest of our Victorian forests. After continuing for half a mile along this track, the Taggerty River (which has been heard in the distance, with its murmurings and gurglings, as it travels over its rocky bed) is reached. A flock of Gang-Gang Cockatoos is seen, and their distinct screechings heard; a wallaby is observed, too, jumping into obscurity among the scrub, and the Harmonious Thrush, with its beautiful song, made the tourists realize they were in one of Nature's vast wild gardens. Where the track first comes alongside, the river is about 12 yards in width - a beautiful clear, white-foamed stream, ever flowing over its rock and boulder-strewn course. It continues in close proximity to the track, always in view, and so makes additionally charming the whole of the remaining six miles of journey. Two stately white Mountain Ash trees, *Eucalyptus regnans*, one on either side of us are passed as we enter upon the portion of the track known as "The Valley Beautiful" - a title which but very inadequately describes the place. On either side of the track through the valley are large, healthy specimens of the following plants in full bloom :- The large-flowering form of the Woolly Tea-tree, *Leptospermum lanigerum*, var. *grandiflorum*, Holly-leaved and Long-leaved Lomatias, *L. ilicifolia*, and *L. longifolia*, Native Musk, the several Snow-Bushes, *Olcara stellulata*, var. *lirata*, and other *Olearias*, *O. myrsinoides* and var. *erubescens*, the Christmas-Bush, Native Hazel, *P. apelata*, the Prickly Coprosma, *Coprosma Billardieri*, Native Mulberry, Sand-fly Bush, *Zieria Smithii*, "Banyalla," *Pittosporum bicolor*, Blanket-tree, Golden Goodia, Elderberry Ash, and others. These shrubs or small trees were never seen by us previously in such luxuriance of growth as here. The "Banyallas" were over 20 feet in height, and some of them were covered from the bottom to the top with their rich yellow coloured

blooms. All the way along the valley we passed through avenues of the tall Mountain Ash eucalypt, and occasionally observed fine lofty trees of the River White Gum, *Eucalyptus radiata*. Stately specimens of the spiny-stemmed Hill Tree-Fern, of varying heights up to 30 feet, were disposed about in picturesque positions. Some of their new fronds measured over nine feet in length. The smaller ferns were seen in great luxuriance along our path. The Prickly Shield-Fern, *Aspidium aculeatum*, had fronds over four feet in length, while the fronds of *Lomaria capensis* were both of a large and extremely bright bronze red colour throughout. The Common *Lomaria*, *L. discolor*, had fronds 5 feet 6 inches high. The new fronds of the Batswing Fern, *Pteris incisa*, were seen here, too, of greater length than hitherto observed. Fine specimens of the Silver Wattle, *Acacia dealbata*, Native Sassafras, *Atherosperma moschata*, and Blackwood *Acacia melanoxylon*, abound near the water's edge and along our path.

After two miles of this "Valley Beautiful" track are passed, we cross a tributary stream of the Taggerty River, known as "Tommy's Bend Creek," and then reach a spot marked "Beech Grove." All along the track we notice the Myrtle Beech trees, *Fagus Cunninghami*, but at this spot they are very abundant, and provide a distinctive contrast to the foliage of the eucalypts with which they are surrounded. Near here is a resting-place provided for parties with motors or other vehicles. Journeying on, we find ourselves in what is called "Murray Pass," so named, we presume, after a former Chief Secretary of this State, whose decease took place only last week. At a bend in the road now we obtain some fine views of the mountain forest and valleys on the opposite side of the river. The Cathedral Range appears to terminate there with the eastern slopes of Mount Margaret. These slopes are tree-fern-clad from top to their bases at the rivers edge. It was here that we met with a fine patch of the beautiful Long-leaved Waxflower, *Eriostemon myoporoides*. The plants were unusually large, being over six feet in height, and were just in their perfection of pink and white blooms. Some pieces were taken for propagation purposes. At five miles from the entrance to the "Drive" we came to what is called "The Forest of Arden." Here is the termination of the vehicular track, and a good resting and picnicking ground. We reached this place the previous Friday, but were forced to return, considerably drenched by the rain. At this spot and onward are to be seen magnificent specimens of our Myrtle Beeches. They are the principal feature of the forest hereabout and worth the journey to see. They had been noted increasing in size for some time as we passed along. Some of them were 100 feet high, with trunks 18 to 20 feet in girth, and had extraordinary knobs or excrescences on them, which gave them the appearance of rustic gnarled specimens. Profuse growths of *Sphagnum* Moss are on the bases of their trunks, which also support immense clusters of several species of *Polypodium* and other ferns, which are at times found to be epiphytal. Particularly pretty water scenes abound at intervals along the path here, as the water forms little cascades and flows out from the overhanging Beech trees, especially when lit with shafts of sunlight. Up to this spot the track has been about 8 to 10 feet in width. Beyond it is only a footway, but a beautiful one, well defined, and through a continuous avenue of Beeches, some each of which we collect on the return journey to bring to Melbourne. It is while traversing this path at a distance of about half a mile from the entrance to the "Forest of Arden," and near to where the "Glover Walk" (another tourists' track from Mount Arnold) joins our track, that we observe the "Phantom Falls" on the opposite side of the river. These falls are seen plunging down the extreme end of Mount Margaret from a height of about 400 to 500 feet. The waters fall in several series of cascades before flowing into the river. Viewed from our position, the stream appears to be about ten feet in width, and forms a beautiful sight in the sunlight. A slight error regarding the position of these falls is made in the tourists' plan, as they are thereon indicated



as being opposite to "Murray Pass," whereas the board drawing attention to these falls themselves, are not visible until one has passed through the "Forest of Arden" for half a mile. Although Coachwhip and Lyre birds gave evidence of their presence along our route, it was only here that one of our party observed one of the latter birds.

Soon after mid-day we reached the Keppel Falls, and the spot known as "The Meeting of the Waters." This proved to be one of the grandest and most charming places we had ever seen. The waters of Keppel Falls, which originally proceed from Lake Mountain at the height of 4,800 feet, as they reach their base, and from the Taggerty River, are broken up by immense granite boulders into the three or four distinct streams. These, with the Snowy Creek, which comes in from the east from the mountain peak known as Snowy Hill (height 4,700 feet), and another creek flowing in from the north, constitute "The Meeting of the Waters." A substantially built pavilion has been erected on an island, around which the various creek and falls waters flow. The building is supported by the trunks of Blackwood and Beech trees, the crowns of which had been cut off and a shingled roof fitted on to their tops. Tracks leading up at the side of the Keppel Falls have been made, and footbridges at about 50 and 100 feet up are stretched across the waters, to give visitors further views of the beauties of the place. At the time of our visit the track had not been cleared up for the season's traffic, and one of the bridges had been broken down by a recent storm. As high as we could reach in comfort, the falls were fairly continuous. A particularly noticeable feature was the extraordinary growth of bright green moss, which covered the large boulders in the midst of the surging waters. We enjoyed luncheon in the pavilion, and spent some three hours amid these wonderfully grand surroundings. We would have liked to have gone on for another 1.5 miles and ascended Lake Mountain, but, as the track was much overgrown and the ascent stated to be very steep, we decided to leave it for a future occasion. The return journey was delightfully enjoyable as the going, and specimens of the following plants found in bloom were collected en route, viz. :- Forest Bitter Cress, *Cardamine dictosperma*, Soft Senecio, *S. vagus*, Mudwort, *Limnosa aquatica*, Soft Millotia, *M. lennifolia*, Cymbanotus, *C. Lawsonianus*, Small-leaved Poranthera, *P. microphylla*, Limp Starwort, *Stellaria flaccida*, Tall Sundew, *Drosera auriculata*, The Crowded Woodruff, *Asperula conferta*, Dwarf Pimelea or Rice-flower, *P. humilis*. We reached Marysville soon after 6 p.m.

During our journeyings we observed several kinds of lizards, and, in addition to the birds already mentioned, noted various Parrots, Wrens, Magpies, Robins, Honey-eaters, and Magpie-Larks.

The morning of the following day, the final one of our outing, as it was not necessary to leave for Melbourne till the afternoon, was spent in a third visit to the Steavenson Falls, when, as the weather was bright and glorious, they were seen at their best. On the way an echidna was seen crossing the path. Very little standing water was met with in our rambles, hence there were few opportunities of searching for pond-life, but in a little pool not far from the Steavenson we found specimens of a rather uncommon protozoon, probably a member of the genus *Oxybricha*. A few more plant specimens were collected before retracing our steps. At three o'clock we commenced the return journey by motor car to Healesville, which was reached in time for the evening train to town. The week had proved so enjoyable that we thought a brief description of some of the beauty spots we had managed to visit during our rambles might be helpful to other members who might be desirous of spending a few days in what is one of the most charming of Victorian tourist resorts, especially of those not far from town. We estimated that we had traversed altogether about eighty miles on foot, without any feelings of distress, so bracing was the fresh mountain air. On every hand, turn where you would, delightful woodland, mountain, or river scenery, of which we never tired,

met the eye. The presence of a public notice-board, placed in some conspicuous position in the village, giving the directions and distances to the various spots of interest, would be a decided advantage to tourists. In its absence, full use had to be made of the map issued by the Tourist Bureau, which we found most valuable.

1916

#### Excursion to the Dee Valley and Ben Cairn.

This excursion, arranged so as to include the Foundation Day holiday, was unfortunately marred by inclement weather - an unusual occurrence for the end of January. Another disappointing circumstance was that the leader, Mr. F G. A. Barnard, owing to business matters, was unable to take part in the trip, but he made up for his absence by providing us with sketch maps of the district and a suggested programme, and also arranged for accommodation at West Warburton. Steady rain set in on Friday, 28th January, and continued next day, with the result that only three members left town by the early afternoon train. On arrival at West Warburton the few remaining hours of daylight were spent along the banks of the Yarra, where the creamy flowers of the Prickly Box, *Bursaria spinosa*, provided a pretty sight. Steady rain continued on Sunday morning, and though close at hand, Ben Cairn was quite blotted out from view. It was therefore determined to follow up Yankee Jim's Creek towards Old Warburton. Along the road many familiar plants and shrubs were met with, but none of them was in bloom. On the way a Spine-billed Honeyeater, *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*, was captured, benumbed by the cold and dripping with rain. Following down Backstairs Creek towards Warburton it was noticeable that, notwithstanding the rain, there was less water in the stream than when visited twelve months before, in the midst of a dry spell. A track along the Yarra was taken for a little way, and then the road through Millgrove was followed to our starting-place, West Warburton. In the afternoon a visit was paid to the Britannia Falls. On the way back Mr. Cuming was kind enough to show us over the wood distillation works, and explain the methods adopted in obtaining numerous useful products from condemned eucalyptus timber from the clearings on the hillsides, which would otherwise be wasted. The practice is, instead of selecting only the trees suitable for saw-milling, to entirely clear the ground of all timber, the best trees being sent to the sawmill and the rest to the chemical works. By this plan it has been found that the forest has a better chance of reproducing itself, and there is less litter. On Monday morning (31st) Ben Cairn stood out boldly, and, though rain still fell at intervals, we determined to try and reach the top, 3,400 feet above sea-level, so made an early start. Crossing the Yarra by the bridge near the spot where the Dee adds its contribution to the main stream, we followed up the Dee for a short distance, then, striking westerly, followed a tram track for about two miles, when a marked track was followed to the top. About half a mile up the tram track the new O'Shannassy aqueduct was crossed. From there on we passed through and sometimes above, magnificent fern gullies. One very fine one contained many splendid specimens of the Myrtle Beech, *Nothofagus* (*Fagus*) *Cunninghamii*, which alone were worth the climb. The track then became very steep, and before reaching the top half a mile or so of the Christmas-bush, *Prostanthera lasiantha*, in full bloom, was traversed, which, though slightly past its best, was exceedingly beautiful. Here the rasping cry of the Gang-Gang Cockatoo was heard, and on reaching the top many of the birds were seen, their red heads rendering them conspicuous. By this time the rain had cleared off, and except towards Donna Buang the splendid view was unspoiled. To the east the Baw Baws were sharply defined, Mounts Baw Baw, Mueller, and Erica being picked out, with

another range showing up behind them. The Yarra valley could be traced for miles, while the townships of Millgrove Warburton and Yarra Junction lay spread out below us. Here we missed the topographical knowledge of our intended leader in naming the various ranges in view. It would be a distinct advantage to tourists visiting this rock, which is undoubtedly the finest view-point in the district, if a direction plate, similar to that on Flinders Peak, at the You Yangs, were provided for their information. Few flowers beyond those mentioned were noticed, the season being well advanced. A number of birds were noticed, among which the following may be mentioned :- Brown Hawk, Gang-Gang Cockatoo, Sacred Kingfisher, Kookaburra, Blue Wren, Flame-breasted Robin, Yellow Robin, White-browed Wood-Swallow, Pennant's Parrakeet, Rosella Parrot, Pallid Cuckoo, and Black-and-white Fantail. - Gertrude M. T. Nethercote.

1916

#### Warburton

Wattle and Snow.- Heavy snowfall on the higher hills on Monday. A wet cold August, but there are signs of early spring. Last Saturday the wattle blossom was at its very best, and a party of visitors came in from the city, but on Saturday rain fell in torrents. There is more wattle bloom this season than for many years young trees having sprung up here and there unnoticed, until they display their yellow tresses. Mountaineers on snow clad Donna Buang this week will be able to invert the line of the old song, and sing, "There's a silver on the mountain and gold on the plain."

1916

Guide Book and Pictorial Souvenir of Healesville, Fernshaw, Narbethong and Marysville. Circa 1916

#### Mathinna Falls

Seven miles from Healesville on the eastern slopes of Mount Monda, the stately range to the north of Healesville, are situated the Mathinna Falls. From Healesville the most satisfactory mode of making the trip is on horseback, although by good walkers it can easily be done on foot. For a party, traps can be driven considerably more than half the way, the vehicles being left at the foot of the spur while the ascent is made on foot. Under any circumstances a fine day should be chosen, and a reasonably early start made. The main Fernshaw road is followed a little past Gracedale, where a finger plate indicates the track branches off to the left. This track is suitable for vehicles, and is easily followed to the Watts River, which is forded, walkers crossing by a rustic bridge. On the other side the track turns to the right, continuing along the river bank for a mile. At a point about level with the fence enclosing the weir on the Watts River, seen a short distance away, a narrow bridle track to the left is followed. This is as far as vehicles can be taken, though saddle horses can go on to the Falls. The track follows the spur, and as there is very little scrub and the bracken fern hereabouts are not high, the view to the right and left becomes increasingly interesting as you advance. To the right, the gully formed by the spur and the range opposite, dips rapidly, showing to advantage the myriad ferns which grace the gully and hillside. Some little distance further on the track passes under a cluster of tall tree ferns, which form a bower strongly reminding one of an Eastern palm scene.

As we resume the ascent, Castella's Gully claims attention on the right, as before the verdict of the company being that, without the Falls

altogether, the trip is well worth taking for the scenery witnessed en route. The sky appearing through the trees ahead indicates our approach to the crown of the hill; and very shortly we secure the horses and proceed afoot.

Descending the side of the hill some 50 or 60 feet, and directed by the splash of the water, we were not long in discovering the object of our visit at the upper end of the gully, where the topmost of the Mathinna Falls dashes over a basework of rock on to the boulders at our feet; after rapidly coursing through the rocks, makes a second bound over a projecting ledge to another shelf below; and as we descend the side of the cataract we discover that there are several distinct falls, all differing in character, and culminating some 200 feet below in one of the most charming visions of fairyland imaginable. Between the second and third fall from the top the stream is crossed, and on the opposite side a clear view down the Maroondah Gully is obtained from a little perch, well named the Crow's Nest. The hills rise abruptly on either hand, while the course of the Falls into the valley below leaves an open view ahead. And such a view! The wondrous variety in form and shade of the foliage which clothes valley and hill-sides - the pale green of the ferns, the darker tints of the shade trees, the golden glory of the flowering wattles, and the massive stems of the towering gum trees - with the blue mountain range in the distance, the music of the falling waters in the ear - these, and other influences together produce an ensemble which it would be very hard indeed to match. The lowest fall is the most imposing in the series, as not only is the depth greater, but the water, by the formation of the rock, is spread over a wider surface and the result is more effective. The top fall, however, is, in connection with its surroundings, perfect in this way, and as the place is naturally the spot for pic-nicing, it invariably receives due attention from visitors.

The return journey is much more easily accomplished than the trip out, and as we regain the level country, we are surprised to learn that quite a little brook, which one feels tempted to leap over, is the Falls Creek. That such a marvellous effect should be produced out of so little material is only another evidence of what a magician Nature is.

#### Condon's Gully

There is no doubt in the minds of those who have made walking tours to the mountain fastness about Healesville that there are as yet undiscovered a very great number of eminently attractive spots which only require to be known to be popular with tourists. One of these is Condon's Gully, On Mount Monda. It is situated very much as are the Mathinna Falls, at the head of a gully of exceptional beauty.

The St. Leonard's Road is followed to the end, when the abrupt turn to the right is taken, between the fences, and the course of the Watts is kept to the bridge. This is crossed, as well as the log over Donnelly's Creek, a few chains further on. The upper or right hand cart track is then taken, and is so well defined to be missed. It passes on the upper side of the pine trees within the fence enclosing the mouth of water tunnel and aqueduct, and vehicles can be driven for some distance. Soon however, the ascent becomes too much for harness horses, and for about a mile and a half the spur is followed, ever upwards. At length the track, which is well defined throughout, deviates to the right, and descending gradually about 40 yards along a very pretty path, leads into the shady fern gully, down which a little stream of cool, clear water flows. Some of the tree ferns in the gully are very large, and the fronds are superb. The trunks are clothed with a dense covering of mosses, which fairly carpet the rich peaty soil. The timber, too, is magnificent; black butts of enormous girth and height, and blackwood of unusually large dimensions, growing here.

Some distance up the gully are the Falls. The little stream falls in a succession of cataracts which have a very pretty effect, especially when there is a good body of water coming down. But the travelling is very heavy, and most people are content when they have reached the Gully.

#### Mount Juliet

For the young and vigorous, the mountain peaks around Healesville possess a powerful attraction. Almost the first impulse of the active youth on his initial visit to the district is to rush away and scale a mountain top. More especially is this the case in winter months, when the snow spreads its fleecy mantle over the crests of the ranges, and those who have accomplished the somewhat difficult task of scaling the heights of Mount Juliet in the snow, have returned a unanimous verdict that "the game was worth the candle." If the trip is undertaken in the summer, a cool day should be chosen, as the ascent is very trying in ordinary weather, while in a high temperature it would not only be devoid of enjoyment, but even the magnificent view obtained from the top would hardly be sufficient quid pro quo for the exertion involved. Taken at the right time, however, and with a knowledge of the route, the ascent of Juliet ranks among the best of Healesville outings. Roughly speaking, it is a ten mile journey - six miles from Healesville along the main Fernshaw road to the slip panel, one mile up the cart track, and about three miles up the Mount to the cairn on the top. Some active people walk the whole way - ten miles there and ten mile back - and do it in eight hours; but that is making a toil of pleasure. Others prefer to drive to the slip panel, or ride to the end of the cart track, walk up the mountain and back, and ride or drive back to Healesville. Assuming the outing to be a winter one, a start should be made directly after breakfast. The drive to the slip panel is done in about an hour, or the walk comfortably in two hours. If the latter mode of travelling has been adopted, the visitors will be prepared for a little refreshment before ascending Juliet. The end of the mile walk along the cart track is a good place at which to rest. Water can be obtained from the little creek to the left, and with considerable persuasion the billy may be made to boil. It is well to have lunch here, as with the snow two feet deep there is little temptation to stay long on the top of the mountain, and after descending, with feet wet and cold, the travellers are not disposed to spend half-an-hour in boiling a billy.

The light repast over, all superfluous gear should be hidden in the scrub - not so carefully as DZÅa declined to comment on any of the circumstances surrounding the discovery, saying it was a criminal matter.

#### Death's lonely trail

By John Hamilton

This is the Mystery of the Mystic Mountains - a knee-deep grave surrounded by stringybark saplings and towering mountain gums deep within the Yarra Ranges National Park.

A sign tells you that you are on your way to the Mystic Mountains as you drive through the Black Spur on the road to Marysville.

The road zigs and Zags through thickets of ancient ferns and the tall timbers of the forest.

You hug the edge of the narrow road as logging trucks thunder towards the city and vivid blue and red mountain parrots screech upwards in alarm.

The grave is beyond sleepy Marysville, which calls itself the Mist of the Mountains.

Another 21km beyond. Past the turn-offs to Warburton and Big River Rd, past the signs alerting drivers to the presence of lyrebirds.

It was a pair of alert forest rangers who thought they had found a new lyrebird nest on Monday that led to the discovery of this grave.

A mound of freshly dug light brown dirt in the shadow of a gnarled mountain gum, surrounded by charred tree stumps left by past bushfires.

Except the mound seemed too big, too rounded, to be a lyrebird's. That's when the rangers decided to explore further, to dig...

THERE was no mist in the mountains yesterday. Only warm autumn sunshine and the distant sound of bellbirds in the bush.

I reached the grave in the Mystic Mountains by walking along a bush track where long strips of bark peeled from the towering gums overhead to crackle underfoot.

The track is marked with a small white post by the side of the gravel road that winds on towards Woods Point.

The post had the number 3 written on surrounding country were obtainable. At one of these a large rock - known as Exhibition Rock - offered a particularly good outlook. Melbourne being seen with the naked eye. The club blazed a track, evidences of which can still be seen, and cleared the timber so as to provide lookouts.

The best course is to follow the Don River road to the cemetery; then take the fenced roadway to the left marked by a finger-post. This road is followed for about a mile, obstructing fences being crossed, till a little over the second rise, at the angle of an intersecting fence on the right, a blazed tree is seen. There the blazed track to the right is taken up as far as the long spur ahead. This spur is the easiest for the ascent.

Mount Riddell could be done in a half day; but it is wiser to make a day's out of it, and to take things easy. The hour or two spare can then be well filled in resting on the top of the range. The height of Riddell is estimated to be about 2,600 feet. There is no water on the top and no spring that we know of near the blazed track.

### The Aqueduct

The Maroondah or Watts River Water Supply Works, the first portion of which are completed, are well worth a visit. The scheme is simply the utilisation of the water from the Watts River at Fernshaw as a supply for Melbourne supplementary to Yan Yean. And in order to effect this, works of great magnitude have been necessary, involving the tunneling of hills, the construction of some forty miles of channeling, syphons, weirs, etc., costing the country about 400,000 pounds. And this is only the first portion of the complete scheme, which embraces the conversion of that part of the valley of the Watts, below the weir, into a vast reservoir, as well as impounding of the waters of the Graceburn and Badger Rivers.

It is hardly likely, however, that this portion of the work will be entered upon for many years to come.

There is nothing sensational or phenomenal in the Aqueduct or its surroundings, but those who like to know "how" effects are accomplished, it is extremely interesting to see the difficulties in the way of bringing the system out of its course to a given point, and how they are overcome.

The Aqueduct can be struck almost anywhere to the north-west of Healesville; but the best course to adopt would be to go out as far as the weir on the Watts, at the foot of the spur which is ascended in going to Mathinna Falls. Thence to follow the course of the channel (which is covered in for some distance) say for two or three miles towards Healesville. In that distance, the tunnels through the hills, the syphon carrying the water in pipes from a point on one hill, down a valley, and up the opposite hillside to an almost equal height, and a considerable

length of the open concrete channel are seen, and will convey a fair idea of the difficulties which have had to be contended with in carrying out the scheme.

To Fernshaw and Marysville

By far the best known, as it is deservedly the most popular, outing from Healesville, is the drive along the main road to Fernshaw, Narbethong, and Marysville, a total distance of twenty-three miles. It may be made by coach, leaving Healesville at 10 o'clock, shortly after the arrival of the train from Melbourne; or, in the case of a party, the most enjoyable method of accomplishing the journey is to hire a pair-horse trap at Healesville, and do the trip in a leisurely and pleasurable manner.

The road immediately after leaving Healesville becomes an ascent; and very soon, first on the left and then on the right, occasional breaks in the timber give glimpses of vistas of forest and mountain scenery, which become grander as you advance.

Three miles from the station a turn on the road brings into view the popular and commodious tourists' resort, Gracedale House, beautifully situated on an eminence overlooking the valley of the Watts on one side and the Graceburn on the other. Just past Gracedale the track to Mathinna Falls branches off to the left, and on the opposite side of the road is the Graceburn aqueduct and weir.

A mile further the road commences to fall towards

Fernshaw

Beautiful gullies, in which there is a profusion of ferns of every variety and degree, from the delicate maiden hair to giant trees 40 feet in height, present themselves at every turn in the road. At the six-mile post the slip-rails of the track to Mount Juliet are passed; and seven miles from Healesville you rattle into the lovely dale famous throughout the colony and beyond it for its exceptional beauty - Fernshaw.

At one time it was a thriving little settlement with two inns, a post office, store, and a number of settlers and fruit growers; but the waters of the Watts River were required for the metropolis, and, at enormous expense, and in the face of many obstacles, the stream was carried over hill and dale for fifty miles to contribute to the city wants. Moreover, to ensure the purity of the supply, every householder and settler about Fernshaw, where for seven miles the country drains into the Watts River, was brought out by the Government and required to evacuate. This explains the absolute demolition and extinction of the little village at the foot of the Blacks Spur, which for years was one of the most popular summer resorts of tourists. However, though the settlement was broken up, the scenery remains.

The enclosure inside the stile is the favourite resort of pic-nicers, who appreciate the shade of the trees, and the proximity of the crystal stream. Fires are permitted in the roadway just outside the fence, and "billy tea" is consequently a popular institution.

There are several most attractive outings accessible on foot from Fernshaw. The Watts River alone abounds in beautiful surroundings. The walk through the bush to Mathinna Falls; Morley's Track, which faces you as you turn to the left to begin the rise of the Blacks Spur; and half-a-dozen other walking trips may be made from this standpoint. Finger posts mark some of these tracks, but to follow them needs some local knowledge, as they are not very well defined in parts.

Immediately after leaving the Watts, at Fernshaw, the ascent of the Blacks Spur, by the main road is commenced, and for something like four miles the horses have an unbroken pull on the collar. The scenery becomes

majestic as you ascend. The timber is finer, and the foliage more varied and beautiful. The native myrtle, which here grows to perfection glistens like holly in the sunshine and with its neighbours, the sassafras and wattle, offers an imposing contrast to the wealth of delicate green in the myriad ferns of every class at their feet. Close behind the main road, scenes of beauty lie hidden; as is the case of

#### Etta's Glen

in which thousands of visitors have pic-nicked. It is about two miles up the spur, on the left hand side, and may be easily passed unobserved, the only feature to mark its existence being a calico poster of Board of Works regulations affixed to a tree. The "Glen" is close beside the road, and is of fascinating beauty. The ice-cold water dashes down the rocky gully, on the side of which is a natural camping ground. Every one of the fern trunks is thickly inscribed with initials, which have also have been cut on everything cuttable, and speaks volumes for the extensive circle of patrons who have found safe conduct to this sylvan retreat.

#### Tommy's Bend

is another favorite spot with tourists. The main Wood's Point road is followed over the bridge crossing the Stevenson river, and for nearly six miles a steady stiff ascent is maintained. Rubbly Spur (sic) being sufficiently steep to test the power of man and beast. The scenery as usual becomes grander as the height increases, but as the forth or fifth mile post is reached, the opposite range appears gradually to approach that along the side of which the road is formed and the converging of these hills, with the beautiful foliage of the trees and ferns in the gully between, excites the keenest admiration. At the culminating point of this unsurpassed sassafras gully, the road takes a horse-shoe turn, forming what is known by the homely denomination of Tommy's Bend on Mount Grant.

To the tourist with ample time at his disposal, the road all the way to Wood's Point is interesting, and sturdy pedestrians frequently make it a walking tour. Others branch off to Warburton and then Launching Place, and back either to Healesville or Lillydale.

1917

#### The Road to Jordan

The historic road to Jordan was a hard road to trabbel," I believe the negro melody has it, but the road to our own River Jordan, described by Broadbent last week as a "magnificent tourist spot", is almost impassable. The Melbourne man referred to in these notes recently, did, after all, get to McVeigh's with his four-wheeler, but couldn't face the job of removing 51 trees on the balance of the trip to the Point. It would cost no more than 20 pounds to make the track fairly passable. Who is going to do it?

1917

#### Upper Yarra Watershed

#### Metropolitan Board Claims control

Several conferences have been held of late between the Premier and Mr Carre Riddell, chairman of the Metropolitan Board, on the question of



vesting the Upper Yarra watershed in the Board of Works, about which there is a conflict of opinion between the Board and the Forestry Department. The board has been endeavouring to secure the watershed, but the Forestry department wants to keep control of the timber on it. One barrier in the way seems to be a report made to the Government in 1916 by Mr. T. Murray who stated that good water was obtained by other authorities from timber resources managed by the State Forest Department. The Board does not agree to this, and points out that the Melbourne supply of water enjoys immunity from the expense of purification because of its natural and uncontaminated catchment areas. A long letter in reply to Mr Murray's report was written by the Board to the Premier on the 4th inst., stating that settlement on the watershed areas is recognised as being unfavourable to a good water supply, and that deforestation causes discolouration and pollution of the water by soil bacteria. The Board is about to build a storage reservoir at Healesville, which will take five years to construct. It is considered that if there should be a rapid influx of people after the war, the population of the Metropolis will probably reach 900,000 before the dam is completed, and a shortage of water would then be likely. The Maroondah dam, the letter states, will not be able to supply the higher levels east and south east of Melbourne, without pumping, and long before its waters can be absorbed in the central western suburbs, there will be urgent need for the Upper Yarra water for gravitation supply to the eastern suburbs.

1917

#### Maroondah Reservoir Site

#### Tenders called for Clearing

Tenders for the clearing of the site of the proposed Maroondah Reservoir, at Healesville, are invited in this issue by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

The works for which tenders are being invited is the clearing of an area of about 485 acres which will be submerged by the water impounded by the proposed Maroondah dam. The work is divided into two classes. Class A consists of 291 acres, in which the ground is to be absolutely cleared of timber and vegetation of every description, level with the surface. Class B consists of 194 acres, in which all timber and vegetation must be removed or destroyed, but stumps of trees 30 inches girth or over may be left standing, provided that the height of the stump does not exceed 6 feet.

The successful tenderer must take up both classes in one contract. The contract provides that the contractor must either destroy the timber or may dispose of it as he pleases, so long as the ground is left clear. The area is fairly heavily timbered consisting almost entirely of messmate and white gum and should provide a large amount of firewood, milling timber, telegraph and scaffold poles. The time for completion of the whole contract extends to the end of May 1920. The site is accessible, being about three miles from Healesville railway station, and connected thereto by a good metalled road (the Blacks' Spur road).

A copy of the specification and plan may be seen at the head office of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Spencer Street, Melbourne or at the caretaker's quarters, at Yarra Glen.

Tenders, accompanied by a preliminary deposit of 25 pounds and endorsed "Tender for Clearing."

1918

## Motoring Sensation

### Serious Accident Narrowly Averted

About 5.30 pm on Saturday last, the Black Spur Motor Company's motor mail coach overturned whilst descending the Spur, and the driver (Alfred Alright) and ten passengers were all more or less severely shaken and bruised, and the coach badly damaged.

The motor had left Marysville a few minutes before 4 o'clock on its daily return run to Healesville with mails and passengers. It was considered one of the best vehicles in the Company's fleet and had been driven over the Spur hundreds of times. Nothing unusual occurred on Saturday until Devil's Elbow on the Healesville side had been negotiated. Then however, it is said the motor slipped out of gear, and the control of the car was thus thrown wholly on the brakes. The driver at once applied both foot and handbrake, but these proved inadequate to hold the car.

1918

### The Acheron Valley

#### A Railway Project Offer by SawMillers

The Minister of Railways moved in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday night last, that the question of connecting the Upper Acheron Valley district with the existing railway system by a broad or narrow gauge railway to tap timber supplies be referred to the Standing Committee for report. He said that the Acheron Valley lay north of the Dividing Range at the Black Spur beyond Healesville, and included the settlements of Narbethong and Granton. Railway communication with the district had been agitated for during the last 30 years, but owing to the fact that most of the intervening country was withheld from occupation to provide the water supply of Melbourne the smallness of the local settlement, and the high cost of construction no steps towards building a railway had so far been taken. Difficulties in importing softwood timber, due to the war, had caused a largely increased demand for Victorian hardwood, and saw millers were desirous of establishing large mills in the Acheron Valley, where there is a splendid forest of messmate, spotted gum, mountain ash and blackbutt, estimated by the chief forester in charge of the district to contain 520,000,000 superficial feet of marketable timber with a value of 2,317,000 pounds and a royalty value at present rates of 192,500 pounds.

1919

### Excursion to Marysville,

The Christmas excursion to Marysville proved most enjoyable in every way. A party of eight, including two ladies, proceeded to Healesville by the 8 a.m. train on Christmas morning. Owing to a special having left a little while before, there was little crowding, and we were able to travel together. Healesville (38 miles) was reached in due course; there we found a vehicle waiting to convey us the remaining twenty-three miles of our journey. As the number of excursionists was smaller than had been expected, some delay was experienced while a smaller vehicle was being substituted for that originally selected to make the trip; however, by 11.30 a.m. we were on the road. The weather was dull, with showers threatening, the absence of sunshine to fully reveal the beauties of the

bush and the surrounding hills being greatly regretted. The road between Healesville and Marysville is famed as being one of the most picturesque in the State, passing as it does over the Blacks' Spur, celebrated for its tall trees. At about six miles out the turn-off to Mount Juliet was passed on our right, and in another mile the Maroondah River, formerly known as the Watts, was crossed. Here was the site of Fernshaw, a well-known tourist resort in the sixties and seventies, but since resumed in the interest of Melbourne's water supply. Morley's track, a favourite walk of Fernshaw visitors in times gone by, branches off up the valley of the Maroondah just where the road takes a sudden turn to the left at the foot of the Spur. Three tree ferns said to be sixty feet in height were seen along the track. Ascending the Spur, the road rises rapidly - about 1,200 feet in three miles. During the first mile or two the under-scrub has been greatly thinned out during recent years by bush fires, which at the expense of the beauty, enables more extensive views to be obtained in a south-westerly direction. The splendid scenery of the upper part of the Spur was greatly admired. On the left is the beautiful Myrtle Creek, with its dense vegetation of many kinds, with a heavily-timbered slope rising up behind. Many huge trees are to be seen close to the road, but the trunk of one of the largest, known as "Uncle Sam," now lies prostrate on the side of the road near the drinking trough. While ascending the Spur the remarkable conical hill known as Mount Dom Dom was seen close by, on the right, with the huge mass of Mount Strickland (4,000 feet) a few miles beyond. As we descended the eastern slope, now in the Murray watershed, at a break in the forest known as Zeal's Look-out, a very fine view across the Acheron Valley to the rugged Cathedral Mountain, near Buxton, was obtained. A short halt was made at Narbethong, in the valley of Fisher's Creek, and then progress was resumed through rather uninteresting country to the Acheron bridge, whence the road gradually ascends till it again reaches an altitude of 2,000 feet at the Bald Hill, dropping again 500 feet before reaching Marysville, which township was reached about 4.30 p.m., just as heavy rain, which had been threatening for some time, swept in, lasting for an hour or more. Here we were cordially welcomed to the hotel by Miss Keppel, and soon had our rooms allotted to us. There was very little in the way of a floral display along the road we had traversed, the Blue Pincushion, *Brunonia australis*, the pink Trigger-flower, *Stylidium graminifolium*, and the Fringed Lily, *Thysanotus tuberosus*, being perhaps the most noticeable. After tea, as the rain had stopped and there was still an hour or so of daylight, some of the party went for a walk for a couple of miles along the Wood's Point road, which rises sharply beyond the Steavenson River. Here the sweet-scented *Stackhousia linarifolia*, *Veronica Derwentia*, and the ubiquitous *Goodenia ovata* were blooming freely. Beautiful cloud effects were seen as the sun set, masses of vapour appearing as if entangled among the trees on the hillsides. During the evening we made up plans for the ensuing days, embracing the different trips detailed in the paper contributed to the Club's meeting in March 1916, by Mr. F. Pitcher and myself, entitled "An October Week at Marysville" (*Vict. Nat.*, xxxiii., p 32.), and it will be needless to repeat in detail the descriptions of places visited on that occasion.

On Thursday morning most of the party made a before breakfast visit to the "Beauty Spot" - a group of tree-ferns, etc., at the head of a small stream running into the Steavenson. A visit to the Steavenson Falls had been chosen as the first outing of the excursion, and after breakfast all made their way thither by the easy track which gradually ascends the narrow valley until stopped by the rocky wall forming the falls. Owing to the dryness of the season we had not expected to find much water coming down the falls, so were agreeably surprised at the volume descending. High up among the rocks a flowering shrub attracted attention, and on specimens being secured it was found to be *Callistemon salignus*, var.

viridiflorus. The Native Elder, *Sambucus Gaudichaudiana* and the Blanket-wood, *Senecio Bedfordii*, were also in bloom. Perhaps the most noticeable feature along the track was the robust growth of *Daviesia latifolia*, often known as the "Native Hop," from the bitter taste of its leaves. Many of the bushes had a height of at least eight feet, with stem diameters of an inch and a half. Only a few flowers remained, but when in full bloom it must have presented a fine sight. In the afternoon a visit was paid to Keppel's Look-out, on Mount Bismarck, about two or three miles south of the township, with an altitude of 3,000 feet, as indicated by Mr. Barnard's aneroid. This instrument, presented to its owner at the last annual meeting of the Club, it may be remarked, was fully availed of during the different outings, and, in such hilly country, added not a little to their interest. All admired the fine view down the Acheron Valley from this elevated spot, and, though rain compelled us to get such shelter as we could, it did not last long, and the after effects in the distant hills fully made up for any discomfort we had experienced. The large Shrubby *Pimelea*, *P. ligustrina*, with *Helichrysum scorpioides* and *Stellaria flaccida*, were met with during the afternoon. Of course, tree-ferns and smaller species abounded everywhere here, as elsewhere throughout the various trips.

Friday, 27th December, had been set apart for a whole-day trip to the Taggerty Valley and Keppel's Falls. The day turned out all that could be desired, and the beautiful scenery along the stream was the admiration of all. In about seven miles the pavilion at "The Meeting of the Waters" was reached, and after a little trouble the billy was boiled and luncheon had. After spending as long as we could spare here viewing Keppel's Falls, etc., we turned homewards, making a short detour along the Glover Walk to the Cameron Cascades, a place of exquisite beauty, tree-ferns, beeches, sassafras, and shrubbery combining to make a scene which it is impossible to describe. A remarkably fine growth of the fern *Lomaria fluviatilis* was seen here, some of the fronds being three feet in length and in perfect order. One of the largest beeches seen was growing here, its trunk being about eight feet in diameter. Several flowering spikes of the Potato Orchid, *Gastrodia sesamoides*, were met with, and a plant of *Billardiera longiflora*, laden with purple fruits, was a notable sight. This plant was subsequently noted in full bloom. The creeper *Lyonsia straminea* was found in the "Forest of Arden," both in flower and in fruit. Several of the beautiful green and black butterflies, *Papilio macleanus*, confined to our higher mountainous districts, were seen flying about the flowering shrubs along the river. The Strap-fern, *Lomaria Patersoni*, so named for its long, narrow, undivided fronds, was noticed in the deep shade of the beeches in many places. A peculiar globular fungus, *Cytharia Gunnii*, which seems to be found only on the beech, was secured by Mr. P. Morrison, in the Forest of Arden, a new locality for this rare species. Some ten years ago I found specimens of this fungus on the same host tree in Myrtle Creek, on the Black's Spur. The altitude of the pavilion at "The Meeting of the Waters" was found to be about 600 feet above Marysville, so that the walk was not an arduous one. Afternoon tea was taken at the termination of the Talbot Drive, and the hotel was reached about half-past eight, all having thoroughly enjoyed the fifteen-mile tramp.

Saturday was devoted to the walk to Bald Hill, another view-point overlooking the Acheron Valley. The day promised to be warm, and, though not a very long journey, it was thought better to take lunch and give a whole day to the trip. From the northern end of the Spur, which is bare of timber, an extensive view of the Acheron Valley, the Cathedral Range, the Black Range, and of Narbethong was obtained. Few flowering plants were met with; the flowers of the *Brachycome diversifolia*, which were so fine when seen in October, 1915, were at this time of year much diminished in size. After spending two or three hours admiring the view,

we returned by the route of the morning. This range is of different geological formation to most of the country around Marysville, being Silurian or Ordovician instead of the prevailing granite or dacite.

Sunday was spent quietly, most of the party attending the morning service at the local church. In the afternoon some went to "Michael Dene," a nice fern gully not far from the township; others renewed their acquaintance with the Steavenson Falls.

For Monday a visit to the Cumberland Falls, distant about eleven miles along the Wood's Point road, was decided on. Three of the party, considering the trip would tax their walking powers too severely, arranged to join some visitors at the hotel who were driving thither. The others, starting at 6 a.m., breakfasted at a spring on the road about five miles out, and by noon had completed the first half of their journey. The driving party arrived about one, and all had lunch together. The road rises quickly after crossing the Steavenson River, and traverses a part of Mount Grant known as Robley's Spur. At first the densely-timbered valley of the Steavenson River on the right is overlooked, with Mount Bismarck forming a background to the picture. A little further on the road crosses to the other side of the ridge, and the view is now down the valley of the Taggerty with Mount Margaret beyond. An elevation of 3,000 feet or more is attained, and the road then becomes comparatively level. The views from Nicholls's Look-out and other spots were much admired. Shortly after passing Tommy's Bend, a celebrated beauty spot in former days, the road crosses the divide into the southern (Yarra) watershed. About here some fine beeches were showing the beautiful coppery tints of their young foliage. Halting at the Bellell Creek, or O'Shannassy River, so that the travellers might refresh themselves at the stream, some interesting insect larvae were noticed in the water on the stones, probably the larvae of one of the Ephemerids. The road, as it ascended the divide near Mount Arnold, attained about 3,600 feet, and was bordered with flowering shrubs, the white flowers of *Olearia* (*Aster*) *stellulata*, var. *lyrata*, and *O. myrsinoides*, and *Cassinia aculeata* being prominent, with here and there a bush of *Prostanthera mellissifolia* in full bloom, bearing delicate lavender flowers. Several stems of *Dianella tasmanica*, with its beautiful blue flowers, occurred here also. As we descended the slope towards the Corra Linn and Cumberland Creeks many magnificent specimens of the Mountain Ash Gum, *Eucalyptus Regnans*, grew 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 known as "King Edward VII.," which has a girth of 87 feet. A photograph of this huge trunk is one of the adornments of the hotel vestibule. One of the features of the road was the fine growth of *Lomaria fluviatilis*, which occurred everywhere on the shady side, while *L. lanceolata* was absent. The only snake of the outing was seen here, but escaped capture. After lunch at the falls, on the advice of the walking party, who had gone about a mile further and found a group of magnificent gums, we did so also, and were well compensated for the walk, most of the trees being fully 250 feet high. The walking party had been much interested here by the curiosity of a Wonga Pigeon, *Leucosarcia melanoleuca*, which seemed to regard them with wonder and astonishment, so many persons to be seen at one time in such an unfrequented spot being evidently more than it could understand. The falls, which were visited in November, 1890, by the Yarra Falls excursion party of the Club (*Vict. Nat.*, vii., p.161, with photograph), were found to be largely hidden from view by the wealth of vegetation with which they are surrounded, only the upper part being well seen. The gorge down which the stream precipitates itself is very beautiful, and a fairly easy track descends for some 200 feet or more alongside the rushing water. The pedestrian party left before the others, having decided to add some three or four miles to their return journey by trying to get through to the Taggerty River, along the Glover Walk, and thus return to Marysville by

way of the Forest of Arden and the Talbot Drive. This they did without mishap, and report a succession of glorious fern and beech scenes along the Walk, and, notwithstanding that they did not reach the hotel till 10 p.m. seemed thoroughly pleased with their sixteen hours in the open. One of this party, it may be mentioned, was a lady, who seemed perhaps the least tired of all by the hard day's work. Those who returned by vehicle had some glorious sunset scenes over the Taggerty Valley as they made their descent of Mount Grant.

Tuesday, 31st December, was the last day of the stay, which had passed all too quickly. As we were timed to leave for Healesville at 3 p.m., we had a few hours available in the morning, which were devoted to exploring the track to the wolfram mine on Wilks's Creek. This track leaves the Keppel's Look-out track about 1.5 miles from the village, and bears southerly through the fairly open forest towards Mount Strickland. On reaching Wilks's Creek we found it to be of the usual mountain gully type, with King and other ferns in profusion, but the time did not permit the completion of the journey to the mine. We noticed here, as well as in another place, nice plants of *Mimulus moschatus*, the musk of our shade-houses, doing remarkably well. After lunch some of us collected a few seedling ferns from the side of the water-race before packing our belongings. Our final duty was to pen and sign an appreciation of our experiences at Marysville in the visitors' book for the delectation of those who may follow, we having been greatly interested in the notes made by the late Baron von Mueller, Rev. Tenison-Woods, Mr. C. French, and others of kindred tastes in days gone by.

From the number of birds observed while sitting quietly in the bush, it would appear that ornithologically the district is also good, but, as none of us professed much knowledge of birds, little can be said under that heading. One Lyre-bird and many Gang-Gang Cockatoos, King Parrots, Blue Wrens, Robins, etc., were seen. A male Scarlet-breasted Robin was particularly fond of the top of the lamp outside the hotel, and could generally be seen there morning and evening. Insects were very scarce, beetles particularly so. Of butterflies three or four species were noted; the common brown *Heteronympha merope*, Painted Lady, *Pyrameis kershawi*, and Mountain Swallow-tail, *Papilio macleanus* - the last-named insect was seen in considerable numbers in many places. Reptilia were represented by a Blue-tongued Lizard and numerous smaller species, and the Black Snake previously mentioned.

In addition to the plants already named the following were seen in bloom in different places:- *Loranthus pendulus*, *Sisyrinchium pulchellum*, *Helichrysum rosmarinifolium*, *H. ferrugineum*, *H. leucopsidium*, *Dipodium punctatum*, *Lagenophora Billardieri*, *Mentha laxiflora*, *Leptospermum scoparium*, *Viola hederacea*, *Senecio vagus*, and *S. australis*.

Although it cannot be claimed that anything particular was done in the way of scientific work, the beautiful scenery naturally attracting most attention, all of the party seemed well satisfied with the excursion, which was made all the more pleasant by reason of the exceptionally favourable weather experienced at a time of year when extreme heat might have been expected. The elevation of Marysville (1,600 feet), and the presence of ranges up to 4,800 feet within a few miles, may perhaps account for the invigorating air, which enabled us to cover some seventy miles on foot during the week. The outstanding features of the district are undoubtedly the profusion and robustness of the vegetation, many of the Myrtle Beeches of the Forest of Arden possessing trunks six to eight feet in diameter, being correspondingly tall, while other flowering plants usually found as dwarf shrubs are here almost arborescent, and instead of occurring as scattered specimens, grow in dense thickets to the exclusion of other species. Many more plants might have been mentioned, but only those prominent at the time of our visit are recorded, for the names of some of which I am indebted to Mr. F. Pitcher,

who was put down as co-leader of the excursion, but was unfortunately unable to take part in it. The tourist map issued by the Lands Department was found of great service during the outing, and, as a copy of it was posted under the hotel verandah, it was easily referred to and discussed before and after each day's trip.- I. Strickland.

1920

### The Pioneers Passing

This is the day of the past and gone,  
The dirge of the Pioneers  
The men who conquered the pathless bush  
Aback, in the bygone years.

Time, the supreme leveller, has recently sent west two of our oldest pioneers, in the persons of the late Mr Archie Walker, of Buxton and Mrs Williams, for fifty years post mistress of Narbethong.

The late Mr. Walker, who had attained the ripe age of 77, came to Marysville in the early sixties of last century. He was a trusted and confident employee of the late Mr. Thomas Barton, J.P., of Marysville who carried on a large butchering and provisioning business in partnership with the late Mr Ewen Cameron M.L.A. for Evelyn, for over thirty years. This was the Eldorado period of the Woods Point mining centre - the weird and woolly days of the golden ranges. For over a decade he remained the confidential assistant of Mr Barton. In charge of a long string of pack horses, he took meat and provisions into the neighbouring hills, Big River, Dirty Dick's (afterwards Shaw), Bear, Damper and Donovan's Creek and tributaries, and later to Reefton, when the mine was discovered. In the early seventies he married the present Mrs. Walker and took up the homestead in which he resided till the last. In this task he was beset with all the vicissitudes of struggle that were always present with the pioneer who undertook to make a home in the great bush, always restless and unyielding he was ably assisted by his persevering wife, and now highly respected widow. Both had the true grit of the pioneer and unto them, as the years rolled by came a family of six sons and three daughters, all of whom are grown up, while several are married and settled in this and adjoining districts. For many years Mr. Walker was a trusted and supervising employee of the Healesville Shire Council. With him is lost a fund of information in reference to particular parts from which runs of gold were taken in the early days from many creeks of the Upper Yarra. He was a man of most cheerful disposition, always seeing the silver lining to the darkest cloud. Possessed of an immense fund of dry humor, he was always quite jovial and pleasing to meet; full of grit and determination in the hour of trial and adversity, with a child's heart in moments of pleasure. The writer met him first on Boxing Day, 1869 in the first horse race that was run at Marysville. Charlie Wilson, of the numerous Wilson family of Healesville, Archie Walker and I were the riders. I was diminutive in size and turning to me Archie said, "mind you don't come down nipper." I thought the advice unnecessary, but he made no error, I came a cropper and the Warrigal I rode had to be shot, its leg being badly broken. The races were of the old bush type with saddles and bridles as prizes and the main road was the course. Now Charlie and he have both gone where we must all go.

1921

### Warburton

Mt Donna Buang Road

Complaints are being received from guest house keepers that the road to the Mount is constantly obstructed by fallen trees, even below Cement Creek. This is a great pity, for it is, without a doubt, the premier drive of the district, and it is ridiculous that passengers are not able to get within a mile of the turntable at the Creek unless they get down and walk.

The job of clearing appears to be nobody's job. Formerly, I believe the Public Works department used to let a contract; but from information that I can gather there is not one in existence now. Of course, from June up till the end of September it is extremely difficult to keep the roads open owing to the heavy gales breaking down trees and strewing limbs all over, the place; but it is time now that something was done. The secretary of the Progress League has written to the Public Works department on the matter.

1922

Lost at Marysville

A Mountain Sensation

Women's Unpleasant Experience

(From our Marysville correspondent)

The great anxiety felt by the residents and visitors at Marysville was relieved at 5.30 p.m. on Saturday, by the news telephoned from Narbethong that the two ladies, Misses Lamont and Hayes, of Albert Park, who had been lost on Mt Strickland (4000ft.) since Thursday the 20th inst., had been picked up by a search party at the head of the Acheron river.

The ladies had started out from Marysville at 10 a.m. on Thursday with the intention of walking over the summit of Mt Strickland, which had been recently opened up by the Marysville Progress Association. Use had been made of a section of the old Warburton track to the top of Mt Strickland, where the new track leaves the old one on top of the mountain, and the trees have been "carefully" blazed. It appears that the ladies missed the blazed turn off, and continued on the old Warburton track, which is completely lost, except to an experienced bushman, about 100 yards beyond the turn off on the new track.

When the ladies failed to return a search party was made up from the boarding house from where they were staying. Powerful gas lanterns were taken by the searchers, and the lower slopes were searched until midnight, without result. The matter was reported to Mounted-Constable De Larue of Marysville, first thing on Friday morning. This officer has a thorough knowledge of the bush in the locality and he, with others, immediately set out on horseback and made a thorough examination of the whole tracks. Unfortunately rain had fallen in the night sufficient to obliterate any footprints that might have been made. However, a copy of a newspaper, dated 18th April was found on the track near Mt Strickland, about 6.5 miles from Marysville, together with footprints, which were apparently those of the ladies. The party searched for some time, but failed to pick up any further footprints. Failing to find any tracks of the lost ladies, the police officer returned to Marysville to organise a search party. The church bell was rung and an immediate response was made by the whole village. Some thirteen experienced bushmen at once set out on horses to the top of Mt. Strickland by a different route. The mounted and foot party met shortly after dusk on the top of the mount, finding no trace of the missing women. A camp was made, and later, with the aid of lanterns the party moved in groups to the various high peaks on the mount



and lit huge fires, which were maintained to the early hours of the morning, as a guide to the bushed women. As further search was impossible, the party returned to the camp to settle down to await the dawn with the cheerfulness which characterised the Australian in war.

At daybreak (Saturday) their vigil was rewarded- not, unfortunately, by the discovery of the object of their search - but by breakfast, brought to them by a relief party which had left Marysville at 4 a.m. The scene must have appealed to anyone with a sense of beauty. At 4,300 feet above sea level was the camp. An immense fire lighted up the tall woolly-but trees with a red glare. The faithful bush horses stood around the fire with their tails to the piercing cold wind. Whilst the billy boiled a large steak was grilled in the fire at the end of a 12 ft. stick, and rounds of toast were prepared by toasting forks cut from the bush. Away in the distance could be seen the electric street lights of Healesville, and the beacon fires on the various peaks. The sky began to pale and change rapidly from pearl grey to pale blue. A thousand gleaming red eyes blinked through the trees as the first streak of light peeped over Lake Mountain. Suddenly a kookaburra laughed, and the thud-thud of the wallaby resounded as he left his grazing ground for the more secluded gully. The light grew stronger until the whole wonderful panorama stood out, clearly stretching from the base of the mountain to the farthest hills, some 60 miles away.

After breakfast the whole party, now numbering 25 men, were instructed by the police officer the direction they were to take, and they spread over a distance of four miles, the whole section moving off within reasonable distance of each other, and commencing a thorough beating of the bush, going straight down the mountain side, and working towards the Narbethong-Marysville road. This survey bore no fruit, and as the position of things looked serious, the police officer at once returned to Marysville and communicated with Superintendent O'Brien of the Police Depot, Melbourne, requesting that the black trackers be sent immediately to Marysville to assist in the search. The superintendent of police gave instructions for the black trackers to proceed to Marysville as early as possible, and the local police officer was informed that the trackers would reach Marysville that night. Motor cars were sent out to the surrounding country to call up every available man, and a search party was formed at Narbethong, with instructions to proceed at once up the Acheron Valley and beat the bush on the slopes of Mt. Strickland, and to remain out all night and light fires.

In the afternoon Mr. Oxlee, of Marysville, who originally cut the track over Mt. Strickland, found traces of the lost women in the form of pieces of a newspaper dated the 18th April, stuck on twigs about a mile and a half along the old Warburton track. Mr. Oxlee, being on foot immediately retraced his steps until he picked up some of the searchers by answering their coo-ees. A party of 15 horsemen were soon collected together and they immediately took up the trail, and on examination of the pieces of paper they were convinced that the trail had been laid by the lost women. The party followed the trail, when it ended after quarter of a mile, from there on the track was blocked by fallen trees with a complete net of wattles, dog wood, sassafras and tree ferns, etc. The party forced their way through for some distance, but the horses which had been ridden from daylight without food were beginning to fag, and several falls were recorded and a valuable animal ridden by Mr. F.J. Barton J.P., was staked in the chest. A halt was called, and after some discussion the party decided to retrace their tracks and return to Marysville, and concentrate the whole of the search party, now numbering 50 men, with 35 horses, on the trail at daylight next morning. Footprints of the lost women were covered up by the police officer so as to preserve them for black trackers. Darkness caught the mounted party before many miles were

traveled, and the riders could not see six feet ahead, so the horses were heads and trusted to luck to keep on the 2 ft. track cut out of the side of the mountain, where one false step would have sent horse and rider down the mountain side. Not a word was spoken between the horsemen, except for a quiet word of command from the rider to his horse, and the foot of the mountain was reached without accident.

The party from Narbethong, which has moved up the Acheron Valley and were making a systematic search of the mountain gullies, were rewarded in hearing an answer to their coo-ees. The answering coo-ees were heard by Messrs. Roche and Lucas, who being well mounted, quickly broke their way through the dense undergrowth and located the two lost women, who at that time looked a little the worse for their experience. Mr Roche, who is the licensee of the Blacks' Spur hotel at Narbethong, and Mr. Lucas double banked their horses, taking a lady apiece, and conveyed them to Narbethong hotel, where Miss Hayes, who was suffering from a sprained ankle collapsed, and had to be carried into the hotel.

Enquires made by our representative elicited the fact that the ladies are doing well, and are fortunately little the worse for their terrible experience, except for a sprained ankle and many cuts and bruises, and are now safely back at Marysville.

Intending walkers of the direct Marysville-Warburton track should be warned not to take this route, as the track is completely obliterated and cannot be followed. The Marysville Progress Association have applied to have the road opened, but have been unsuccessful, yet the Tourist Bureau of Melbourne, hand out guide maps to walkers, showing the direct Marysville-Warburton track. Only last week four men who intended doing this trip, though warned not to do so by local residents, were lost and came out at Stevenson's Falls, 2.5 miles from Marysville.

1923

#### A Bush Episode

Over fifty years ago I was one of a party of seven men working on the Christmas Reef, situated about 100 miles from Melbourne. Early one morning one of my mates W. Hampson, was seriously injured by the heavy limb of a tree falling on him from a height of 90 feet. I saw the accident happen and when I rushed over to the unfortunate fellow I could see that he was seriously injured, bleeding from the mouth and nose. What was to be done? We were 100 miles away from medical help; but after due consideration we decided to try and get him to Melbourne. We set to work made a light stretcher, covered in as the weather was wet, previously sending the weakest of our party down to McMahons Creek, 14 miles away, to tell the boys an accident had happened, and asking them to meet us. From the Christmas Reef to the top of the range is several hundred feet, but we started. A man named Lowe (he was 6 ft. 2 in. tall) and myself being the two smallest men, had to take the back poles of the stretcher, and it was an arduous climb up that muddy, narrow, packhorse track. However, we pushed on; and after going along a few miles the McMahan diggers came along in twos and threes, and each party thoughtfully provided with a bottle containing spiritual comfort. The blue ribbon cult was not in favor in the ranges in those days. Many hands now made light work. We got to McMahon's in the evening, made torches and traveled all night on the narrow track, often knee deep in mud. We had to climb steep ranges, go through swamps and ford creeks over which there were no bridges. On the morning after the accident we reached Launching Place, procured a roomy waggonette and horses, and set off for the long drive to Melbourne. We

got to Lilydale in the evening at dark, and by this time poor Hampson was delirious. We passed through Brushy Creek (Olinda) as the moon rose, and was not cheered by hearing a mob of wild dogs howling in the thrush near by. Some of the brutes followed our trap for miles, evidently knowing that something was wrong. Well, at last we reached the Melbourne Hospital, and our patient was taken over by the doctors. One of them asked me why we did not get a doctor at the scene of the accident, but I explained to him that we had come to the nearest medical help. "Well," he replied, "If the man is not mortally hurt the journey of 36 hours over bad roads is enough to kill anyone." On examination it was found that Hampson had several ribs broken close to the spine, and one lung badly injured. He recovered, but was never fit for hard work again. I suppose, poor fellow, that he has gone west long ago.

I cannot conclude this old reminiscence without paying tribute to the good qualities of the Upper Yarra miners of the sixties. They were in a crowd of many nationalities, and they generally had names given to them describing their personal appearances or the countries they came from. I never knew the right names of many of them. Thus we had "Big Pat," "Big Bill," "French Charley," "Dutch Harry," "Wombat Dick," "Garabaldi Jack," "Jack the Bear," "Davey the Greek," "Cockney Joe," "Scotch Alick," "Bluenose," "Gentleman John," "Dago Bill," etc., etc. Most of the Upper Yarra men had histories. One or two were classical scholars. A couple of them P. Niven and Dutnall served with Napier in the Baltic at the time of the Russian war. They were both lost years afterwards in the wreck of the General Grant at the Auckland Islands. Jack Barrier fought in the British fleet when it tried conclusions with the forts at Sebastapol in the Black Sea. "Gentleman John" was swept away by a Yarra flood and never seen again. Wells and Johnson died of fever in Queensland. Sergt. John Paul died of starvation and old age in a lonely hut in Gippsland, although, unknown to him, there was a large sum lying to his credit (deferred pay) in the British War Office. Paul fought all through the Crimea and Indian Mutiny, and escaped unhurt. Charley Brown, another digger, went out prospecting and never returned. "Yankee Ned," to my knowledge, made several good rises on the Yarra and other places in Victoria, finishing up with a big fortune in N.S.W. He died an old age pensioner. Of late years Messrs. Bowden Hillditch, Ewart and T. Gilroy have passed away, universally respected. Taking them all together they were in every way a grand lot of men, generous and kind hearted, ever ready to help in any case of sickness or distress, nothing mean or underhand about them; and when they passed their word they never went back on it. I think they have all gone (or nearly all) by this time. I only know of two survivors - myself and Mr Lowe, who is now living at Geelong. We can look back at the end of our lives to difficulties overcome, and many a hard task accomplished in the mountain fastness of the Upper Yarra.

1923

Marysville Beauty Spots

Preserving Cumberland Valley

Reserve of Square Mile Suggested.

A suggestion was made to the acting Premier (Sir William McPherson) last week that an area of atleast one square mile should be set aside permanently in the beautiful Cumberland Valley, near Marysville, to preserve it for tourists. In stating that he thought the proposal reasonable, he said "I am a great believer in preserving our beauty spots throughout the State. They have been neglected in the past."

Members of the Tourist Committee inspected the Cumberland Valley last week, and a report is being prepared for submission to the Acting Premier. The view taken by the Forestry department is that its duty embraces not only the care and preservation of the forests, but also the utilising of any timber which has reached maturity and is therefore fit for cutting. In regard to the Cumberland Valley members of the commission have emphasised that its beauty as a tourist resort will in no way be marred by the limited timber cutting which the commission proposes to allow. Provision will be allowed, it has been claimed, that the gullies which gave the Cumberland Valley its especial charm, shall be immune from the axe of the timber cutter, and, that on the remaining part of the valley only the timber shall be taken which from a forester's point of view, is ripe for cutting and, should, in the interest of the forest itself be taken out. Those who have at heart the preservation of the Cumberland Valley as a tourist resort consider, however, that if once the timber getters were allowed on to this picturesque area its beauty would inevitably be spoiled to some extent, notwithstanding the praiseworthy intentions of the Forestry department.

1923

#### National Park urged

While not opposing the rights of timber getters in certain of the forest areas of the State, Mr. R. Cook MHR for Indi (which includes some of the chief forest reserves in Victoria), believes the famous Cumberland Valley should be reserved as a national park, because of the unusual growth of the giant mountain ash in the area. The proposal of the Forestry Commission to allow timber getters to enter the Cumberland Valley is meeting very strong opposition.

1924

#### Motor Cycle Capsizes

##### Accident on Blacks' Spur

##### Two men injured

The Blacks' Spur was the scene of a motor cycle accident on Monday morning when two young men had a fortunate escape from serious injury. Leslie Northbury, 23, of Alexandra, and his cousin, Harold Northbury, 23, of Caulfield, the latter having been on a fortnight's visit to Alexandra, were on their way to Melbourne and when coming down the Blacks' Spur the brakes failed, the machine capsizing rounding the Devil's Elbow. Both men crashed to the ground and were rendered unconscious.

Luckily two telephone linesmen, Messrs Wills and Hetherton, were near the spot, and went to the assistance of the injured men. They tapped the wires to the Healesville post office, from where word was sent to Dr. H. Symonds, who was taken out to the scene of the accident by Mr. J. Baker. The men were brought to Nurse Townsend's private hospital and given attention. Leslie Northbury (who was in the side car) sustained bad injuries to the face, shock, and slight concussion and Harold Northbury (the driver), suffered from shock, bruises and a jarred shoulder. They left for Melbourne at about 4p.m. the same day. The machine was not badly damaged.

1925

#### A Trip to Ben Cairn

## An Enjoyable Outing

It was a happy thought that prompted Mrs E. Barker, of "Wildwood," to suggest at the last Progress Association meeting an outing to Ben Cairn, prior to winter setting in. The wisdom of this was borne out, as Sunday, the day arranged for the trip, saw the biggest attendance that has ever been present at any similar outing. A good deal of interest was added by the fact that Dr. Brooke Nicholls had decided to take a number of pictures at various points between Healesville and Ben Cairn for his incorporation in his big moving picture of Wonderful Australia.

Shortly after 10.30 am the contingent of about 140 left Healesville. There were motor cars, drags, horsemen and horsewomen, motor cycles and sidecars, and although the day did not promise well, it was evident that the holiday seekers were prepared to "do or die". As it turned out, the weather was pleasant, some of the horsemen being thankful that "old Sol" did not shine brilliantly. Several stops were made on the road. Dr Nicholls taking pictures at various vantage points. There was a deal of haze about, which mitigated against scenery viewing, but those who first time gazed upon the beauties of nature depicted on this trip, even under unfavorable conditions, were amazed and delighted with what they saw. At the turnoff to "The Rock" a number of visitors lunched at different stages on the way. At about 3 pm. the majority were bidding "good day to Ben" and another picture was taken. At about 4 o'clock a move was made for home, and at the finish of the journey it was freely admitted that the outing had been one of the most successful organised by the association, and it started through Mrs Barker, the thanks of those participating are due to her.

1925

## The Maroondah System

The Water Supply Board, which has been formed for the purpose of advising the Government, recommended in 1879 that a survey should be made of the Watts River and its tributaries to determine the practicability of bringing water to Melbourne from that source. This survey was made by Mr. J.H. Davies, whose report, furnished on 18th May, 1880, showed the practicability of conveying Watts water from a point near Healesville to the Preston Reservoir. The work was recommended by the Water Supply Board in May, 1885. The average daily flow of the Watts and its tributaries was given at 42,000,000 gallons, and the minimum at 25,000,000, and it was stated that by erecting a dam 105 feet high across the Watts Valley 2,000,000,000 gallons could be stored.

In 1886 the construction of the Watts River Scheme was commenced, and was completed in 1891, the water being turned on by His Excellency the Governor, the Earl of Hopetoun, on 18th February, in the presence of a large and representative gathering, and the name of the river and system was changed to Maroondah.

The permanent survey and construction of the aqueduct were carried out under the direction of Mr. William Davidson, then Engineer of the Melbourne Water Supply Branch of the Public Works Department. The aqueduct is 41 miles in length, 25.5 miles being open contour channel. There are 12 tunnels of an aggregate length of 6.25 miles, three of these being each about a mile long. Fourteen inverted syphons make up the remaining 9.25 miles.

The complete scheme provides for the erection of the dam already referred to, with an aqueduct capable of carrying 50,000,000 gallons daily. At present there is a concrete weir, with stone coping, constructed at the head of the valley, which will eventually be occupied

by the reservoir. The weir is only sufficiently high to divert the water into the pipes forming the first syphon.

The open aqueduct is lined with cement-concrete, or brickwork in cement, sufficiently high to carry 28,000,000 gallons per day, but the greater part has been completed to the full size, viz., 15 feet wide and 5 feet 11 inches deep, the shape being similar to the Wallaby Aqueduct. The tunnels are driven large enough to carry 50,000,000 gallons daily, and, except where through good hard rock, are also lined with brickwork or concrete. The fall in the open channels and tunnels is 1 foot to the mile.

The valleys of the various streams in the course of the aqueduct are crossed by inverted syphons of 53 or 50 inches diameter, the falls of such syphons being 4 feet and 7 feet 6 inches per mile respectively. The syphon pipes are constructed of riveted wrought iron varying in thickness from 1/4 inch to 3/8 inch according to pressure; some of these pipes have a working pressure of over 100 lbs, to the square inch. With the exception of that at the Plenty River, which is carried by a wrought iron girder bridge well above flood level, all the syphons are laid under the beds of the streams. At each of the charging and discharging basins of the syphons, provision is made for connecting a duplicate pipe, which will then bring the carrying capacity up to 50,000,000 gallons per day. Each of the syphons is provided with a scour-pipe large enough to take the full flow of the aqueduct, thus enabling the water to be diverted down any of the natural watercourses when desirable, instead of being shut off at the head works.

The Maroondah Aqueduct discharges into the Preston Reservoir.

Great care is taken to prevent drainage from land not under the control of the Board entering the aqueducts.

To augment the supply from the Maroondah River a weir was built on the Graceburn, and the water conveyed in an open channel for three quarters of a mile, and thence, in an 18 inch wrought iron syphon, 1.25 miles long, across the valley of the Maroondah into the main aqueduct.

From the Graceburn channel a 7 inch pipe is taken for the supply of the township of Healesville; this is under the control of the Healesville Water Trust.

The watershed of the Maroondah is mainly situated on the southern slopes of that portion of the Great Dividing Range which extends eastwards from Mount St. Leonard. Including the watershed of the Coranderrk Creek, the area is about 40,000 acres.

The country is chiefly porphyritic, overlaid with rich volcanic soil, growing some of the largest timber known. A mountain ash on the Dividing Range, near the top of the Blacks' Spur, measured 295 feet high, and 53 feet round the trunk 6 feet from the ground, and above the buttresses formed by the spreading roots. Taller trees, and others of greater girth, are not uncommon.

All alienated land in the watershed, including the township of Fernshaw, has been purchased, with the result that in the whole area from which water for Melbourne is obtained there is not one habitation draining into the watershed, and horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and dogs are excluded from it.

The township of Fernshaw was formerly a favorite resort of tourists. Situated on the sparkling Watts River, at the foot of the Blacks' Spur, with Mount Juliet and Monda rising on either side, and its houses surrounded by orchards and raspberry gardens spreading up the hill side into the forest of giant eucalypti, beautiful tree ferns and dense undergrowth, it was one of the most picturesque villages in Victoria. The houses have all been razed, and Fernshaw is now only a name on the old maps.

In 1893 the supply in the Maroondah Aqueduct was further augmented by the diversion of Donnelly's Creek (a tributary of the Maroondah). This

was obtained by the construction of a small concrete weir and the laying of about a quarter of a mile of 18 inch earthenware pipes, bringing in 4,000,000 gallons per day, at a cost of only 940 pounds.

In 1907 the needs of the increasing population, which had then advanced to a total of 536,540 persons, made apparent the necessity of entering upon a more active construction policy both as regards additional sources of supply and means of distribution.

The strain upon the Yan Yean Reservoir about this period, which was one of exceptionally low rainfall, was so great that in May, 1908, the level of the water in the reservoir fell to 12 feet 0.25 inches, the lowest depth reached since 3th July, 1883.

The first important work was the raising of the sides of the Maroondah Channel without duplicating the syphons. By this means the discharge of the Maroondah Aqueduct was increased to 29,000,000 gallons per day.

The resources of this aqueduct were further increased to the extent of 3,700,000 gallons per day by a 12 inch and 15 inch pipe extension, 3.75 miles in length, from the Graceburn Syphon, to tap the waters of the Coranderrk Creek at a diversion weir. The water was formally turned on by the Chairman of the Board, Mr. W. J. Carre Riddell, on 15th January, 1909.

The cost of the Coranderrk Scheme was 9,126 pounds.

During the years 1915 and 1916 a definite commencement was made in the direction of constructing Maroondah Dam.

Guagings of the stream flow which had been carried out in 1891 had shown that the minimum flow of the stream was very much lower than had been originally computed, and plans were therefore made for the erection of a structure to store the utmost quantity of water which was possible at the site.

During the years 1915 and 1916 exploratory work was commenced. After the rock had been approximately located by means of shafts and open cuts the rock base for the Dam was further prospected by means of diamond drill borings.

In all the sum of 9,715 pound was spent in exploratory work with a view to obtaining the best possible results for this Reservoir.

The investigations were further fortified by obtaining independent geological reports. These investigations finally confirmed the choice of the site, and on 13th February, 1917, the Board gave authority to proceed with the preparation of designs and estimates for the Dam, and to arrange for clearing the timber in the area of submergence.

The work of clearing was commenced, under contract, in 1917, and was finally completed by day labor.

In 1918 designs were completed for a structure of Cyclopean Rubble Concrete, the particulars of which are as follows:-

Maximum height, 135 feet.

Maximum thickness at base, 101 feet.

Total length on top, 946 feet.

Total capacity, 6,255,000,000 gallons.

Capacity above draw-off level, 4,855,000,000 gallons.

Capacity below draw-off level only to be realised by pumping - 1,400,000,000 gallons.

Area of water service of the proposed lake, 543 acres.

Length around margin of the lake at top water level, 7.5 miles.

The Dam will back up the water a total distance of about 2 miles and will submerge the present diversion weir to a depth of about 40 feet.

The Dam is curved in plan to a radius of 1500 feet and is provided with a complete drainage system to prevent the infiltration of water through the concrete.

The rock available for the construction of the Dam is known as Dacite, and is obtainable in unlimited quantities in close

proximity to the site. It is one of the older volcanic rocks of dense structure, its characteristics partaking of the

nature of Diorite and Granite. Its weight is 165 lbs. per cubic foot.

In August 1918 the first contract was let for diversion of the Maroondah River by an open concrete channel constructed on one side of the valley flat, with temporary dams at each end of the same to divert the course of the river.

As all the sand and cement had to be brought from Melbourne or its vicinity to the terminal of the broad gauge railway at Healesville, and thence to the site of the Dam, it was decided to erect a bi-cable aerial ropeway for conveying materials.

The ropeway was erected in the years 1919-1920 at a cost of 10,961 pounds.

In October 1920, the first contract for the construction of the Dam proper was entered into for the lower portion only, for the sum of 116,955 pounds, and this work was completed in October 1922.

It was immediately followed by a second contract for the completion of the Dam Outlet Tower and subsidiary works, the total amount of which was 502,124 pounds. This contract is at present about half completed.

#### O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra System

Owing to population increasing in an abnormal degree towards the higher levels east and south-east, the Board decided that it was necessary to supplement the supply of water to the metropolis.

It was first considered expedient to postpone the construction of the Maroondah Reservoir in consequence of the pumping that would be involved on account of its low level, and to install a new high level scheme from Upper Yarra sources to supply all Eastern and South-Eastern Suburbs, so that the present and future demands of the Metropolis might be governed by gravitation in whatever direction development should take place.

The Board having decided upon the construction of the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Scheme, an application was made on the 17th February, 1908, to vest in the Board the watersheds of the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Rivers, comprising an area of about 90,000 acres of Crown Lands, which, in 1888, at the instance of Mr. William Davidson, the Government had temporarily reserved from occupation for future water supply purposes.

Considerable delay was caused by a section of the press and public advocating the construction of the Maroondah Reservoir, and eventually a Royal Commission was appointed by the Murray Government to inquire into the "relative merits of the Maroondah and the O'Shannassy River Schemes."

An exhaustive inquiry was held by a Royal Commission, consisting of Messrs. Davidson, Fowler, and Garson, whose report was issued on the 11th August, 1909.

After carefully reviewing the various arguments for and against several schemes, the Commission arrived at the following conclusions:-

(a) The Maroondah enlargement, on the original basis of a dam of 2,400,000,000 gallons capacity would supply an additional 110,000 persons at a cost of about 3 pound 16 per capita.

(B) The O'Shannassy Scheme would provide for an additional 250,000 persons at about 1 pound 16 per capita.

The Commission then goes on to report as follows:- "After earnest consideration we are, therefore, unanimously of opinion that the O'Shannassy project would provide for a greater increase of population than would the completion of the Maroondah Scheme, and at a much lower cost per head."

"The quality of the O'Shannassy water is, undoubtedly, excellent, and the fact that it can be delivered at an altitude to command the highest parts of the metropolitan area is one of its leading points of commendation, and very far-reaching in the economical distribution of the



water hereafter. We have no hesitation, therefore, in recommending the O'Shannassy Scheme as being that which would prove the most efficient and economical possible. As we also venture to express the opinion that the time has arrived when the construction should be seriously considered."

The decision of the Board to carry out the O'Shannassy Scheme instead of the Maroondah Reservoir having been unanimously endorsed by the members of the Royal Commission, the advocates of the Maroondah Reservoir were silenced, and nothing remained but to start the work.

Although the application to vest the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra watersheds was made on the 17th February, 1908, the actual vesting of the O'Shannassy watershed, comprising 32,650 acres, was only gazetted on the 9th February, 1910. Immediately upon the vesting of the watershed the designing of the scheme was pushed on with great rapidity. The first contract was let on the 11th July, 1911, and by October, 1914, the scheme was in full operation for the delivery of 20,000,000 gallons per day.

The O'Shannassy River rises in the slopes of Mounts Strickland, Grant, and Arnold, and junctions with the River Yarra about 8 miles above Warburton. The geological formation is Dacite for the greater part, the balance consisting of Shales and Sanstones.

As the result of a deep humus and heavy protective forest and scrub preserved in their natural state, there is a very reliable stream flow, and the water is of high quality.

The Royal Commission before referred to says of the O'Shannassy River in its report:- "During our inquiry we visited the O'Shannassy River during a period of heavy rains, when it was discharging much in excess of its normal volume, and were surprised to find the water absolutely pellucid. We do not know of any other stream of equal magnitude that under similar weather conditions would present an appearance so favorable in relation to a town water supply."

The river has been diverted by means of a concrete weir at a point about 3.75 miles above its confluence with the River Yarra.

From this point an aqueduct and pipeline, 48.75 miles in length, delivers the water into a new service reservoir of 15,000,000 gallons capacity at Surrey Hills.

The O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Aqueduct consists of 23 miles of open covered channel, 3 tunnels 6 feet and 7 feet in diameter aggregating in length a little over half a mile, 22.75 miles of steel pipes 34-inch to 36-inch in diameter, partly riveted but mainly lock bar pattern, 0.25 of a mile of reinforced concrete pipes 38.25-inch in diameter, and 2 miles of wood stave pipes 30-inch to 36-inch in diameter, or a total of 25.5 miles of pipe line and 23.25 miles of channel and tunnel.

The fall of the channel is 2.1 feet per mile, and that of the pipe lines from 16 feet per mile to 42 feet per mile.

The channel is at present lined with cement mortar to sufficient depth to carry 20,000,000 gallons per day for the greater part, but in sections it is constructed to a depth of 5 feet 2.5 inches, and a top width of 12 feet 10.5 inches, to carry 60,000,000 gallons per day, the tunnels being already completed to the latter capacity.

By duplicating and triplicating the pipe lines and raising the sides of the channels, it will thus be possible in future to bring in the waters of the Upper Yarra and its tributaries in the remaining portions of the 115,000 acres which have not yet been permanently vested in the Board. Extensive and costly additional works of construction, including tunnels, aqueducts, syphons, weirs, etc., will also be required.

Guagings are regularly taken of the Upper Yarra and Armstrong's Creek (the latter is the principal tributary next to the O'Shannassy River), as they form the chief future sources of supply upon which the city must depend.

The O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Aqueduct follows the slopes of the main Yarra Valley to a point near Launching Place, whence it passes through Wandin to Olinda, near Lilydale, at 671 feet above sea level.

Here a pipe-head reservoir of 11,000,000 gallons capacity and screening chambers have been completed, the aqueduct being also carried around this reservoir by a by-pass. The cost was 21,016 pounds.

From Olinda the aqueduct passes to Surrey Hills, via Mitcham 9510 feet above sea level). At the latter site 34 acres have been purchased for the construction of service reservoirs. The first of these has been built, having a capacity of 43,000,000 gallons.

The total cost of the works, hereinbefore described, for the O'Shannassy System was 436,890 pounds up to the 30th April 1915.

The water from the new scheme was turned on in October 1914.

The beginning of that summer marked the culmination of a period of more or less declining rainfall.

The new scheme was available only just in time to avert a shortage of water supply in Melbourne, such as was experienced more or less in every important City in the Australian Commonwealth during this period of exceptional drought.

Guagings of the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Rivers during the 1914 drought showed that the lowest recorded stream flows in the O'Shannassy River was about 12,000,000 gallons per day, and in the Upper Yarra River near Walsh's Creek 5,426,000 gallons per day.

It then became apparent that the Board must prepare for an active programme of storage works to make up for the deficiencies in stream flow during periods of drought.

Concurrently with these investigations endeavor was made to secure some storage basin on the course of the aqueduct closer into Melbourne than the watersheds, and in August, 1917, the Engineer of Water Supply (Mr. Edgar G. Ritchie, M.Inst.C.E) reported that the two most favorable sites, in close proximity, had been located for such a reservoir on tributaries of the Olinda Creek near Mt. Dandenong in the vicinity of the township of Silvan.

The location of these reservoirs opened a wide field for the better exploitation of the O'Shannassy River and Upper Yarra watersheds.

The advantages of the Silvan Reservoir may be summarised as follows:-

They are situated close to the main route of the O'Shannassy Aqueduct and 20 miles from Surrey Hills in suitable wooded surroundings which will be entirely free from settlement of any description. They will be used to take all surplus winter flows in the O'Shannassy Aqueduct and make these available for summer use. They will also secure the Metropolis against risks of break-down attendant upon the 28.5 miles of aqueduct and syphon lines between Silvan and the O'Shannassy Weir. Moreover, they will secure the complete sedimentation of all water before its delivery into the main pipe lines leading to Surrey Hills. The capacity of No. 1 Reservoir is to be about 6,600,000,000 gallons, and No.2 5,600,000,000 gallons, and they will be situated with a top water level of 800 feet above sea level.

The total catchment area of Silvan Reservoir No. 1 is only 2,228 acres, of which 1,105 acres, being part of the Dandenong State Forest, were vested in the Board by Crown Grant in the year 1919. The balance of the land required was purchased from private owners to ensure that the whole of the watershed of the Silvan Reservoir should be in the hands of the Board, and be free from risk of contamination.

In pursuance of a policy of fuller development of the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra sources of Supply, the first steps necessary was the construction of O'Shannassy Dam with a view to equalising the flow of that river so as to make good the deficiency in stream flow, as shown by the record drought of 1914.

The O'Shannassy Dam is an earthen structure of which the following are leading particulars:-

Length on top, 740 feet.

Width on top, 20 feet.

Maximum vertical height above river bed at centre line of dam, 110 feet.

Maximum vertical height above lowest point of down stream toe of dam, 150 feet.

The inner or water slope is three to one faced with irregular stone protection.

The outer slope is two to one with a heavy banquette of pure rock to weigh the downstream toe of the dam, having a slope of two and a half to one.

The dam is situated immediately below the confluence of the main O'Shannassy River and its western branch.

Water will be backed up the former to a distance of about three quarters of a mile, and up the latter to a distance of about half a mile.

Total capacity of the reservoir will be about 930,000,000 gallons.

The area of water surface at top water level is 74 acres.

The structure is to contain a reinforced concrete core founded upon bed rock everywhere through its length, and backed by puddle clay on the upstream side. On the downstream side of the concrete core wall is a broken stone diaphragm to drain the core wall in the event of any percolation of water through puddle and concrete.

In 1922 a contract was let for a tunnel through the solid rock on one side of the Valley to divert the river at site of the Dam, this tunnel to be afterwards used for discharging water from the completed reservoir.

After preliminary investigations, consisting of boring and sinking of the core wall trench by an open cut, several endeavors were made to obtain the construction of the Dam on a contract basis, but it was finally decided in 1923 to proceed by day labor. The work at present is about half completed.

In 1924 the enlargement of the O'Shannassy conduit, to provide for the rapidly increasing population of the eastern and south-eastern suburbs, was commenced.

Instead of enlarging the capacity of the conduit in units of 20,000,000 gallons per day, it was decided to increase the capacity of the conduit to its full original estimate of 60,000,000 gallons per day.

For this purpose the sides of the open channel sections were raised in accordance with the original plan. This work was commenced in 1924. To provide the additional capacity required on the syphon lines one main pipe, in addition to that existing instead of two, as had been originally planned, was arranged for.

This work, consisting of 11.25 miles of 46in. and 8 miles of 54in. steel pipes, was commenced in 1924, and is about half completed.

1926

Opening of Ben Cairn Donna Buang Road

Warburton-Healesville-Marysville Wonder Trip

The morning of Friday, January 22, dawned bright and clear, and the hearts of the president and members of the Warburton Progress League waxed merry indeed.

...

This day, January 22, 1926 will certainly go down in history as a red letter day for Warburton, Healesville and Marysville, for the opening of the Ben Cairn-Donna Buang Road forms the connecting link of a truly wonderful round trip from Marysville and Healesville to Warburton, or vice versa - one which will do much to develop the grandeur of that

splendid country. The weather was literally made to order for a ceremony of this kind, therefore a very large crowd turned out, supplemented by a great number of visitors. Altogether there were 42 motor cars and about 300 people amongst whom were the Minister of Public Works, Attorney General...etc.

A start was made by the Healesville party from the fine edifice known as the Memorial Hall at about 10.45 am, and after two miles had been traversed a turn was made on to the Don road. From this point it was a continual climb, the road winding around the mountain side. When about three miles along the road the magnificent scenery was indescribable. On the left one looked down over some 300 feet and saw the Beautiful Badger Valley and its creek winding in and out and the large tree ferns with the undergrowth, and its forest giants. With Mount Riddell in the background the setting was unique. About four miles further on the scene changes to the right, and looking down and across the property of Mr Connibere the vision is enchanting; in the far distance the townships of Seville and Wandin came into the picture, and, further on, the Westernport bay. One reads a lot about Buffalo - in fact wherever one goes its beauties by big, flaring posters; why this part of the State does not meet with similar publicity is understandable, for it is equal, if not better, than any Alpine tourist resort in Victoria, and lies practically at the back yard of Melbourne, to be reached with very little expense. The reason is not far to seek. There is no Government-owned chalet there! After passing through all this scenic grandeur, which is too magnificent for mere words, the great rock of Ben Cairn is reached. And here, again, there unfolds to the eye a scenic splendor. A fitting place, indeed for the two parties to meet.

After the forces met a move was made from Ben Cairn to the start of the new section, and on arrival here the ladies from Warburton had refreshments ready and treated all to the "cup that cheers" - which put everybody into the best of humor. The wonder of the views obtainable was on the lips of everyone, and many were the laudatory praises given in regard to the trip. After lunch had been partaken of in the shadows of the mount the opening ceremony was performed.

The Minister (Mr Goudie) was introduced by H.E.B. Thomas, president of the Warburton Progress Association, who also bade a hearty welcome to all those present.

...

At an altitude of more than 3000 feet the new road takes off from Ben Cairn and follows a general north-easterly direction to within a mile and a quarter of Mount Donna Buang. Winding through glorious forest glades of myrtle, mountain ash and eucalyptus, the new road passes through scenes of amazing beauty. At times the track sweeps boldly round a great spur on the range, and rising from the valley full 2000 ft. below are seen tier upon tier of forest giants. Though in many cases 200 feet high, these great trees appear dwarfed by the grandeur of the surroundings. Cutting across beautiful ravines and leading around thickly wooded valleys, the road passes through gorgeous avenues of trees where the boughs, interlacing above, form a magnificent archway. Along the whole route the track cuts through what is practically virgin forest.

From Donna Buang the journey to Warburton was made by way of the tourist road which was opened 14 years ago. The forest scenery along this track, which drops more than 2000 ft. to the valley of the Yarra in ten miles, is remarkable for its variety. From the great boles of the mountain ash the growth ranges down to the delightful plumes of the tree and king fern, and the dense glades of Christmas bush and hazel scrub. Six miles further on Cement Creek is reached. From this point the party drove ten miles along the uncompleted road to Marysville. When completed this road will probably be looked upon as one of the scenic attractions of the State, especially as it will be made accessible by easy grades and

comfortable travelling. For twelve miles the road winds along the slopes of the ranges through virgin forests at a level of 2,500 ft. to within five miles of Marysville. Representations have been made to authorities with a view to having the road completed at an early date.

1926

Warburton

(From our correspondent)

Jack Lewis Goes Through  
The Fire Belt

Jack Lewis, the well known marathon walker has furnished me with the following report. As "Jack" knows the country better than most, his narrative of the ravages of the fire as seen from the Baw Baw district, may be taken as authentic.

After aiding in the search for the Donald family, who were burnt at Grant's mill at Big Pats Creek, I left Warburton on Wednesday morning with the object of getting to Mr Harry McLelland, who had been working at his art right in the very center of the Baw Baws for the last four or five weeks. Travelling at the rate of about 60 miles a day, I made from Moe towards Erica. From 12.30 to 1.30 the fires traveled at a rate of 30 miles an hour. I found McLelland and party; they had not come down, and were not aware of the awful tragedy that was taking place around Powelltown and Big Pat's Creek. If they had remained in the position in which I found them for another day they would certainly have had great difficulty in getting away unharmed. After this I took up my patrol duty across the Baw Baw ranges. North-east towards the Thompson watershed the whole country was ablaze; south towards Fumina country and Mt Horsfall it was burnt right out, and away toward Mt. Arnold fires were coming in to the O'Shannassay watershed. Armstrong Creek from the Yarra to its head, and away back from the source of Starvation and McMahon's Creek the country was all ablaze, the only peaks not alight being Mt. Buller, Mt. Feathertop and Mt. Skinner. Mt Singleton was not on fire on top but was burning at the foot. The head of the McAllister River and out eastward from the Baw Baws was just a blazing mass. Thursday morning broke very clear, but the smoke was so thick in the gullies it was impossible to see anything down there. On the Friday morning the smoke was awful right along the peaks. The head of the Warburton fire was met nineteen miles on the other side of McVeigh's and I had to double back into the creek on the right branch of the Yarra to come through. It was heart-breaking to know that this most wonderful scenery was destroyed. The Baw Baw shelter huts at 15 miles, with stables, have gone - nothing left. Trees from one to eight feet have been burnt to ashes. The track is in an awful state, right into Walsh's Creek. It is the first time in all my long and intimate experience of the bush in all parts of Australia that I have had to throw away food and other necessities to get through. Two men whom I was on the look out for had, much to my relief turned back to McVeigh's at Walsh's Creek. On the high points on both sides of the Yarra Valley only two spots by creeks - one at the seven and the other at the nine mile keep green; all the others are scorched - burnt right out. On the north side of the track on the Great Dividing Range there are two fires, one from Walsh's Creek and the other from Mt Kelly, these should just about meet today (Saturday). On the west side of the Baw Baw track, from the peak of Mt. Horsfall right down through Loch Valley, Neerim and Noojee is burnt right out, and fires are making towards Mt McDonald, not far from Warragul. Round about Mt Gregory there is a stretch of the finest pink mountain ash timber, the only hope of saving which is by the

downfall of rain. On the north side towards Big River fires were burning slowly Saturday week, but by Friday last the whole countryside was fairly gutted. These two fires, the one from Matlock and the other from Mt Kelly, will just about meet to-day and will spread towards Frenchman's Creek, Big River and right across to Mansfield.

Lewis went up on Sunday week to watch about the Acheron Valley where a fire was said to be steadily burning, the salvation of which could only be brought about by rain. A continuation of the dry spell and heavy north winds would undoubtedly have meant grave danger and great damage in that country, but fortunately the rain of Sunday last effectively quelled the fire.

1926

#### Lost in the Bush Unsuccessful Search

The largest search party ever organised in this district was out all day on Sunday at Marysville, combing the mountain fastness in the hope of finding Miss Olive B Pitman, proprietress of Koorringa guest house, Marysville, who had been missing from her home since Thursday, July 8.

Investigations made during the previous ten days on the roads leading into Marysville had revealed the fact that Miss Pitman, instead of, as was first thought, proceeding to the cemetery to visit the grave of her father, who died some months ago, had walked eleven miles along the Woods' Point road. A well metalled thoroughfare, it was in the occasional soft patches that her footprints could be discerned. Bushmen through exhaustive search and examination, had been able to establish the fact that Miss Pitman had wandered back along the road to Marysville. It is not considered likely that Miss Pitman took any of the recognised trails, which are kept in order by the Marysville Tourist Association. If she had, it is regarded as certain that she would have been observed by the bushmen or the black trackers, who had been sent up from Melbourne. Opinion, therefore, is that Miss Pitman stepped directly off the road into the bush, and wandered until exhausted.

The bush through which the Woods' Point road runs is so dense that, without some definite indication as to where she left the road the task of finding Miss Pitman is considered almost impossible. The mountains in this district are well opened up with good tracks and it would be hard for anyone knowing the country to get lost for any length of time. The generally accepted theory is that Miss Pitman suffered a severe nervous breakdown two years ago, the theory is that her memory suddenly failed on July 8, with the result that she wandered off into the bush and was unable to recognise any of the landmarks which would have guided her in normal circumstances.

Ever since Miss Pitman's disappearance parties of searchers have scoured the bush daily without success, and on Saturday Constable Bartholomew, of Healesville, organised a big party to take up the search. On Sunday morning motor cars provided by Messrs. Smith and Pollard, P.L. Mac Namara, D. Burns, C.M. Graham, D. Cherry and Mrs Murrell conveyed over 60 volunteers from Healesville to Marysville. The party was in charge of Mounted Constable J. Constable and left Healesville shortly after 7 a.m. It joined forces with the Marysville searchers under Mounted Constable Ware, and roughly 130 men took up the search. In addition to volunteers from Healesville and Marysville, men from Narbethong, Buxton and Rubicon joined in. At 10.30 a start was made 2.5 miles on the Marysville side of Cumberland Falls. The party diverted into fours and a systematic combing of the country was made. Instructions were issued to work to the Cumberland bridge on the Woods' Point road, and by this means overlapping was avoided.

Snow had fallen during the previous night, and lay heavy in parts. Many false trails were followed, some of which proved to be the tracks of opossum hunters. What appeared to be the imprint of a woman's shoe was discovered in the snow but disappeared after a few yards. Search was made over country untouched by black trackers and through rough and heavy timber to the Cumberland Falls. The separate parties met at Cumberland bridge at about 1 p.m., and after a short rest set out again. The mountain fastness around Cora Lynn falls and every depression and recess was thoroughly investigated, but no trace of the missing woman was found. The country traversed was rough and rugged, and thick with scrub and heavy timber. Several members of the various parties had from time to time to hew their way through the dense scrub. The long search proved unsuccessful, and at 4.30 the men returned to Marysville, after an exhausting day. The Healesville party returned back at 8 p.m. All hope of finding Miss Pitman has now been abandoned and organized search has been given up.

1926

New Track to Mathinna Falls  
Refused by Metropolitan Board

The Healesville Tourist and Progress Association recently directed the attention of the Metropolitan Board of works to the fact that owing to the construction of the Maroondah Reservoir the track to Mathinna Falls has been submerged, and as this place was considered one of the finest beauty spots in the district it was desired that the board should construct a track that would lead to Condon's Gully and then on to Mathinna Falls.

The board has informed the association that it cannot see its way to the establishment of any new tourist tracks at Healesville, as there was ample evidence to show that such tracks are a definite source of danger to the purity of the water supply, and the more isolated they were the greater was the difficulty in controlling the actions of holiday makers. It was pointed out that although the old Mathinna Falls track had been obliterated the scenic beauty of the locality had been greatly added to by the creation of a fine sheet of water, which could be viewed by holiday makers and pleasure seekers under the proper regulations, and in those parts from which danger to the supply is not to be feared, as they are under close supervision. The provisions being made for planting and beautification on the downstream side of Maroondah Reservoir will be of much more benefit in this respect than the old track to Mathinna Falls, to which access is now prevented.

1927

Healesville-Ben Cairn Road  
  
Great Scenic Beauty

The secretary of the tourist resorts committee (Mr A.E. Corbon) said on Friday that the committee was of opinion that the expenditure incurred in the construction of the Ben Cairn and Mount Donna Buang road, linking Healesville and Warburton with a splendid high level scenic tourist route, had been fully justified.

Evidence of the growing popularity of the road, added Mr Corben, was furnished by the fact that 360 motor cars had passed over it on one day at the Christmas holidays, some making the journey at night. Thousands of motorists had traversed the road since its opening. Despite the

occasional statement that the road was dangerous, the committee regarded it as safe.

Being a mountain road with miles of side cutting, it was one on which careful driving was necessary. It was not a road for the novice or reckless driver. With a maximum speed of 15 miles an hour it was quite safe. The Public Works department had increased the number of passing places, widened the road at the bends, and generally extended the line of views overlooking the Yarra Valley for many miles, and revealing at close quarters the beauty of fern and beech groves, the road was justly considered one of the foremost scenic roads in Australia.

The great mass of the Ben Cairn rock was a remarkable viewpoint. For picnic parties special provision had been made at two other selected points, known as "The Font" and "Cement Creek Turn," where water had been brought down in pipes. A pretty rustic kiosk had been erected at Cement Creek Turn. The old timber tower erected at the top of Mt Donna Buang by the late Mr. C. Catani having become unsafe, steps had been taken to substitute a steel tower, which had been used on a Bendigo gold mine. The tower would soon be in position, and would enable visitors from a height of about 60 ft. to enjoy a magnificent panoramic view. In addition it would serve as a lookout station in bushfire season.

In conclusion, Mr Corben said that from Cement Creek Turn a tourist road had been constructed over the Acheron Valley towards Marysville for about eight miles, but through traffic was not yet possible.

1927

#### Warburton

##### Property Missed

Two men working at the O'Shannasseys weir were surprised on returning to their camp on Tuesday afternoon to discover that some of their property was missing. One William Inlach was minus a blue twill suit, a shirt, socks and 3 pound 7 in cash; while the other Aubrey Calvert, missed a watch, belt and socks. The police at Warburton were communicated with at about 5.30. Suspicion fell on a man who left the works that afternoon, and the police ascertained that he had reached Warburton. From information gleaned they were satisfied he had left by the 5.35 pm train to Melbourne, and between 7 and 8 o'clock a message was sent to the Lilydale police with the object of intercepting the subject. As the message was too late to allow of this being done at Lilydale, the Ringwood police were notified, and when the train reached the man named Frank Buckley was located and questioned. He was subsequently arrested on a charge of having stolen the property missed by the two men. Buckley will be arraigned at the Warburton court on Thursday next.

1927

#### Maroondah Reservoir

##### Condition of Retaining Wall.

Motorists who have passed near the retaining wall of the Maroondah Reservoir recently have noticed what appear to be a number of leaks in the face of the dam wall, and the report has been circulated that the reservoir is leaking seriously. Commenting on these reports, the engineer for water supply of the Board of Works (Mr Ritchie) said on Wednesday that a number of small contraction cracks had developed in the wall and a small quantity of water was escaping through some of them.



"There is nothing unusual or alarming about the cracks in the wall," said Mr Ritchie. "They are exactly similar to contraction cracks which occurred in the wall last winter. They may close in the summer, but if they do not we will not be worried. Cracks of this kind are common in all large dams such as that at Maroondah, but they do not endanger the structure, nor is the amount of water which escapes through them sufficient to be of an importance. It is full, is in a perfectly sound and normal condition. It is full, and we are letting surplus water out through the overflow.

1928

## To Yarra Falls in the Eighties

By Geo. Lyell

In the old days, in 1888 and 1889, I remember taking part in Saturday afternoon and holiday excursions with the members of the Field Naturalists' Club, but I never remember any speech-making on those occasions. In those days, Mr. F. G. A. Barnard was secretary of the Club, as well as editor of the Naturalist, and he was one of the most indefatigable of the excursionists, usually acting as leader. Messrs A. H. S. Lucas and C. Frost were working at the lizards of Victoria, and were interested in the snakes, too. I remember six or eight of us going down to Tooradin for the day - two lady members with us. During the morning, Frost caught three fine, big Copperhead Snakes, which he carried in a canvas bag over his shoulder. When lunch time came, the provisions were pooled, and while the billy was boiling, the ladies unwrapped the packets of sandwiches. Coming to the canvas bag over his shoulder. When lunch time came, the provisions were pooled, and while the billy was boiling, the ladies unwrapped the packets of sandwiches. Coming to the canvas bag, they started to investigate that, but dropped it rather suddenly when they were told what it contained!

Healesville was another place I remember visiting, and Messrs. Barnard, D. Best, and J. Searle were with us on that day. There, for the first time, I took the butterfly, *Tisiphone abconia*. I little thought that investigations regarding the races of butterfly, by my friend, G. A. Waterhouse, of Sydney, would bring him his degree as Doctor of Science.

My only long excursion with the Club was to the falls of the Upper Yarra, in November, 1889. There were six of us in the party - Prof. Baldwin Spencer, Messrs. Frost, Best, Scarle, Ashworth, and myself. Our tent and provisions left Melbourne, by dray, two or three days earlier than we did, and were overtaken at Marysville. Four of us tramped from Healesville to Marysville, and there Prof. Spencer and Scarle joined us. We stayed for the night at Keppel's and were told that several exploring parties had made the attempt to reach the Yarra Falls, but had failed. Searle had taken a fine specimen of *Oncyodes lutosaria* at the light, at Keppel's on the evening before. He gave me this, and it was ten years or later that I took another, in the Pyrethre Ranges. Best knocked a fine *Arhodia lasioemparia* into his beetle-umbrella, and I came in for that, too. Just outside Marysville. I remember taking the little *Philobota herodiella*, for the first time (I was then a raw beginner).

I fancy we camped the first night at something over 4000 feet, on the upper slopes of Mount Arnold; and the second night at an old, deserted wayside place, called "The Scandinavians." We found that the long-disused Woods Point road was impassable for the dray; so we planted that vehicle and part of our provisions, put pack-saddles on our two horses, and loaded them up. Another 25 miles and we reached the "Yarra Track Hotel"; five miles further on we camped. In the morning it was raining, and when, ten miles further on, we came to the point where we had to leave the old

road, things did not look too promising. We found the old surveyors' track which we were seeking; that had been cut back in the sixties, and did not appear to have been used since. We could trace it by the stumps of the trees that had been felled, but forest giants had fallen across it, especially in the gullies, and in some places we had to cut a way for our packhorses.

Three miles down this track, we were all wet through, and Best and Searle decided to tramp back, 50 miles or so, to the Yarra Track Hotel, and await our return there. The others determined not to give in yet. We had managed another two miles by four o'clock in the afternoon. Then, on a bit of rising ground, we cut a small clearing in the dripping scrub, put up our tent, and after an hour's work, managed to get a fire going, in a big log a few yards away. We cut scrub for the floor of the tent, and then a lot of treefern fronds, and fortunately we had a bit of waterproof covering on our blankets. So, after a good deal of trouble we managed to get a fairly dry place to sleep in. It was just as well, for it rained for the best part of three days, and the surrounding scrub was so wet it was impossible to go more than a few yards from the tent.

Being weather bound cut our time short and made inroads in our provisions. The falls were still about 15 or 16 miles away (according to our maps), and we found that, if we did not reach them on the morrow, we should have to give it up. The rain stopped in the late afternoon, and we determined to make the attempt at daylight. We were up soon after 3 a.m., and got everything ready, and it was not quite 4.30 a.m. when we started, leaving the pack horses with the man at the tent. We followed the old surveyors' track for some miles, losing it here and there, where a tangle of big trees had come down, and having to scout round till we found it again. There we had to leave it and travel by compass, blazing the trees with a tomahawk, to show us our way back.

We went for miles through a big Beech forest, the going there being better for scrub, but worse for the surface-roots of the Beech trees. Some of these trees had a soft fungus plant growing in the branches, the colour and, some, the size of ripe apricots. Just at midday we reached the stream we were seeking, and we were less than a mile above the falls. Owing to the previous days rain, the river was full and about 15 feet wide and three feet deep. As we got to the top of the falls, the noise was so loud we had to shout to make ourselves heard. The waters were a white mass disappearing down the mountain gully.

Spencer and Frost managed to climb down over 600 feet, and took a number of photographs - the first time these biggest falls in Victoria had been photographed. Then Spencer lost his presentation aneroid, and nearly came to grief himself. Meanwhile, Ashworth and I had found the nest of the Pink-breasted Robin - a little cup of green lichen, on a Beech bough overhanging the stream. I cut a big shield on the bark of a tree on the bank, with the letters F.N.C. and the date. I wonder if they are still decipherable! Spencer and Frost climbed up again, and, after a short rest, we ate a small bit of damper each - and had finished our provisions. It was 4 p.m. when we started for home, and we got along pretty well while the daylight lasted. Then we lit a fire, and waited an hour or two till the moon rose, when the fun began. One of us would find a blazed tree, and the others would scout out for the next. Progress was slow.

Though we had not much to carry, the camera and its plates, and even the tomahawk, became heavier and heavier, and every now and then we had to spell; every few yards there were logs across the path, some of them so big it was all we could do to climb over them. Fortunately, we found plenty of water, but had nothing left to eat. However, the night wore on, and the sun was in the tree-tops and the birds were awake when, at last, we sighted the tent, just before 4 a.m. That was a walk of 23 hours, and I suppose one of the longest in the history of the Club's excursions. The

distance was only about 30 miles, but in the trackless mountain forest it seemed double that.

Our man at the tent had some rice boiling over the fire and I distinctly remember the difficulty of keeping sufficiently awake to eat it, though we had been 12 hours without food. We told the man to wake us at nine; then we struck our tent, fixed the packs on our horses, and started on our homeward journey. We came out on to the old Woods Point road at 1 p.m., and there the five of us divided one of the smallest tins of sardines and a crust of damper, and the last morsel of our provisions was soon consumed. We were about 15 miles from the Yarra Track Hotel, and were rather footsore. It was just getting dark when we reached there, and rejoined our friends, Bestand Searle. There we had lots to eat (including, I remember, smoked blackfish, which they told us were taken there up to 6lbs, in weight), and felt too lazy to put up the tent (the accommodation was stretched to its utmost to accommodate Best and Searle). As it was raining, we slept on the wood floor of an old barn.

Next day we tramped the 25 miles to the spot where we had planted our dray and provisions; and the following day, over the Cumberland Valley, and along past Tommys Bend, into Marysville, which was reached as the church bells were ringing on Sunday evening. There we had one of the biggest meals of our lives! Spencer caught the coach on Monday morning, and the rest of us tramped through Narbethong over the Blacks' Spur, and, I think, camped at Fernshaw. Next day into Healesville, and the following to Yarra Glen and up to the Christmas Hills; then by the evening train to Melbourne - and home. We were away about a fortnight, and had tramped more than 200 miles.

The distances traveled were, of course, too long to permit of much collecting, but we felt that we were making history for the Field Naturalists' Club, and were content. The following year I came up to Gisborne, and my opportunities of attending meetings of the Club have been very few and far between; it is only through the pages of the Naturalist that I am able to keep in touch with our club. I am very pleased to know that it is prospering greatly in these days.

1928

Warburton

Mt. Donna Buang Tower

An added attraction to the glorious scenic views to be obtained by tourists has been provided in the form of a look-out tower on the summit of Mount Donna Buang. The idea originated with the Warburton Progress Association which, after approaching the Government Tourist Committee on the matter, accorded financial support, along with the Marysville Association. Not only will the tower be appreciated by visitors but the Forestry Department realises that the tower will be most useful as a look-out for forest fires that it has had it connected by telephone with the exchange. It is intended that the official opening will take place this month, and while at present it has been tentatively fixed for Friday 27<sup>th</sup> inst it will probably be altered to a Wednesday so that the people of Warburton will be able to take advantage of the half holiday to participate in the function. An official luncheon is to be provided for invited guests, representatives of public bodies in particular. On Monday last the Upper Yarra Shire council accepted the invitation of Cr. Horsey (president of the Warburton Progress Association) to be present.

1928

Accident at Fernshaw

On Tuesday morning a carriers motor lorry met with an accident at Fernshawe, and the driver Mr. Bowman, was badly injured. With a companion, Mr Dickenson, Mr Bowman was on his way from Healesville to Alexandra and when close to Fernshawe noticed a motor car coming towards him. He pulled off the road to give room, and his steering gear jammed, the trunk striking a tree with terrific force. Both men were picked up in an apparently serious condition. He was brought to Healesville and given attention by Dr. L.F. Freemantle. He was badly knocked about and was later taken back to Melbourne. Mr Dickensen escaped with a few bruises and scratches.

1929

A New Tourist Road

The Acheron Way

Round Trip from Healesville

The official opening of the Acheron Way, which will make available a wonderful round trip from Healesville to Ben Cairn, along the Cement Creek to Narbethong and return to Healesville by way of the Blacks' Spur, will be performed by His Excellency the Governor (Lord Somers) on Wednesday, Jan 16.

A large party from Melbourne is expected to be present, and the Narbethong Progress Association has issued a number of invitations to district public bodies to attend. Those who have been invited from Melbourne will travel by way of Warburton, and the cars will meet representatives of the Narbethong and Marysville Progress Associations at 12.30 at a luncheon ground about six miles from the Narbethong end of the road. The official opening will begin at this spot at 1.30 and at 2.30 cars will begin the return journey travelling to the main Healesville-Marysville road and back to Melbourne by way of Blacks' Spur and Healesville.

1929

Majestic Marysville

The Cumberland Valley

New Reserve Defined.

Following the statement by the Minister for Forests (Mr Pennington) that he had decided to permanently reserve one square mile of the Cumberland Valley as a national scenic forest, the details of this area, as far as they have been decided on, were announced on Saturday. The area will be created mainly by extending the reservation of the 380 acres made in 1923 to the east and west of its present boundaries. In addition a picturesque strip along the banks of the Armstrong Creek will be included. The reservation will be irregularly shaped, but members of the Forests Commission say that it will include the finest scenic timbered area in the valley. It will be easily accessible, and will be carefully supervised to ensure that its natural attractions are not impaired.

The area of 380 acres reserved in 1923 lies near the mouth of the Cumberland Valley. It is almost square with its south-eastern corner approximately at the junction of the Cumberland Creek and the Cora Lynn Creek. The road from Marysville to Woods' Point passes almost through its

centre. It is traversed by the Cumberland Creek, and the Cora Lynn Creek passes through it, parallel to its southern boundary. To provide the new reservation of one square mile, the western boundary will be extended to the eastern spur from the Dividing Range. In addition a long strip of territory will be added to the south-eastern corner of the reservation.

#### Preserving Beauty Spots.

This territory will extend from the junction of the Cumberland and Corra Lynn Creeks - known usually as the "Meeting of the Waters" - along the valley of the Armstrong River, which is formed by the joining of the two creeks. This valley contains one of the finest myrtle groves in Victoria, and it is expected that when its beauty spots become better known it will be one of the most popular picnic spots in the ranges. The Commission intends to strictly preserve this grove and to maintain its natural beauty. The reservation will then take the form of a strip of territory nearly two miles long and more than half a mile wide, running approximately east and west, and including the whole of the mouth of the valley. For nearly the whole of its length it will be traversed by the Marysville-Woods' Point road, and every portion of it will thus be accessible. In addition the area now set aside is provided with many tourist tracks.

An effort will be made to provide for the construction of tracks in the new portions. Some years ago a track skirted its southern boundary but this has now become overgrown and is no longer passable. It is hoped to make adequate provision for visitors to reach the myrtle grove along the Armstrong River.

Officers of the Forests Commission will visit the Cumberland area shortly to complete surveys, which have already begun, and to mark out the boundaries of the new reservation.

#### Memorial to Soldiers

On behalf of returned soldiers the president of the Victorian branch of the Returned Soldiers League (Mr H.J. Martin) has expressed gratification at the decision of the Minister to reserve permanently this area as a memorial to Victorians who died in the war.

1929

#### Sensation at Marysville

##### Lost in the Mountains

##### Holiday Party's Adventure

Becoming lost in the bush near the Cumberland Valley while on a walking trip on Tuesday morning, three men were obliged to spend the night in the bush under trying conditions. Considerable anxiety, which was felt in the township for their safety, was increased when a search party which spent Wednesday morning looking for the men returned at mid-day and reported that they could not be found. A larger party was dispatched in the afternoon and the men were rescued shortly after 5 o'clock. The missing men were Frank Smith aged 35 years of Chapel Street, Windsor; Joseph Train, 55, of Melbourne and Gilbert Allen, 19, of Melbourne.

With a number of friends the men who were visitors to Marysville, left at 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning to walk to Lake Mountain. They traveled in motor cars to a point about six miles along the Marysville-Woods' Point road, where the track to the mountain begins there they left the rest of the party, which proceeded to Taggerty River and began the climb up a blazed trail to Lake Mountain. The Country which is a portion of the picturesque but heavily timbered Cumberland area, was so densely overgrown that they had difficulty in forcing their way along the trail, but succeeded in following it until Lake Mountain was reached. They then had lunch and later set out on the return trip. After proceeding about half a mile they discovered they had missed the trail. After several

efforts were made to find it they lost all sense of direction in the rugged bush, and found themselves wandering, hopelessly lost.

The sun was then beginning to set, and, expecting that a search party would come for them, they decided to wonder no further from the locality where a search was likely to be made. Selecting a sheltered spot, they made, a large fire and camped for the night. Although the morning had been bright the night was overcast, and, despite the large fire, the party suffered considerably from cold and hunger, and were unable to sleep. They remained at the camp site all Wednesday.

When the cars returned to Lake Mountain trail in the afternoon and found the men were not there no concern was felt. It being presumed that they had returned to Marysville. Until dark the return of the party was expected, and no anxiety was felt until late in the night, when it was too late to arrange a search. Early on Wednesday Constable J.W. Taylor and Mr. F. Barton organised a search party. With a larger party the search resumed in the after noon. Searchers included Mr J. Lewis a ranger of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, an experienced bushman who knows the mountain intimately. Mr Lewis had furnished himself with a blanket and provision for two days. Climbing Mount Arnold, half a mile from Lake Mountain, in the evening Mr. Lewis found tracks. He followed them and in a few minutes reached the camp of the missing men who were exceedingly hungry but otherwise little the worse for their experience. They were brought back to Marysville by Mr Barton.

1929

Scaling East Wall of  
the Acheron Valley

What Walkers Found

(By a Special Correspondent)

Tourists who have driven through the Acheron Valley, from Narbethong to Warburton, or have walked along the old track that rambled along, crossing tributary after tributary of the Acheron River, might have wondered what the valley was like off the beaten track, and what a closer view would reveal of the walls with which the Great Dividing Range hems the valley.

My curiosity got the better of me, and I found a curious formation. The Dividing Range, after reaching Mt Strickland, takes a sudden dip to the southward to within a few miles of Warburton and Donna Buang. Then as suddenly it turns to the north and passing over Mt Vinegar, crossing the Blacks' Spur and resumes its normal east-west course over Mts. Monda and St Leonard. Such a vicious bite southward of a northward flowing river provides something unusual for the tourists.

The little track which wound southward from Narbethong in 1923 has been supplanted by the Acheron Way, and something of the awe inspiring nature of a trip through the valley provides new material for many holidays.

Track Marked "Indistinct"

At Easter we chose the east wall. Those who know the tourist map of the district will recall a track marked which starts from Splitter's Camp near the extreme south of the valley, and winds northward over the Divide to the summit of Mt. Strickland. This track has tantalisingly been marked "indistinct" by the tourist authorities, and they warn you that it is overgrown and cannot advise you to attempt to follow it.

The beginning of this track is a few yards due east of the hut at Splitters' Camp. After following it straight up the spur for about a mile it lost itself completely in the undergrowth. The way lay straight up the

spur, and we went on. After scrambling and pushing, we reached the brow of the spur. The undergrowth suddenly petered out and gave way to snow grass and box, which formed a park-like plateau. There were several miles of this park-like land along this part of the Divide, and this stage of the journey is comparatively easy.

4250 Feet up.

Following the spur in a nor'-nor' easterly direction for about four miles we came to the summit marked on the tourist map, "4250ft." - the highest point in the district.

Once the spur from Splitters' Camp is climbed, the rise is gradual all the way to the summit. A car could negotiate it with ease. Half way from the Splitters' Camp to the 4250 point a true plateau formation occurs where it seems this spur makes a junction with the Dividing Range proper. An area of a mile square seems to sweep gradually upward and concentrate on a central point crowned with a cap of snow gums. This area is covered with fallen timber, and the standing trunks of dead stunted gums are like the dried skeletons of some arboreal shambles. The only living thing is the snow grass. Standing on the southern rim of this plateau one gets the impression that the whole earth is sweeping majestically upward to one central point.

After crossing the plateau the top of the Divide, though still wide, is more normal in size. Although freely dotted with clumps of snow gums the park like nature of the country continues until, on the verge of a rapid descent northward, it culminates in the 4250 point.

Fine View Through Gums.

Snow gums at present mar what would otherwise undoubtedly be the finest viewpoint in the district. It is necessary to move from point to point to obtain views in different directions. To the northward are the closely wooded top of Mt Strickland on the left, the beginning of the Poley Range on the right, and between them the westerly portion of the O'Shanassy watershed. Directly to the north, over Paradise Plains can be seen Mt. Kitchenier, beyond which lies Marysville, and still further away the Cathedral Mountain and the places around Buxton. To the right of Mt. Kitchenier lie Mt. Grant and Mt. Arnold, Snowy Hill and Lake Mountain ridge stretching away to the north.

On the west of the 4250 point the immediate foreground to the steep walled valley of the Acheron, looking more precipitous than ever from this perch on the eastern rim Mt. Vinegar rises directly opposite. Beyond Mt. Vinegar lie Mounts Monda and St. Leonard and Mt. Macedon. South of these are the plains around Melbourne. Port Phillip Bay, with the You Yangs in the distance.

Southward are the Acheron Gap, through which we had come from Warburton, and Mt. Donna Buang with the lookout tower clear against the skyline.

Sudden Dip

Continuing northward the ridge of the Divide dips steeply. The dip ceases abruptly after a mile, in an unbroken rise to Mt. Strickland, four or five miles further north. Our descent was hampered by fallen timber and dense clumps of snow gums. The Gap at the foot of this descent is a pleasant surprise. Tall trees with a carpet of snow grass, and walled on the north by a grove of beech trees, made a pleasing picture. This beech grove is on a spring which form the head waters of one of the many westward flowing tributaries of the Acheron River.

Our next objective was the falls on the southern most tributary of Deep Creek. In the O'Shanassy watershed. It is only a mile from the Gap, but

the country is tricky. Use of compass and some head work got us there without much trouble.

The first part of this stage of the journey is through a desolate piece of fire-swept country, thickly covered with fallen timber and dead gum saplings. The last stage is along a creek bed lined with beech trees until within 200 or 300 yards of the falls, the creek joins the main stream.

#### Falls Drop 200feet

These falls have a total drop of 200 feet. Unlike Steavenson's Falls, they lack the majesty of a single, long fall, but leap from ledge to ledge in drops of from four to twenty feet. We climbed down the falls and up again. It is an exhilarating scramble and does not present any uncomfortable situations.

Returning to the Gap, we found the slopes of Mt. Strickland densely timbered. An axe would be frequently needed to reach the summit, so the vote went against Mt. Strickland.

We returned to the Acheron Valley and civilisation by way of the creek which finds its source at the Gap. It was an arduous two or three hours' journey down precipitous slopes and through their tangles of undergrowth.

We spent two nights practically on top of the Dividing Range during this trip.

The trip could be made in two days, spending the night at the Gap. The greater part of the week could profitably be spent wondering on this portion of the Divide.

The old "track indistinct" of the tourist map has not been used for years. There is an interesting trip for somebody re-breaking the ground between the Gap and Mt. Strickland.

1929

#### Pioneer Sketches

(By E. Nicholls)

From time to time Mr E Nicholls a former resident of the Healesville Shire, who was one of the early settlers in the Marysville district, has contributed interesting reminiscences of the early history of Healesville and Marysville. In submitting these sketches Mr. Nicholls states that all the incidents and individuals occurred and existed but at times the names are fictitious. Brown and Wilson described in the following were the last of the old time diggers to go.

#### Jim Brown's Station

It was a bitterly cold night, with a wily wind roaring through the tree tops. Cold flakes of snow struck my face ever and anon, causing an unpleasant chill. The treacherous white stuff lay deep in the ground filling my horse's hoofs and causing him to stumble when a large lump was discarded. It was a very dark and the track difficult to follow, and a night in the bush in the present mood would be dismal and unpleasant; but these thoughts were interrupted by the appearance of a light through the bush, and my destination for the night - Jones's Half-Way Hotel - was near. On arrival I found a jovial crew of diggers, bushmen and others, waiting for the snow storm to cease to return to their huts. They were merry, and freely sampling the various liquors of the establishment. They were all good natured and in the best of humors, inviting me to join them in their carousal and mirth, tending to story and song. Some were decent singers, and the form varied solo to community when the whole raised their voices in harmony. I moved to the big log fire in the large bush chimney where, two, withdrawn from the merry throng, were sitting. These



I learnt were Charley Wilson and Jim Brown, both diggers who had good sluicing mines in nearby creeks.

Jim Brown informed me that he had a station down on Bear's Creek, and a decent hut and gardens, where he grew vegetables and fruit, and invited me to come and pass a night with him, informing me that he had some superb hay for my horse and that I would get an idea of a bush bachelor's home. This was my first meeting with Brown and Wilson, and most of the other diggers, but down the years which followed I came to know them all well and was often entrusted with parcels of gold to take to their agents or send by registered post to the Mint.

A few years later a reef near Brown's station on Bear's Creek was taken up by a Melbourne company under the name of the "Bear's Reef." In connection with supplying a battery to the company it was necessary for me to get special information on the locality. Remembering Brown's invitation I arrived one evening and made my mission known. Brown, who was preparing tea, was amiability itself and hopped round and made my horse comfortable in a shed and supplied him with hay. He showed me the aspect and outlines of his home, a small clearing of about an acre in which he had many fruit trees, currant, raspberry and gooseberry bushes, growing, with all kind of vegetables - potatoes, melons, pumpkins and many others - several swarms of bees, and a two-roomed hut with skillion rooms. Here he lived the simple life, getting in meat and groceries and growing all the vegetables he required to make his jams and preserves. While down in the creek he worked an alluvial sluicing claim which gave him very fair returns of gold. Thus he lived alone on his station in the heart of a great virgin forest. "The world forgetting, by the world forgot." Once a week the mailman brought him his mail and groceries; often it consisted of his weekly paper, "The Leader," which he read religiously from week to week, gleaning therefrom the news of the world and the Colonies, as they were then termed. Each week after reading them, he stacked them in tidy, trim parcels on shelves in one of the skillion rooms. Asked why he was so careful in keeping them, he replied. They and fresh bread and butter on the tables.

The volunteers were resting after a line search through the bush.

One cheerfully volunteered to take me further, past the police tape now threaded through the trees, marking off a major crime scene.

Another 100m on and a large white van, marked Mountain District Mobile Police Facility, was parked on the track.

Det Sen-Sgt Charlie Bezzina, of the homicide squad, nodded a greeting. So did Det. Sen-Sgt Steve Waddell, whose job includes missing people.

There were seven detectives in suits gathered by a small table, also supplied by the Red Cross, with plates of bananas and apples for the police.

The embers of a campfire smouldered close by. No one said a thing.

There was silence except for the buzzing of bushflies and the distant sound of bellbirds.

About 100m from the van and just 10m off the track was the grave.

Two forensic specialists with rubber gloves were closely examining the piles of earth beside the hole. They took pictures, close up.

One of the men climbed into the hole in his rubber boots. The depth hardly reached his knees.

It seemed incredibly small and shallow to have held two adult bodies.

Two adult bodies.

That's all the police were saying in a brief news conference they held down the track.

They were being very careful and not saying much at all.

Back down the track, away from the grave and its mystery, the bark crackled underfoot and the leaves rustled overhead and the bellbirds kept ping...ping...ping in the distance.

Another man with close-cropped hair was coming up the track, hurrying along, preoccupied, twigs snapping underfoot.

It was Det. Inspector Brian Rix, head of the homicide squad. He had been recalled from leave.

That's when you knew the claim by sound, and ever and anon breaking into the song of every bird that frequents these hills. This is my station, and the land of the lyrebird - the master mocking bird of the world. And all the animals I have named are its stock. In every part you find them living and comforting to their own particular habits. I never handle any of them, but many become tame. A brown thrush comes every morning and sings me a beautiful song and hops off under my table to gather crumbs, also, the yellow breasted robin, scarlet breast and many wee dicky birds and wrens. And in winter the satin birds trip all over my hut and garden with the grey magpie and the handsome bodied king parrot and the lively red lory. Knowing that I never hurt them, they have no fear of me, but take no liberties with a stranger. The most timid is the whip bird; them I often hear but seldom see. The most terrorising are the powerful owl, with their shrilly, shrieking screamy notes. When heard for the first time on a dark winter's night it is blood-curling and demonfaced.

Later I inspected the Bear Mine, but was not impressed with it. My business was to provide a battery and engine, which I did at the company's cost. The first crushing was also its last. It has lain abandoned ever since. While erecting the battery I saw a good deal of Brown's station, and came to know the numerous diggers scattered along the creek and often came in contact with them. Decades of time passed by, and with the long toil of years the creeks became worked out and the claims abandoned and the diggers drifted to other parts. Jones's Half-Way Hotel was left in the forest uncared for, and was soon burnt down. Now nothing remains but the chimney stones and a few decrepit fruit trees and by the roadside, the child grave of Mrs Jones' first son, and alongside it that of a stranger whose name my memory refuses to recall. But long after the hotel was destroyed and the diggers had wandered away, Jim Brown remained on his home two miles away, over a steep and rugged hill.

The long toll of years - nearly 40 - had brought changes to the two. Their features showed the vintage of age. Their locks had turned hoary and their movements were slow, yet they still had sluicing claims in the creek, where they potted a little at times and got a few weights of gold; but chiefly they lived on the old age pension and the products of their gardens.

Though there were only two men left in the hills and they lived over 20 miles from the nearest habitation, let it be said to the credit of the Postal department that every Friday the mailman came to Jim Brown's station with mail and supplies. And between the two old men a compact was made that they spend each week-end together. So one week Charley Wilson climbing the great hill and came to Jim Brown's, returning on Monday morning it all was well. On the next Friday, after the mail arrived. Jim Brown would climb over the hill to Wilson's and stay until Monday morning. Thus for years these old diggers carried out this arrangement, with an occasional change if one got sick with a cold or other ailment. The other would look after him till he was better; until there came a time when Jim Brown took a bad turn that he could not shake off. And when the mail came one Friday Wilson said an effort must be made to get brown to the doctor. He indited a letter to the constable at Marysville, describing the position. The constable procured a conveyance and went up to the old diggers. Brown was very ill, and it was obvious that he must see a doctor. So they decided to take him to Alexandra Hospital, 50 miles away. Tenderly they carried him into the conveyance and safely to the hospital, where he lingered a short time but never recovered, and passed away to the cemetery on the plateau, which in days gone by had been white with diggers tents.

With Brown gone, the small community at Marysville felt that the old digger Wilson could not be allowed to go back into the great lone forest to live in solitude. So they erected a comfortable hut for him close to town, to which he was shifted. Here for several months he lived contentedly and apparently his wanted health, until one morning his nearby neighbour, on going to the creek for water, was surprised to see Charley lying with his face in the creek water. Letting him out he discovered he was dead. The old man, in going for a billy of water very likely for his breakfast, had taken a fainting fit and had fallen with his face into the water and never regained consciousness. Thus passed away the last two old diggers of the Upper Yarra creeks.

Back in the years that I remember there was a large number of these men. Most, if not all, have passed to other regions, and all the country they worked is now closed against habitation by man. But the stock on Jim Brown's station still lives, undisturbed, and should do so for aeons under the present regime. And in the slopes of these hills are hidden many rich gold mines; for the matrix which shed the gold into, the many creek has not yet been discovered. Meanwhile the forest has reclaimed all of the old diggers gardens and folded them to her heart in a wild tangle of undergrowth.

1929

#### THE UNNAMED PEAK

(Now known as Mt Ritchie)

Places marked on maps about which information is not available seem to urge one to visit them. Mountains have a particular interest to those fond of the bush, and a peak shown on the State Tourist Committee map as being situated at the junction of the Poley Range and the Great Dividing Range has attracted some friends and myself for a couple of years. As no name was assigned to the peak on the map we always referred to it as the "Unnamed Peak," We were frequent visitors to Mt. Donna Buang, and each visit reminded us that another mountain, nearly 200 feet higher, and quite close at hand, seemed to need attention.

So Clyde Grant, Chas. Oaten and I (E. Robinson) set out one weekend in 1929 for a preliminary excursion. Turning in from the Acheron Way at the Gap, we found some traces of the old Edgar Track, and were soon on the top of the ridge, a nice open snow grass plateau, with occasional gums. To return to Warburton we decided to follow down a spur until it crossed the O'Shannassy Aqueduct. Soon after we started to descend we entered dense scrub, with the result that we emerged at the aqueduct torn and scratched, with only an hour to cover the remaining eight miles to Warburton.

Having only short holidays the following Christmas, Chas. Oaten and I started out to travel along the range from Acheron Gap to Mt. Strickland, which would entail going over the "Unnamed Peak." The ascent from the Gap was without incident, and we quickly reached the crest again. The grassy plateau gave way to wattles and scrub, and we descended rapidly into a very low saddle.

The climb out was steep for about 500 feet, but became easier as we passed through more park like country. According to the map, already mentioned, we were ascending the "Unnamed Peak." Indeed, without knowing it, we had reached the topmost point, for the crest is flat, with a gentle slope in each direction.

A subsequent trip proved that this was the "Unnamed Peak," as we had called it, though it certainly is no peak. Ahead we could see another mountain, apparently higher, so we decided to go on to this, for we reasoned that surely the point marked in the map would be the highest. A mist was working over, and by the time we reached this higher point the neighbouring ridges were obscured. Our time was nearly up, and as we

could not discern any ridge connecting with Mt. Strickland we decided to descend to the Acheron Way. After passing through an area of red mountain ash forest we came into country which had been burned over a few years previously. The trees had nearly all fallen, and were hidden by a dense growth of dogwood. As we pushed through the undergrowth and scrambled over the fallen trees we came to a stream which was not large enough for the Acheron River; from there we immediately made a steep ascent, which brought us on to an open, grassy ridge, and thence we descended through more rough country to a mill track, which led out on to the Acheron Way.

Not knowing that the first point we reached was the one marked on the map, we could not understand why we had to cross a large creek and ridge before reaching the Acheron Way. Shortly after this trip I met Jack Lewis, who assured me that we had not been on the "Unnamed Peak." It seemed obvious that another trip was necessary to clear the matter up, so we decided to make a thorough job, and traverse the length of the Poley Range, from the O'Shannassy Weir to the Great Divide, and then along it to the Acheron Gap. We set out, a party of nine, on Eight Hours' weekend of this year, but wet weather prevented our making more than an inspection of the commencement of the trip.

Again at Easter, this time three in number, we set out. After passing round the west shore of the reservoir, and crossing Smith's Creek, we climbed the spur of the Poley Range. Very soon we were in the densest scrub I ever encountered. Dogwood, hazel, musk, wattles and other scrub were growing closely together. This thick growth had to be pushed aside, and fallen trees clambered over. Progress was slow, although strong words often came rapidly. Three hours of this brought nightfall, and we were very little on our way. We had lost our sense of distance, for we were hemmed in by the scrub, and could get no outlook. In those three strenuous hours I doubt if we advanced a mile. No clearing, in which we could unroll our sleeping bags, was to be found, so we had to make one. Scrub was uprooted or cut down until we had sufficient space. There were no gullies handy, and the going through the bush was too severe for an extended search to be made for water, so we had a dry camp.

Next morning, at about 3,500 feet, a change in the scrub was noticed, the species already mentioned giving way to hickory, wattle (*Acacia penninervis*). It was at about this height that somebody found a small pool of water in a hollow of the trunk of a fallen tree. One of the party fortunately had a rubber tubing, which he carried as a ligature in case of snake bite. The tubing was cut into three, and in turn we sucked at the water. Perhaps there were a few insects in it, and it may have had a peculiar flavour, but it was wet.

A little later we came across several patches of snow, which, when melted, gave half a cup of tea each. Descents on either side of the ridge had failed to produce water. The ascent now became gradual, and at about 3,700 feet the open snowgrass parks encountered on previous trips appeared. A drift of snow provided our first wash for twenty four hours. We found that by placing a piece of preserved ginger and a quantity of snow in our mouths at the one time we obtained the equivalent of a drink of ginger beer.

Although the top of the ridge was covered with snow we were able to camp very comfortably just below it, at the head of an O'Shannassy tributary. Next morning we ascended the high point from which we had gone astray on the previous trip. We could see now that this point is on the Poley Range, and that on this occasion we had descended into Deep Creek, a head of the O'Shannassy River, and had then to cross the Great Divide to reach the Acheron River.

An aneroid check showed this point to be a little higher than the 4,250 feet mountain shown on the Tourist Committee map. The journey back to the Acheron Gap, over the route of our previous trip, and incidentally over the 4,250 feet point, was almost without anything of note.

We were unable to pick up the old track leading to the Gap, and in getting down encountered wire grass growing in profusion. It had climbed the trees to a height of about ten feet, and covered all the underbrush. We were glad, for we needed some support in our praises of wiregrass.

The open, grassy tops of this country are most pleasant, but no extensive panoramas are obtainable, and it needs an open track through the thick growth at several places to make it attractive.

1929

Ecology of Marysville and Lake Mountain.

By P. F. Morris.

(National Herbarium, Melbourne.)

From a geobotanical point of view, little or nothing has been done to group the flora of various districts or associations in Victoria, in order to give an instructive picture of the socialological structure of our plant covering and its relation to the habitat. I propose to give, as far as my knowledge permits, some idea of the plant associations of the Marysville-Lake Mountain districts, Especially Echo Flat.

Marysville and its vicinity.

The hilly and mountainous country is, in its vegetation, a typical example of most of the hill country around the Dandenong Range area. The principal associations are not very well preserved, and have been influenced by human activity.

The "Talbot Drive," of about eight miles, follows the Taggerty River to within a short distance of Keppel Falls. On the left the country is flat and alluvial, on the right the ground rises, and is clothed with a vegetation different from that of the flats. The Valley Beautiful and the Forest of Arden, with the Myrtle Beech, *Nothofagus Cunninghami*, growing in pure association, are charming areas. Further on, the forest is mixed with *Eucalyptus*, as a top-covering to the smaller woody shrubs, which protect the herbs. In the more open forests grasses and sedges occur.

*Eucalypt* covering; *Eucalyptus viminalis* (Manna Gum) inhabits the moist alluvial flats along the river; *E. ovata* (Swamp Gum) and *E. rubida* sometimes grow in mixed association with it, but they generally persist on slightly higher, and perhaps better drained and sweeter, soils. These species give rise to *E. goniocalyx* (Mountain Grey Gum), known locally as Blue Gum, interspersed with an occasional Mountain Ash (*E. regnans*) and Messmate (*E. obliqua*). The two latter species may have once been the principle trees of the area, but the area was cut over many years ago, thus the better timber trees would be used.

Acacia Association.

A corresponding difference of association and distribution is found in the three specimens of *Acacia* :- *A. dealbata* (Silver Wattle), *A. mollissima* (Black Wattle), and *A. melanoxylon* (Blackwood). *A. dealbata* follows the river and alluvial soils, and is found growing with *Eucalyptus viminalis*; *A. mollissima* is distributed similarly to *E. rubida*, while *A. melanoxylon* follows the lines of *E. ovata*, *E. goniocalyx* and *E. obliqua*.

Shrubs Association

The principal shrubs which grow below the canopy of Eucalyptus and Acacia are *Leptospermum lanigerum* (Woolly Tea Tree), *Olearia lyrata* (Snow Daisy-bush), *Lomatia ilicifolia* and *L. longifolia*, *Zieria Smithii* (Sandfly Zieria), Native Mulberry, Banyalla, Golden Goodia, Prickly Coprosma, Blanket-leaf, shrubby species of Acacia - *A. verticillata* (Prickly Moses), *A. verniciflua*, *A. juniperina*, and *A. oxycedrus* (Spike Acacia).

Herbs and ferns consisted of *Polystichum aculeatum* (Prickly Shield Fern), *Blechnum capense* (Soft Water Fern), *Blechnum discolor* (Fishbone Fern), *Histiopteris incisa* (Batswing Fern), *Pteridium aquilinum* (Bracken Fern) and *Alsophila australis* - often clothed with layers of *Hymenophyllum* (Filmy Ferns). Included among the herbs were species of *Triglochin*, *Ranunculus*, *Mentha*, *Stylidium graminifolium* (Grass Trigger Plant), and here *Poa caespitosa* (Tussock Grass) grows in dense communities.

All along the road, *Nothofagus Cunninghami* was to be seen growing in pure associations on the banks of the rivers. In places, these trees are very abundant, and provide a distinctive contrast to the Eucalyptus, with which they are surrounded. The difference in relation to plant life between the amount and density of light is most strikingly apparent under the dense crown of leaves of the Myrtle-Beech; the ability of undergrowth to live is diminished.

Leaving Marysville, a walk of eight miles along the Wood's Point Road leads to the turn-off to Mount Arnold and Snowy Mount. The vegetation here has altered considerably, on account of the altitude. The slopes are fern-clad, the trees are large but few, and represent the remnants of a fine forest of Mountain Ash. Passing over Mount Arnold to Snowy Mount, large areas of dead trees were noticed, the result of fire, probably started to make room for grass for a few mountain cattle. The question of grazing leases in or near timber areas is one worthy of our Club's consideration. Here, trees to a height of 200 feet or more, with their charred and weathered surfaces, stood as monuments to the destruction that can be caused by fire. Ascending Snowy Mount, the first Snow Gum association was reached at 4000 feet. This species forms almost impenetrable thickets and makes a canopy for several plants that appear on the lowlands as fairly large shrubs, but here are weak and straggling. Lake Mountain lies north-east, and is reached after a climb over granite boulders and through thickets of Snow Gum. The reading at the highest point of the mountain was estimated as 4890 feet.

Geologically, Lake Mountain consists of large rocky outcrops of granite. As yet, no detailed geological map of the area has been published. Even a superficial observation of the area is sufficient to show that many interesting correlations of the plant communities could be made, were more geological data available.

No previous work has been published on this area. Owing to the absence of a properly equipped field laboratory, the scope of the investigations regarding climatic conditions is somewhat limited. Snow often lies on the ground from May to October, while heavy falls of snow in November are not rare. No regular record of rainfall has been made, but the data taken at a point corresponding in height, and five miles north-west of the mount, shows the average rainfall to be 37 inches.

The flora of Lake Mountain may be divided into three main divisions - (1) Basal Slopes, (2) Hillside Flora, (3) Echo Flat, or "Soak Flora."

#### Basal Slopes.

An analysis of the flora of the basal slopes does not provide anything of great interest. The soil is a black light peat, composed of a considerable amount of decaying vegetable material. Owing to soakage from upper levels and heavy falls of snow, much of the area is boggy, and

sometimes swampy, ground. After the snow melts, these areas gradually dry as the summer months approach. A large amount of water is retained. The small herbs, such as *Brachycome alpina*, *B. Tadgellii*, *Caladenia alpina*, *Drosera*, and other plants appear as the water recedes.

Trees are absent from these soaks, their places being taken by herbs, sedges, mosses, hepatics, etc. Around the edges of soaks grow *Cladium Gunni*, *Carex breviculmus*, *Luzula campestris*, *Crassula Sieberiana*, *Blechnum fluviatile*, *Blennodia alpestris*, *Calamagrostis filiformis*, *Danthonia pencilata*, *Gnaphalium japonicum* and *G. alpigenum*, *Cotula alpina* and *Claytonia australasica*. Most of these areas are surrounded by a thick growth of *Leptospermum scoparium* and *L. lanigerum*.

#### Hillside Flora, 4000 Feet.

Owing to protection from wind, most of the hillsides are well clothed with trees and undergrowth. The trees forming the lower division, which graduates to the upper division consist mainly of *Atherospermum moschatum*, *Nothofagus Cunninghami*, *Acacia melanoxylon*, *Acacia dealbata*, *Eucalyptus gigantea* and *E. regnans*. These trees descend to the lowest flats of the area, and are found in mixed company, and occasionally in pure association. Under shrubs are generally conspicuous, and almost form an impenetrable thicket. The forests are open, and apparently have been invaded by the undershrubs. The chief plants in this section are:- *Bursaria spinosa* (Sweet Bursaria), *Hedycarya augustifolia* (Austral Mulberry), *Pomaderris apetala*, *Bedfordia salicina* (Blanket-leaf), *Prostanthera lasiantha* (Christmas Bush), and *Coprosma Billiardieri*.

The summit of Lake Mountain is bare of vegetation, except for a few straggling Snow Gums and a few patches of *Poa caespitosa*, which grows in rock crevices. To the north-east of the summit lies Echo Flat; it is here that most of the flora of Lake Mountain grows. Five days were spent in exploring the flat and its flora.

#### High Swamp Flora. Echo Flat.

Topography.- From a point of view of topography, Lake Mountain does not present any features of special interest. The mount and the country surrounding appears to be portion of a dome-shaped granitic intrusion, and the features presented are just the same as those noted on almost any granite area. The water soakages, however, are more extensive than is usually the case, and occur in an almost horizontal plane, tilting slightly to the south. The soakage area is known as Echo Flat, and lies to the north of the mount.

The rock is only thinly covered with soil, and the soakage line is very sharply defined, both by the nature of the surface and by the vegetation. For some distance around Echo Flat the country is comparatively level, the higher points only rising gently from 50 to 200 feet. The physical features do not present any serious obstacles to one traversing the area, but the vegetation is a serious difficulty, forming almost impenetrable thickets. *Eucalyptus coriacea* is the only tree of these associations.

"Lake Mountain" is really a misnomer, and is said to have originated from rumours that were heard from time to time of large sheets of water there. Mr. Keppel, sen., informed me that these rumours were current fifty years ago, and the "lakes" were said by some to be very large, and by others to be small. There seems little doubt that the name originated from those rumours, rather than from the presence of any real lakes.

There is no evidence whatever that a lake existed in the area at any time. The sharp line of demarcation caused by the water soakages, at first glance, suggest a lake margin, and the presence of many pools of water in the lower portions adds to the impression. There are no lakes

either on or near Lake Mountain, and, in my opinion, there never have been. The pools, almost without exception, are on a higher level than the stream draining the country, and they appear to be of a very temporary character. Several of the pools to the north of Echo Flat are within two feet of the stream and eighteen inches or more above it. The water is retained only by a small line or wall, bound together by *Sphagnum cymbifolium* (*Sphagnum* Moss), *Polytrichum juniperinum* *Luzula campestris*, and other plants. A stroke with a spade would drain them; there is abundant evidence to show that occasionally, these frail barriers break down, and that pools are drained from time to time. The blockage of the drainage ways by the growth of mosses. etc., which arrests the abundant decaying vegetable material, re-establish the barriers, and the pools reform. The pools appear to be rapidly filling with peaty sludge, and it is highly probable that they would have long since disappeared if the retaining barriers had not broken down and allowed the accumulated material to be carried away by the stream.

Probably the most interesting feature is the regularity and extent of the seepage line, and the abundant flow of water from it. The rainfall is about 37 inches, and snow often lies for six or more months, but taking into consideration the small amount of country higher than the seepage line and the shallow soil, it is an interesting speculation as to how the flow is sustained.

#### Echo Flat Flora

The effect of the extremely damp and cold habitat is evident when a comparison of the floristic composition of associations is made. The hilly and mountainous country is clothed in an abundant vegetation, including trees to a height of 200 feet or more. To a height of 4500 feet trees form this chief covering to all associations. Where the soil is extremely damp and cold, trees are not found, and Echo Flat is treeless except for dense bands of Snow Gum, which inhabit the outer and well-drained parts of the flat.

The relation of plants and plant association to the edaphic factors of the habitat is very close, and has been found to conform to certain definite laws, that can not be ignored by the modern plant sociologist. Chemical-edaphic influences are an extremely penetrating, and often a decisive, agent for the distribution of plant communities and of individual species in every natural district of vegetation. The acid soil conditions of Echo Flat and its different flora is a direct answer to the question as to the confinement of plants to certain soils.

Before proceeding to more detailed explanations, I shall present a list of plants of Echo Flat.

#### Muscae

*Stereodon cupressiforme*, *Sphagnum cymbifolium*, *Bryum* species.

#### Lichenes

*Usnea barbata*, *Parmelia conspersa*, and other species.

#### Lycopodiaceae.

*Lycopodium clavatum*, L. (Common Clubmoss).

#### Monocotyledoneae.

#### Cyperaceae.

*Carex appressa* (Tall Sedge).

#### Juncaceae.

*Luzula campestris*, var. *australasica* (Field Wood-rush).

*Juncus falcatus* (Sickle Leaf-rush).

#### Orchidaceae.



*Caladenia alpina* (Mountain *Caladenia*), found with one flower on Echo Flat, but with more congenial localities it has two to four flowers.

1930

#### Marysville's Attractions

##### Improvements at Lake Mountain

This season the Marysville Tourist Association has been showing great activity with regard to the new winter playground at Lake Mountain, which is 450 feet higher than Buffalo Chalet, and only 74 miles from Melbourne. Approximately 500 pounds has been spent - about half that amount having been raised locally through efforts of the association.

A small graded track has been constructed from Glover Walk, on Cumberland road, about 6.5 miles from Marysville. This portion is easily negotiable by car in all weathers to an altitude of 3151 feet. From here the remaining 5.5 miles to the summit, on the newly constructed track is traversed on foot or horseback, horses being available at Marysville.

At a point about 4 miles from Glover Walk, the Marysville association has recently constructed on Snowy Hill, an excellent ski run at an altitude of over 4,400 feet, and commenced the construction of a hut. This course, which is 200 yards in length, and over one chain in width, with a smooth surface, has recently been inspected by experts from the Ski Club of Victoria, who regard it as an excellent practice course, the gradients not being too steep for beginners. These members, on their visit, also reported favorably on several other courses which the association proposes opening at the first favorable opportunity. These runs should prove a great attraction to the expert ski runner, as, on account of their steeper grade, more thrills will be experienced.

One of the most attractive areas of Lake Mountain Plateau is that known as Echo Flat, situated about 1.5 miles north of Lake Mountain.

1931

#### Two Nights in the Bush

##### Hide and seek on Donna Buang

Details to hand of the misadventure which befell Messrs. Sharp and Holbin, of Hawthorn, last week, who were walking up Mt. Donna Buang, show that they left the look-out tower at the summit at about 4 p.m. on Tuesday, to return to Warburton, but inadvertently missed the skiing track and got on the track to Narbethong, which they followed till they reached the firebreak. After traversing this for about two miles the track came to a dead end, and as it was dusk they decided the best thing to do was to spend the night in the bush; so, lighting a fire, they made themselves as comfortable as possible. The next day (Wednesday) they made their way downhill, presumably in the direction of Warburton, and came to a stream, which they followed. This stream, they learnt afterwards was the Watts river, and after covering several miles of difficult country they came to a track.

Food that day they had none, but there was no shortage of water, and on this they subsisted until they arrived at Fernshaw (after another night in the bush) about mid-day on Thursday, after following the track for several miles. From Fernshaw, they were taken to Narbethong, where they received according to their testimony, every kindness. Although weak from lack of food, they soon recovered. The news was conveyed to Warburton and Mr G.H. Maxwell proceeded via the Acheron Way, to pick them up. The party arrived back about midnight, little the worse for their experience. Had they been compelled to spend Thursday night in the open - which as

everyone recollects was very wet and cold - the consequences might have been serious. When word was received of their safety steps were immediately taken at Warburton to recall the search party by prolonged sounding of the Signs whistle and also a railway engine waiting at the Warburton station.

The search party on Wednesday was exploring country to the east of the wanderers, as after leaving the look-out tower they searched in the vicinity of Cuming Smith's winches until it was too dark to continue, and then came home down the tramline, arriving about 10 p.m. Making a fresh start at 6 a.m. on Thursday they worked the bush, across to the spur of the mountain almost to Badger Creek, then down to Platts old tramline and across very rough country, until dusk, when, as there was some danger of getting lost they returned. On arrival at Warburton they were relieved to know that the missing men were safe.

Thursdays operations were made much more hazardous and difficult on account of the heavy rain, fog, and low lying clouds, which at times reduced visibility almost to nil. Very valuable assistance was rendered by owners of hire and other cars. These made several trips to the mount with loads over rough country and particularly on Thursday under trying conditions. In circumstances where many helped and all did excellent work, the assistance given by Mr. E. Silver in the dense country around Badger Creek proved of great value. Years ago he ran cattle in that district, and his knowledge of the locality was the means of enabling the party to keep a fairly accurate idea of their position. It is an interesting fact that in the course of their travels, they came across trees which were recognised by Mr Silver as some he had blazed 20 years ago.

Messrs Sharp and Holbin, who returned to Melbourne on Sunday spoke very highly of the kind treatment they received at Narbethong. They stated they felt none the worse for their adventure.

1931

Sunday on Donna Buang

Car Driver Collapses

Commencing at daylight, an incessant stream of motor cars passed through Warburton on Sunday, bound for the snow capped peak of Donna Buang. Various estimates of the number of cars which ascended the mountains have been given, but it seems that atleast 500 made the trip, and more than half reached the turn-table. About 1500 persons including members of the Ski Club of Victoria, and several local people were on the mountain, where they spent a very jolly day. Sport was marred by a few minor accidents, and by the death, while his car was stationary, of the driver, Edward Ivory, of North Melbourne, who had brought a party from the city. Ivory collapsed while about to start his engine, and died almost immediately. The body was taken to Warburton, and later in the day to Melbourne. A few persons received lesser injuries during the day, and were treated locally. Mishaps were various, the most serious being the overturning of a large Buick car, which went some distance down the slope, fortunately without injuring anyone. At Cement Creek a Pioneer coach got too close to the edge and skidded crosswise, jammed against the bridge, and blocked the traffic for two hours. Messrs J. Larkins and W. Clinch of Warburton, marshaled the cars, with the assistance of others.

A few enterprising spirits from Warburton, established a hot water service, also coffee, tea, etc., but the business done was rather disappointing, as most of the visitors had come prepared.

1931

## The Blacks' Spur Road

### A suggested deviation

By J. T. Noble Anderson

Among the proposals for the unemployed is one to deviate the Blacks' Spur road between Healesville and Marysville. For more than 60 years this route into the gold and timber resources of the great mountain range which divides the Yarra from the Goulburn River has been a source of endless controversy, between Warburton and Healesville interests. While the gold boom was in full blast and when the Bendigo railway had been let for 4,000,000 pounds, a scheme was projected to serve this range, in which splendid gold prospects had been found, by the canalisation of the Yarra River as far as Launching Place, so called because at it timber was to be rafted to Melbourne and produce loaded. This scheme, too difficult for the resources of the time, having been abandoned, and various routes up the Goulburn by way of Yarra Glen, and Alexandra, being congested by local traffic to the new goldfields of the sixties, the old Blackfellows' Track, from which the name Blacks' Spur is derived, was followed as a cattle track to Woods' Point by such pioneers as the late E.H. Cameron and Thomas Barton, and its first surveyors were the bullockies whose teams penetrated wherever good splitting timber was to be got.

The teams avoided the swampy valleys and kept to the ridges. The reason why the main track is so difficult and dangerous for horse-drawn and motor traffic is that about 60 years ago, when the economical Scot Rowan, chief surveyor, was charged with the construction of a road for heavy cartage to the Woods' Point field, he instructed his men to follow the bullock track as far as possible, so avoiding swamps, bridges, culverts and dozens of expensive deviations. This policy may be clearly seen in the first seven miles between Healesville and Fernshaw, which climb some 400 ft. higher than would otherwise have been necessary. Much the same thing occurred every few miles along the next 35 miles.

Owing to the bullocks all pulling in one straight line a team to carry heavy machinery uphill may require a length of nearly 100 ft. On level ground, where about four bullocks could haul a heavily loaded waggon, the road winds in the usual way, but when a steep hill is encountered and the whole team has to pull all together the road must be straight. The long, straight pulls often were on grades of 1 in 3.5. In other words, the road rose 20 ft. in every chain. The problem which the late Mr Rowan set his surveyors was to deviate these long straight hauls. The first real difficulty encountered was on the old Blackfellows' Track about two and a half miles beyond Fernshaw, where a grade of 1 in 3.5 is found. The surveyors found it necessary to retrace their way to Fernshaw and traverse the main spur to the left of the track, which runs up the divide between Morley's Creek and Etta's Glen. Here, by many zig-zags and hairpin bends, they gained a rise of 1000 ft. in about two miles, and succeeded in going more than 300 ft. higher than should have been necessary. Almost every road surveyor who has traversed the road has inveighed against what is now obviously a blunder, and has made this belt of virgin forest, with some of the tallest trees in the world as remote by transport from Melbourne as Croajingolong, and which once the Woods' Point market for produce petered out, left the rich Acheron Valley to have Alexandra rather than Healesville for its railway centre.

From time to time railway projects have been considered to connect more directly with Melbourne and many lines have been surveyed. The last of these was surveyed by Mr Egan, of the railways department, over a route discovered by me, and on the estimates of less than 200,000 pounds the Railways Standing Committee recommended a narrow guage railway. This, no

doubt, would have been built to open these areas for timber but for strenuous opposition of the local residents, who demanded either a broad gauge line or a scheme (again fathered by me) for a combined timber railways and motor road should be adopted. The latter policy was favoured by the Country Roads Board. The present chairman of that board (Mr McCormack), however, considered the long deviation of almost the whole 14.5 miles of road between Healesville and Narbethong too ambitious. He explored the possibility of Morleys Creek track, and found a grade of one in 30, which could be more easily guarded from pollution than the present road, which alternately drains into each of the two tributaries that it skirts. The latter route was subsequently surveyed by the Country Roads Board, and the sum of 55,000 pounds for its construction is the boards estimate.

The question has once again come to the front because modern motor traffic has rendered the Marysville forests profitable to work, even with the disadvantage of a grade of 10ft to the chain. The question now is whether the road shall be strengthened to meet modern conditions or the money which is now required to strengthen it shall be spent in making a new deviation. The question of spoiling one of the finest scenic roads in Australia for tourists comes up. But everyone who has traversed the new route agrees with me that it offers as many and as beautiful attractions as those which the old road possesses.

1931

#### The Blacks' Spur Road

My old friend Mr J.T. Noble Anderson, in his article referring to the Blacks' Spur road, puts in a little excusable romance in regard to making straight tracks up the steep spurs by means of the early bullock teams which traversed them. The farthest that bullock teams came in the first days of the track was Fernshaw. Only an odd team journeyed that far, and they came up the river flat road, now buried under the Maroondah Reservoir.

The first method of taking supplies to Woods' Point via the Yarra track, was by pack horse, several hundred horses being used for the purpose. They traveled up the Watts River flats to Fernshaw, then along Jesse Morley's track to the saddle down a spur from there to Starvation Creek, thence down the flat side of the creek to the vicinity of the present hotel. But on the return journey, with only their saddles to carry the pack men used to take them up and down the tops of the spurs, making straight stretches of track referred to; they were short cuts and saved miles of travel. One of these was past Davis' old residence and over the spot where Lindt's tourist house was built; another was up Beswick's track. Both joining near the top of the spur, on the present road and then bore to the right and down the summit of the spur from which Uncle Sam's creek-let flows, reaching Fernshaw in a distance of a mile and a half - just half the distance of the present road. This steeply graded short cut track was made for returning unloaded packhorses, and blackfellows were not responsible for it, as implied, according to the late Cr. Green who in the last years of the fifties of last century came personally with the blacks from Mohican station on the Acheron River, where they had been for some time prior to Coranderrk.

I had several conversations with the late Cr Green regarding his interesting journey through the bush and asked him if they came over the Spur, where the present track exists. He replied that he did not think they did, and said there was no sign of any trail, and that they had just moved as best they could through the forest, very slowly, owing to the women and children. He thought they came into the Watts flat, west of Fernshaw.

1931

Royal Society of Victoria

The Geology and Petrology of the Black Spur Area (Healesville)

BY

A. B. EDWARDS, B.Sc.

(Read 11th June, 1931.)

Reprinted from Proc. Roy. Soc. Victoria, Victoria, Vol. XLIV, Pt. I.  
(New Series)

Issued separately 29th February, 1932.

[Proc. Roy. Soc. Victoria, 44 (n.s.), PT I, 1932.]

ART. V.- The Geology and Petrology of the Black Spur Area (Healesville)

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(Howitt Scholar in Geology, University of Melbourne)

With Plates VII. and VIII.)

[Read 11th June, 1931; issued separately 29 th February, 1932.]

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## Introduction

The area dealt with in this paper is an approximately rectangular block of country, stretching from Healesville to Granton in the north-east, and bounded by the Acheron Way on its north-eastern frontage, and by the Don Road along its southern extremity; and extending westerly as far as Mt. Monda. Its greatest length is about twelve miles, and its maximum width about ten miles. It is known variously as "The Black Spur." the "Blacks' Spur" (after the aborigines) and Black's Spur" (after the surveyor). I use the former name, since throughout the district it is invariably referred to as "the Black Spur."

A geological map of the area (Plate VII.) and a cross-section (fig. 1) have been prepared. The mapping is generally approximate, and has been done throughout by compass and pacing. Contouring was attempted in order to demonstrate the rugged topography, but time limited such work to aneroid readings during traverses over the northern half of the area, from which form-lines were drawn. Over the southern half extempore form-lines were drawn, based on a few known levels and a knowledge of the country. Where boundaries are plotted with broken lines, considerable linear error may exist, but a full line indicates accurate determination in the field.

I desire to express my sincere thanks to Professor Skeats, Dr. Summers, Dr. Stillwell, Mr Singleton, and others in the Geology School; to Mr. Ampt of the Chemistry School and to Mr Mahony of the mines department for help with rock analyses; to the Metropolitan Board of Works; to Miss O'Neil and Mr. Vale of Narbethong; to Mr Chapman, F.L.S., F.G.S., and Mr. Keble, F.G.S., for determining my fossils; and to Mr. McCance and Mr. Baldin.

## Previous Work.

A list of the earlier literature concerning the area is furnished in a paper by Dr. N.R. Junner (6) which marks an important advance in the knowledge of the geology of the area. Junner's paper, which has served as an invaluable guide and basis throughout my work, deals with a considerably larger area than is covered by the present detailed examination. He mapped the outcrops of the granodiorite and the junction of the igneous series with Silurian sediments; he recognised the variable character of the dacites, but did not appreciate the separate entities of their fourfold division; and he indicated the position of rhyolite, dacite, and tuff on his map by the letters R, D, and T respectively, but had not sufficient time to map their boundaries. He made a detailed study of the pyroclastics, and did some work on the Silurian sediments; and gave a description of the physiography.

An unpublished report by Professor Skeats on the Geology of the Maroondah Dam, together with a map showing speculative boundaries of the main rock types, and recognising three of the four dacite flows, was also used.

## Physiography

As described by Junner (6, p.261) the country falls into three belts from north to south; (1) the valley of the Acheron; (2) the central mountain ranges; (3) the valleys of the Watts and the Yarra. The central ranges of igneous lavas rise up sharply from the open, rolling country of sedimentary character to the north and south, and form part of the main

divide of Victoria. Valleys in this region are narrow, deep, and immature, as opposed to the wide and mature topography of the lower Acheron, the lower Watts, and the Yarra. These rivers rise in the mountain zone. The high ranges radiate as several ridges in turn, and serve as the mediums for roads to cross the hills. The well-known Black Spur is one of these. Low "gaps" mark the junction of the ridges. Streams rising in the dacites have mud bottoms, while those from the rhyolite are stony-bottomed.

## Sedimentary Rocks

### Silurian

The oldest rocks outcropping in the area are sediments of the Silurian age, and include mudstones and sandstones, with occasional shales and conglomerates. The sandstones outcrop mainly to the north-east. They are hard and compact, and inclined to induration by iron oxide, resembling very closely the sandstones in a section on the Tarnpirr private road.

Junner (p. 204) records two outcrops of "fossiliferous conglomerate" near Narbethong, one west, the other east of the main road. Unfortunately the western outcrop was not located, but the eastern conglomerate was found in an old road-metal quarry, about 300 yards west of the Old Marysville Road. Six bands of coarse to fine conglomerate, never more than three feet thick per bed, alternate with very friable shales. A fossiliferous grit bed, varying from six inches to one foot three inches in thickness, directly overlies the uppermost conglomerate bed. The beds dip at 50°W. and strike at 340°(mag.). The individual pebbles are very well rounded, but are never large. They consist of quartzite (the larger sizes), shales and vein-quartz. The grit is similar to fossiliferous grits seen in the Yea-Alexandra district. It is packed with very poorly preserved casts of crinoids and brachiopods, and several identifiable forms were obtained.

Sufficient dips and strikes were obtained to indicate the approximate positions of the anticlines and synclines. The folding is moderately close in character, with high dips. Just east of the Narbethong Post Office the probable existence of a small "crush" zone is indicated.

That the Devonian igneous rocks uncomfortably overlies the Silurian is indicated by the varying levels at which the junction of the two is found. These vary from 400 ft. at Maroondah Dam to 1000 ft. near Wade's Lookout. Evidently the Silurian was neither level nor peneplaned when the igneous activity occurred.

Near Wade's Lookout the sandstone in contact with the dacite has been altered to quartzite. Section No. (1522) shows it to be nearly pure quartz rock, consisting of crenulated, interlocked quartz grains, with very little muscovite. Along the Acheron Way was found a small bedded outcrop of baked mudstone, striking at 280° (?) and dipping at 80°N. It was surrounded by dacitic soil, containing cores of weathered dacite.

## Fossil Forms

Junner records plant remains from the red-coloured sandstones and mudstones in the north of the area. Mr. Chapman has referred them to Haliserites (now Psilophyton) Dechenianus Goeppert - a form characteristic of the Silurian from Wood's Point. Examination of the rocks has yielded poor, but definite remains at several localities. These have been named for me by Messrs. Chapman and Keble.

### 1. Fossiliferous Grit, Conglomerate QUARRY.

Casts of: Brachiopoda -Leptaena sp. (aberrant form - only known from the Yeringian); Stropheodonta (?); Chonetes sp. Anthozoa - Lindstroemia

sp. (Silurian); Tryplasma cf. murrayi. (Upper Silurian to Lower Devonian); Crinoidea - Numerous casts.

## 2. Boulders on the ridge south of Acheron Way.

Casts of Brachiopoda - Conetes sp.; Stropheodonta sp.,; Anthozoa - Lindstroemia sp.; Tryplasma cf. murrayi; Crinoidea - casts of stems. Arthropoda - Cephalic border of a Trilobite, bearing a genal spine.

## 3. St. Fillans

Plantae - Psilophyton (?)

These remains indicate that the beds are of Upper Silurian (Yeringian) Age. The fossil remains in conjunction with the lithological types suggest that the disposition took place under coastal marine conditions.

## Igneous Rocks.

The igneous rocks of the area consist of a series of acid lavas. They are described in their apparent order of extrusion.

### 1. Andesite

No outcrops of andesite have been discovered in the area but proof of its existence has been afforded by xenoliths found in the quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite in the Chosen Valley (S. of Mt. Dom Dom).

Andesite has been recorded from Wade's Lookout by Junner, but sections cut from there and other localities marginal to the flows appear to be chilled borders of the main hypersthene-dacite flow.

The xenoliths of andesite are dark brown in colour, and very fine-grained. A section No. (2343) shows it to be a porphyritic rock, with a felted or hyalopilitic groundmass of fine lathes of feldspar set in a glassy base. The hypersthene forms numerous phenocrysts and dominates over the feldspar. They show a very slight tendency to form reaction rims of secondary biotite, particularly in the presence of ilmenite; and they have clotted together giving rise to glomeroporphyritic structure. The feldspars are labradorite with some andesine. They form small phenocrysts which grade into the groundmass, and are very distinct from the feldspars of the including dacite. Quartz crystals are absent. The ratio of the groundmass to the phenocrysts is about 2:1.

It is remarkable that no xenoliths of andesite are found in the rhyolite, while they are prevalent in the quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite, so close to the rhyolite. This latter when intruding the rhyolite appears to have brought the andesite up with it from below.

### 2. Rhyolite

This has been figured and described by Junner (6, pp. 276-279). His analysis is quoted on page 65. The rhyolite is "characterised in hand specimens by the abundant quartz phenocrysts, and by the paucity of the feldspar materials. Rhomb-shaped sections of glassy and pearly orthoclase can often be recognised." Thin sections show plentiful phenocrysts of strongly embayed quartz and orthoclase (often microperthite) set in a glassy to microcrystalline groundmass. Feldspar minerals are almost absent.

This rock outcrops in a long narrow belt, near the margin, or marginal to the igneous rocks, along their northern boundary. It often shows well developed jointing, as in cliff face at Archer's Lookout and along the Acheron Way.

Tuff's and breccias are developed along the lower spurs north-west of the Hermitage (Narbethong), and boulders of lapilli have been found there. These pyroclastics are well described by Junner (pp. 271-276).



Beautifully banded rhyolite, resulting from differential flowage, is found in this locality.

Examination of thin sections No. (2347, 2349) shows that in addition to the minerals recorded by Junner, cordierite is frequently present and is characteristic of the rock.

Hills (4) has described a similar rock from the Blue Hills, near Taggerty, and thinks that the two flows are connected.

### 3. Quartz-Dacite

This dacite outcrops over an extensive area. It abuts the granodiorite in the south, and extends along both sides of the Maroondah Dam, continuing as far north as the Acheron Way. It almost pinches out at Carter's Gap. The rounded hill on the western side of Maroondah Dam represents a volcanic centre of this flow. On its northern slope a large amount of coarse breccia is found, containing angular fragments of sandstone and shale. On the western slope a volcanic agglomerate occurs, with quartzite and sandstone pebbles as big as a clenched fist. A pebble of rhyolite was found here, but no quartz-biotite-dacite fragments could be discovered.

The rock is grey in colour (often greenish from chlorite). It consists of a fine groundmass with numerous glassy phenocrysts of quartz and feldspar, together with chloritised biotite, and occasional pink garnets. The rock is closely similar in appearance and composition to the Lower Dacite of the Dandenong series (7).

A typical section No. (1324), (Analysis No. III.), from Maroondah Dam, is a porphyritic rock with a glassy groundmass containing numerous microlites of quartz, and patches of small aggregated feldspars. Flow structure is well developed. The quartz phenocrysts are common and have fantastic shapes, having been deeply embayed by corrosion. The outlines of the crystals are usually sharp. The predominant feldspars are labradorite and andesine, in about equal volumes. A few phenocrysts of orthoclase, sometimes showing microperthite, are present. The feldspar crystals are also corroded but not so fantastically as the quartz crystals. This is probably due to the cleavage of the feldspars tending to maintain a more or less rectangular outline in the crystal. The feldspars are often sericitised, and clouded by secondary reactions. They grade in size from the largest phenocrysts down to tiny lathes in the groundmass. Bleached biotite often occurs, being generally partially or entirely replaced by chlorite. Chlorite, alone is frequently observed. A little apatite is included in the biotite. Small ilmenite grains are present. A cordierite trilling, with radial extinction, occurs. It is partially altered to a micaceous substance - pinite (?). In section No. (2338), from Carter's Gap, the feldspars show a tendency to clot. The biotite contains zircons; and a cordierite, with marked radial twinning, shows partial pinitisation. An example from the Acheron Way contains a large, altered garnet, which is surrounded and impregnated by an iron-rich chlorite showing beautiful ultra-blue polarisation colours. Small patches of calcite, after biotite or sericitised feldspar are common. No. (2340), from Mt Juliet track (1000 ft. level), is much altered. The feldspars are clotted and sericitised, and the ilmenite is altering to leucoxene. An intergrowth of biotite (altering to chlorite) and lathes of feldspar is observed.

The chloritisation of this rock is so general, and so characteristic, even in the very freshest of material obtainable from the huge Maroondah Dam quarry, that it cannot be regarded as a weathering effect. The chlorite seems to be of "deuteric" origin, after pyroxene (?), biotite and sometimes garnet.

Near Maroondah Dam the rock contains numerous xenoliths of hornfels. A section No. (2372) shows them to be fragments of altered mudstone.

#### 4. Quartz-Hypersthene-Biotite-Dacite.

This is the first record in Victoria of a dacite which contains quartz and hypersthene phenocrysts freely associated together. It has been found at four separate localities, all maginal to the rhyolite; (1) at Crotty Creek in the north-west; (2) below Archer's Lookout; (3) from the Acheron Way, along an axis of  $300^{\circ}$  (magnetic) to Mt. Dom Dom, and Blandin's Quarry, near which it disappears under the rhyolite; (4) it reappears along this line of "strike" on the other side of the rhyolite, and continues towards Mt. Monda, merging into the quartz-biotite-dacite in this direction by the replacement of the hypersthene by biotite.

The rock is dark blue when fresh, and is markedly porphyritic. Phenocrysts of clear quartz, white feldspar, and frequent but not numerous flakes of biotite are set in a very glassy groundmass. Sporadic pink garnets are characteristic; and pyritic minerals are often seen. Coarse patches develop locally in the normal dacite in the Mt. Monda outcrop. It is closely similar to the Middle Dacite of the Mt. Dandenong series (7), both in appearance and in chemical composition.

A typical section No. (2341), (Analysis No. VII.), from Bladin's Quarry, 2.5 miles from Narbethong, on the Spur road, shows that the groundmass is a fine glass, with local developments of cryptocrystalline texture, exhibiting beautiful flow structure. The quartz phenocrysts are the largest crystals, and are equal to half the volume of the feldspars. They show deep embayments and rundings of the edges from corrosion; but such corroded edges are generally sharply defined. The feldspars are clear and fresh. Plagioclases predominate as labradorite with some albite and andesine. There is an occasional orthoclase. Carlsbad and albite twins, and zoning are prominent. Hypersthene crystals are the dominant ferromagnesian, but are subordinate to the feldspar of quartz in quantity. They show green to pink pleochroism, and contain inclusions of ilmenite and apatite. The rims of the crystals show considerable alteration to a green chloritic mineral, itself secondary after secondary biotite. Sometimes the unaltered biotite remains. Biotite of primary character occurs in thin flexed ribbons, often curving about quartz or feldspar crystals. It shows light yellow to brown pleochroism and perfect cleavage. Secondary biotite as coronas, or unorientated aggregates (after hypersthene), is about equally present. Grains of pyrrhotite appear occasionally. There is no garnet in this section.

Section No. (2344), also from Bladin's Quarry, is from the contact with the rhyolite. It is quite normal. The phenocrysts are smaller and apatite is more abundant. A cordierite trilling is seen, and a large pink garnet, altering to an iron-rich chlorite with fine-blue polarisation colours. The garnet is included (?) by orthoclase crystals, which are much sericitised, and contain zircons. A large orthoclase contains a centrally included fragment of primary biotite. The groundmass is entirely glassy, and most beautifully marked by flow structures. A specimen from the Crotty Creek turn-off, No. (2342), differs in that the ground mass is crypto-crystalline. The feldspars show coarse lamellar twinning, and contain inclusions of more basic feldspar, as shown by the higher refractive indices of the inclusions. One was sufficiently twinned for an extinction angle to be measured. This was  $30^{\circ}$ , indicating anorthite. The hypersthene crystals are more numerous and contain inclusions of ilmenite and plagioclase. They all show stages of the hypersthene-biotite reaction, from hypersthene with biotite coronas to clots of secondary biotite, representing complete reaction. Primary biotite contains inclusions of zircons, with pleochoric haloes, ilmenite and fragments of feldspar. Apatite is common, and there is a trilling of cordierite. No. (2343) from Mt. Monda track near the rhyolite junction, resembles the Crotty Creek specimen. A hypersthene is present abutting an orthoclase

crystal. A layer of secondary biotite marks their junction (see fig. 2). This demonstrates beyond doubt the character of the reaction.

No. (2345), nearer to Mt. Monda, illustrates the linear gradation of quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite into quartz-biotite-dacite. There is a marked decrease in the amount of hypersthene, and a corresponding increase in the amount of biotite. Much of the hypersthene shows alteration to secondary biotite. A pink garnet is present, framed with secondary biotite.

#### Mode of Occurrence.

The quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite is intrusive into the rhyolite. At Blandin's Quarry it is seen in sharp contact with the latter rock, the contact bearing at  $290^{\circ}$  (magnetic). The dacite dips under the rhyolite at the junction at an angle of  $60^{\circ}$  in a southerly direction. It is extremely well jointed into blocks or columns, and these dip away at  $40^{\circ}$  to the north, at right angles to the contact, suggesting growth columnar fashion from the contact inwards.

The rhyolite at the junction shows a slight mineral alteration, which increases as the contract. This metamorphic zone, while never more than 10 ft. wide, can be traced all along the contact from the Acheron Way to Blandin's Quarry. Thus in section No. (2386), ten feet from the contact, the feldspar in the rhyolite is partially sericitised; the groundmass is locally coarse; and small patches of fine grained quartz and feldspar aggregates have developed. No. (2388), two feet from the contact, has the orthoclase generally sericitised, and a coarser groundmass. Strings of blue tourmaline are present and the fine aggregates have developed into coarse clots of a green feldspar mineral (chloritised biotite (?)). Grains of magnetite are associated with these clots. At the contact macroscopic crystals of green biotite (?) are developed. In No. (2387) these appear as flexed green crystals which are strongly pleochroic and have a high double refraction. They show perfect cleavage and seem chloritised. Magnetic grains are included. Blue tourmaline is prevalent as crystal and as fine stringy or mossy aggregates. The groundmass has been recrystallised. Near the summit of Mt. Dom Dom, No. (2384), blue tourmaline is strongly developed, and shearing and foliation are evident.

The dacite tapers out under the rhyolite just west of Blandin's Quarry, and reappears again on the Mt. Monda track on a continuation of the "strike" of the outcrop extending from the Acheron Way to Blandin's Quarry. It follows the valleys as would be expected from its dripping junction. On the Mt. Monda track the rhyolite shows a development of biotite where the dacite appears from under it. Apparently the rhyolite forms only a thin cover, and has considerably metamorphosed. No. (2350), from near the contact contains more albite than usual. Three large cordierites are observed altering to pinite; and tourmaline occurs as crystals of trigonal outline. An intergrowth of quartz and decomposed feldspar is seen. Biotite is prevalent. The groundmass retains its glassy character. In No. (2351) at the contact brown and blue tourmaline are a feature, as crystals and as mossy aggregates, often bordering crystals. Biotite and secondary mica have developed, and the feldspars are sericitised. The groundmass is micro- to cryptocrystalline from recrystallisation.

Small xenoliths of typical rhyolite have been found in the dacite outcrop below Archer's Lookout.

Owing to the minor character of the intrusion, and to the lithological nature of the sediments, little evidence of the relation to Silurian rocks is apparent, but at Crotty Creek, at the eastern edge of the dacite, there is a sedimentary rock of schistose habit. A section No. (2363) contains a large amount of muscovite, arranged more or less in foliation planes. There is no trace of plagioclase or of large quartz crystals, although certain areas have a related extinction. No biotite is

present, and crenulated quartz grains make up the remainder of the rock. These show stained polarisation phenomena.

The dacite appears to have intruded as dykes or sills into fissures in the rhyolite, or into the planes of weakness between the rhyolite and the sediments. It may represent a chilled border phase of a upward stopping magma, which broke through the surface in places, or may have been exposed only by erosion. Fissuring of the rhyolite from differential floating would permit the intrusion of the linear outcrop described.

## 5. Porphyrite Dykes.

(1). Junner describes a patch of granodiorite, extending from the Malory's Cascades, east of Archer's Lookout, down to the Silurian sediments. Four traverses, through dense undergrowth, failed to locate the granodiorite; but in its place were discovered a patch of quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite of nearly the same dimensions, and a porphyrite dyke, four chains wide, extending from the dacite across the saddle south-east of Archer's Lookout, and causing Mallory's Cascades.

This dyke could not be traced in the dacite, but seemed to be an apophysis of it. Fresh samples from the Cascades similar to granodiorite in hand specimen, consisting of quartz, white felspar, biotite; and garnets. Its porphyritic character is masked.

A section No. (2353), from Mallory's Cascades displays a markedly porphyritic rock, with a microcrystalline groundmass of quartz and orthoclase, and biotite. The plagioclase is labradorite, with some andesine, and is often sericitised. The quartz crystals are large and most irregularly shaped. The biotite occurs in large primary crystals and includes quartz, feldspars and zircons - the latter with dark pleochroic haloes. Apatite, ilmenite, and pyrrhotite are common accessories. A secondary radiating micaceous mineral commonly replaces biotite, while retaining the inclusions. Clots of biotite, muscovite, and quartz form coarse patches in the groundmass. A large shattered pink garnet rimmed with chlorite and containing inclusions of quartz and biotite is present.

The contact effect of the dyke on the rhyolite is well displayed in the specimens from the saddle south-east of Archer's Lookout. The dyke No. (2354) shows small blue tourmaline crystals near the margins of the phenocrysts. No. (3252) from the rhyolite has green and blue tourmaline strongly developed as mossy aggregates and as crystals bordering the phenocrysts, and filling the cleavages and cracks. Crystals of andalusite, with strong pink to colourless pleochroism, are found, in one instance associated with a fibrous substance, ( sillimanite (?)). Yellowish, pinitised crystals of cordierite are common. The groundmass has been recrystallised and is commonly coarsely microcrystalline.

(2). A porphyrite dyke intrudes the sediments near Toolangi, along the New Chum road. It resembles a hornblende-granite in hand specimen, and consists of crystals of quartz, pink and white feldspars, and green biotite, resembling hornblende, set in a fine groundmass. A section No. (2364) shows that it is a coarsely porphyritic rock. The groundmass is microcrystalline, and small in quantity. The feldspar phenocrysts vary from microcline with sharp cross hatching, to strongly zoned labradorite, and andesine. Quartz is present as corroded phenocrysts, or in granophyric intergrowth, microcrystalline or coarser, with orthoclase. There are large flakes of brown biotite containing pleochroic haloes; and small mossy aggregates of tourmaline occur with sericitised feldspars.

This second dyke is probably associated with granodiorite, whereas the first is part of the quartz-biotite-dacite series.

## 6. Quartz-Biotite-Dacite

This lies in a belt between the rhyolite and quartz-dacite, and forms the Black Spur. It is well exposed in the roadside quarries from

Fernshawe to the top of the Spur (3 miles from Narbethong). At Carter's Gap in almost precipitous slope of about 300 ft. descent, and abuts a narrow neck of quartz-dacite at the foot of the slope, appearing to overlie it. It is similar in character to the Middle Dacite of the Dandenong series (7).

It is a dark slaty-coloured rock, bluish on a fresh surface. Phenocrysts of quartz and white felspar, occasionally of quite large dimensions, are characteristic. Biotite and garnet are more prevalent than in the quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite. Pyrrhotite appears occasionally.

A typical section No. (2356), (Analysis No. V.), is from a quarry about 4.5 miles from Narbethong, on the Black Spur road. The groundmass is glassy to cryptocrystalline, and appears to consist of quartz and orthoclase. Flow structure is not very evident. The larger phenocrysts are of quartz and plagioclase all showing the effects of corrosion. The plagioclase consists of labradorite, and to a lesser extent andesine. In places the felspar show shearing, and strained polarisation. Zoning is eminent, and there is a tendency towards clotting. A coarse patch of ophitic character shows numerous small plagioclase and biotite crystals caught up in a large quartz phenocryst. Large ribbons of primary biotite are present, often flexed, and containing pleochroic haloes centered about zircons. Two small phenocrysts of hypersthene (?), replaced by chlorite, calcite and micaceous or serpentinous minerals, are seen. Two pink garnets are present, unshattered. They are rounded by corrosion, and bordered with chlorite (after biotite (?)), but preserve something of a rhombododecahedral outline. One contains small inclusions of biotite, while the other is associated with pyrrhotite.

A specimen No. (2377), from a quarry just south of the 5-mile post on the Black Spur, carries a xenolith of rhyolite, and has been semi-propylitised. The dacite contains cubes of pyrite, and the felspar is extremely sericitised. The groundmass coarsens locally about the pyrite, having been recrystallised during the introduction of the sulphides. The xenolith is divided from the dacite by a microcrystalline layer, containing minute trigonal tourmalines (?). In No. (2376), from Fernshaw, coarse bands are found, apparently the last part of the base to consolidate, since crystals of quartz grow columnar fashion towards the centre from both glassy walls.

Near the Devil's Elbow, and along the main divide, patches of coarser rock are found, rich in garnets. Two sections Nos. (2378-2379), from Devil's Elbow, show very large phenocrysts of quartz felspar and biotite, set in a microcrystalline groundmass of quartz and orthoclase. The felspars are basic labradorite and a little andesine. The phenocrysts are strongly corroded, and in places only fragments in optical continuity remain. The biotites are generally fresh. Corroded hypersthene are occasionally present, with deep coronas of green biotite. The garnets are comparatively large, shattered, and associated with chloritised biotite.

These coarse patches may be local developments in dacite, or may be recrystallised fragments of the quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite, regarding the latter as a chilled border phase of the original magma chamber.

#### Relation to the Quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite.

These two dacites are closely similar. A micrometric analysis shows:-

	Q.H.B.Dacite.	Q.B.Dacite.
Quartz	13.18	11.46
Hypersthene	6.24	1.63
Biotite	4.28	11.35
Felspars	28.92	27.04
Groundmass	48.00	45.65

The only marked difference is in the relative proportion of biotite to hypersthene; and as Mt. Monda is approached from the north-east, the amount of hypersthene in quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite decreases and biotite increases, until the rock becomes a quartz-biotite-dacite without any sharp junction being observed. The evidence suggests that the quartz-hypersthene-biotite-dacite is a chilled intrusive facies of the quartz-biotite-dacite.

## 7. Hypersthene-Dacite

This rock outcrops widely over the south-eastern part of the area. It is similar, both chemically and mineralogically, to the hypersthene-dacites of Macedon and the Dandenong Ranges series, and evidences several interesting reactions.

It is a light-coloured rock of an extremely fine, even texture, which masks its porphyritic character. The colour darkens locally where the groundmass is more glassy. It differs from the other types in the area by the entire absence of quartz phenocrysts, and the increased visibility of the biotite. The absence of garnets is characteristic.

Examination of a thin section from Mt. Juliet summit, No. (2330), (Analysis No. VIII.), shows that the rocks consist of phenocrysts of labradorite and hypersthene, with smaller and less numerous crystals of ilmenite and biotite, set in a fine granulitic groundmass of quartz and orthoclase, with some biotite and ilmenite. Occasional coarse patches appear in the groundmass. The feldspars form small but numerous phenocrysts. They are corroded, strongly zoned, and twinned (albite and Carlsbad laws), and show a general extinction angle  $25^\circ$ , i.e. labradorite. Some andesine is also present, and small inclusions of a more basic pleochroism. Ilmenite and apatite are commonly included, and feldspars occasionally. Secondary biotite fringes many of the hypersthene, and sometimes infills the cleavages. The biotite occurs in two forms; (1) a light brown, primary biotite, in flakes with well defined cleavage, often showing flexure as from flowage; (2) a darker secondary biotite, in small unorientated flakes, or aggregates of such fringing hypersthene and ilmenites, which originates from a reaction of phenocrysts and the groundmass. Ilmenite is present as small crystals, also.

A specimen from Mt. Vinegar, No. (2375), contains a notable phenocryst of hypersthene in which all the cleavages are filled with biotite. In No. (2374), from Malleson's Lookout, the groundmass is unusually coarse and variable. Slow cooling than usual has permitted the hypersthene crystals to react strongly with the groundmass, and all stages of the reaction can be seen. Ilmenite is commonly included in the peripheral zones of the hypersthene; or occurs as the nucleus of the biotite aggregates, owing to the complete reaction of the including hypersthene; and the hypersthene show a tendency to clot. One of the feldspars in No. (2332) from Badger Weir has the appearance of anorthoclase. It shows perfect cleavage, but no twinning, and slight zoning at the margin, where it is free from light patches. It is cut parallel to the (010) face. The extinction angle is  $27^\circ$  showing it to be basic labradorite. The light patches, giving the anorthoclase-like appearance, have a lower index of refraction, straight extinction, and show no twinning, so that they appear to be orthoclase. They are not inclusions since the cleavages are continuous through them. Dr. Summers has suggested the following explanation. It is known that plagioclase forms a solid solution with orthoclase, and that the solubility of the orthoclase decreases as the plagioclase becomes more basic. Probably the solid solution can hold less orthoclase when cold than when at high temperature, so that on cooling the excess orthoclase has been thrown down, and has segregated into microscopic patches. Such "anorthoclases" are common, but sporadic in occurrence.

Section No. (2335) from Sunny Lodge represents a chilled border phase. The hypersthene crystals show narrow reaction zones of minute granules of a green mineral - probably chlorite after biotite. Zircons, with pleochroic haloes, idiomorphic ilmenite shows a well developed reaction with the groundmass. Where it abuts the hypersthene or felspar, its fresh character is preserved, but where it comes into contact with the groundmass it loses its metallic lustre at that edge, and the immediately adjacent zone is coloured brown, owing to the formation of a narrow biotite corona. This secondary rim may be granular, but it often shows a columnar structure, the crystals of it growing normal to the edge of the ilmenite crystal (Microphotograph No. 5). Stringers or veins of pyrite are prevalent. They are later than the consolidation of the rock, filling cracks, and sometimes interposing between crystals and their reaction rims. The pyrite borders both felspar and hypersthene. Sometimes the veins follow the crystal boundaries; others continue straight across groundmass or crystal equally, following cleavage planes or cutting across them at will. No. (2373) from Wade's Lookout is a glassy rock, with coarse patches containing clots of tourmaline and secondary biotite. In No. (2334), from S.W. of Mt. Riddell pipe line the groundmass is very glassy. The hypersthene has very narrow reaction rims, but the earlier formed ilmenites show very distinct coronas.

#### 8. Granodiorite.

The only outcrop of granodiorite observed in the area occurs as a ridge between the Meyer's Creek road and Donnelley's Creek (Junner, p. 226 and map). It has a medium, holocrystalline texture, and consists of colourless quartz, greenish-white felspar, and green (chloritised) and black biotite. It is often much contaminated with clots of ferromagnesian, and with xenoliths. Garnet is commonly associated with these contaminated patches. The rock is very similar to the Macedon granodiorite. Superficially it resembles the No. 1 porphyrite dyke.

#### Xenoliths in Granodiorite.

Numerous xenoliths were collected from the granodiorite at the Maroondah Aqueduct Tunnel dump, south of Donnelley's Weir. Many were as big as one foot or more in diameter. Typically they consist of a core of brown porphyritic rock, showing needles of felspar, and noticeably free from biotite, surrounded by an outer zone of fine-grained, dacite appearance, consisting of quartz biotite and calcite, and characteristic large green or white felspars.

The core, No. (2367), is a porphyritic rock with phenocrysts of plagioclase and hypersthene set in a coarsely trachytic groundmass made up equally of plagioclase, quartz, and granular pyroxenes, with subordinate orthoclase and secondary biotite flakes. There is no glass. Ilmenite grains are present. The plagioclase is labradorite with some anorthite. It shows the effects of strong corrosion or solution, and includes numerous granules of hypersthene. Some is schillered. Fresh hypersthene is uncommon as large crystals. It is generally corroded, and much altered to biotite. Smaller crystals of pyroxene are plentiful. The pyroxene varies in composition from hypersthene, through intermediate types, to augite. The extinction angle increases from 0° to 45° as the proportion of the lime molecule increases. Biotite is always subordinate and secondary as coronas, or flakes in the groundmass.

Section No. (2368) shows the junction of the core with the outer zone. The junction is irregular, but sharply defined. The hypersthene is increasingly altered towards the outer zone, and form the "phenocrysts." The augite-pyroxene is limited to the groundmass. A remarkable "kelyphitic structure" is developed in an original aggregation of

plagioclase and hypersthene phenocrysts (Microphotograph No. 6). It consists of a zone of plagioclase intergrown with needle-like crystals of a pale green ferromagnesian. The femic needles develop with their long axes normal to the edge of the hypersthene crystals. They form only where the hypersthene makes contact with the felspar; where it meets quartz or has been altered to biotite, they are absent. They are pleochroic (?) and have extinction angles of about  $25^{\circ}$ . They are doubly refractive, but the strength and nature of the double refraction are indeterminable. They seem to be similar to the augitic pyroxene of the groundmass. The felspar associated with the needles has a lower refractive index than the felspar a little removed from the intergrowth. It appears that the lime-rich felspar has reacted with the hypersthene to form a lime-magnesia pyroxene and a more sodic felspar. This intergrowth differs from the "symplektites" recorded by Sederholm (13, pp. 41-46) in that there the intergrown felspar is more calcic than the unaffected felspar. The plagioclase is well schillered.

The outer zone is of a distinctly different character. The "groundmass" consists of a very coarse intergrowth of quartz and felspar, together with ilmenite and biotite. The felspar is entirely altered to calcite and sericite. The large felspar phenocrysts still show albite twinning, and zoning, but have been considerably altered. They are labradorites. There is no hypersthene. The biotite shows bleaching and chloritisation, and the numerous inclusions of ilmenite contained by it suggest that it has replaced the hypersthene in situ. Pyrrhotite is present.

No. (2371) shows the junction of the outer zone with the granodiorite. The groundmass is increasingly coarse and intergrown. The junction is fairly definite, but irregular; and patches of the xenolith are seen within the granodiorite, suggesting assimilation by the latter. The felspars are totally decomposed to calcite and sericite.

The original rock has been a plagioclase-hypersthene-porphrite, and was probably the hypersthene-dacite. Although this latter rock does not outcrop close at hand, a tremendous amount of erosion has taken place at this locality, and it is quite conceivable that the hypersthene-dacite might have formed the cover into which the granodiorite stopped its way, and that all trace of such cover has now been removed.

#### Basic Clots in Granodiorite.

The granodiorite is commonly contaminated with clots of ferromagnesians. These generally consist of aggregates of biotite, probably remnants from the assimilation of larger xenoliths. Garnet is commonly associated with them, a point of comparison with the granodiorite now outcropping in the tennis court at Clyde (Braemar House), Macedon. One of these clots, No. (2398), was examined. It contains several crystals of hypersthene associated with a large pink garnet. The garnet appears to have developed from the hypersthene. The hypersthene closely resembles the outer zone of the xenolith described above. Nearly all the hypersthene shows partial alteration to biotite; and they are embedded in a "holocrystalline" intergrowth of quartz and sodic plagioclases (albite and andesine). No orthoclase can be discerned; it is probably in solid solution in the sodic plagioclase.

Further reference to these clots and xenoliths will be made when the hypersthene-biotite reaction relation is dealt with later.



Easter weather is usually good for walking, and if one is prepared for the rain which almost invariably accompanies it much enjoyment may be obtained by taking an extended tour on foot. The eastern ranges of Victoria afford good scope for such a holiday. Thus it came about that a quartette of hikers equipped with sleeping bags and provisions for four days, set out under promising conditions on Thursday March 24, 1932. The evening train deposited the party at Warburton, where shelter was found under the ti-tree along the Yarra River. The ever flowing stream made music to lull us to sleep, in spite of the glorious moonlight.

Bright night was followed by brighter day. All were astir early. A curtain of clouds drifted down the valley and revealed the mountains. We sought to avoid the made road as far as possible, choosing instead the Donna Buang road until it reached the Board's territory embracing the O'Shannassy system. Looking back, we could see Warburton nestling below, with Mt. Little Joe prominent in the background. By its serpentine course several miles of the silent aqueduct were followed. Cement Creek and tunnels being crossed by graded roads.

The varied tints of trees, shrubs and flowers in the well laid out garden of the "Quarters" reflected the creative genius of a master mind. Further on we reached the O'Shannassy Weir, where the water is measured in millions of gallons. A pretty spot with its glistening weirs amid green trees and ferns, it looked particularly well from higher up. The road ended at the reservoir whose placid surface was full of reflection in the calmness of the morning. Upstream in the distance the western branch of the stream may be seen, the other being hidden by the nearest hills. The outlet is a rushing torrent, fascinating to watch. Near the weir a couple of wallabies hopped across our track, and were soon lost in the bush. Time forbade delay, as we had a long journey for the first day. Our directions were to follow a path "well defined by empty bottles." We found it so. This brought us to the main road at McMahon's Creek.

After covering a few more miles someone suggested that a dip in the river would be refreshing, so a secluded spot was found, a snake being surprised in the process. The walk along the Yarra, especially around the steep descents where one is well above and can look down on the stream, is idyllic. The white gum trees add much to the picture.

We left the metal road at Little Yankee Jim Creek - whose name is a relic of the mining days - and took to the softer road along the newly constructed Upper Yarra aqueduct. Then by the new road, also made by the Metropolitan Board, we soon began to rise, and got some commanding views. But having gained considerable altitude, we immediately lost it all near the junction of Walsh's Creek with the Yarra. The locality is better known as McVeigh's and is the gateway by which many a walker reaches his "Mecca," since tracks branch from here in several directions. It is the last habitation for miles, and often proves a welcome haven to the wayfarer. Quite a pleasing contrast, too. English trees make among the native ones. The avenue leading to the hotel contains various species whose autumnal tints are at their best about Easter. McVeigh's - the solitary but commodious abode - comprises the hotel, store, post office etc.; but let the traveller take heed its stock is rather limited. At times this has been a centre for some of the Metropolitan Board's activities. Pack horses regularly loaded up here with supplies for survey parties on the distant Baw Baw ranges. Horses used also to be hired for a day or two to walkers, who then turned them loose to find their own way home, saving the need of an escort. Who has not heard of Paddy McVeigh? And what a wealth of stories could be told about him! This must surely have been a busy place in the roaring days of mining - when Woods' Point and the district was at the zenith of its fame. But the old home has a threatened existence, and sooner or later McVeigh's will become but a

memory when the Board finally provides for Melbourne's thirsty population.

McVeighs is a good spot for campers. In fact, without in the least suspecting the weather, we wondered how some motorists would fare in the event of rain, as many cars were parked in paddocks well away from the metal road. Perhaps the sometimes despised horse had to be requisitioned as the rain came down with a vengeance. Our direction from here was to veer north along an old mining track. From a level of about 1000 feet above the sea, we were to rise nearly 2000 feet in a distance of two miles. It was therefore decided to commence part of the climb in the evening. Water being scarce for some distance, we filled our billies and kept ascending till approaching dusk bade us select a suitable spot wherein to bivouac. So here, under the blue canopy of heaven, we spent our second night. A few mosquitoes filled the ear with music, but mostly we were at peace with the world.

Earlier in the day it had been noticed that ants had built their homes well above the ground, that martins were busy circling overhead, and that black cockatoos were screeching and leaving the higher hills. These are all regarded by bushmen proaching bad weather. During the night a mopoke added his voice of warning; and sure enough just when we expected to view a delightful sunrise from our exalted position, we became aware of a clouded sky and even a few drops of rain. Light showers continued throughout the day, but in our walking attire it was not very troublesome and made conditions rather better for climbing. Our last glimpse of McVeigh's was delightful. The distant views were somewhat obscured at the time, but the Baw Baws were visible occasionally. The track was well cleared otherwise the wet undergrowth would have been the source of annoyance. Most of the odd blazes were quite overgrown. Except for two or three small patches denoting recent bushfires the forests were wonderfully green. At times stringybark was much in evidence, then white gums appeared, but eventually mountain ash predominated. On one tree an Italian had cut the word "woare" to signify water, which could be found at the end of a side track. Some very brilliant mountain parrots were seen, and several fine fern gullies.

At one point prospectors had evidently been recently at work on old shafts and tunnels. On the opposite ridge was located the ancient Golden Bower Mine, about which it was said that the company's printed prospectus was more rich in promises than the mine ever was in gold. Remembering that rain sometimes uncovers nuggets, one member of the party kept close watch on the ground, and ere long his perseverance was rewarded for he found a sixpence. On our left Mt Strickland seemed to be the most definite landmark. In due course we emerged on the road between Marysville and Woods' Point, and so turned westerly towards home - along a dry weather road which passed through a veritable fairyland.

1932

### The Cumberland Forest

Admirers of the abundant pristine beauty at the Cumberland Valley will be interested to learn that the Marysville Tourist Association has obtained the active assistance of the Minister for Forests ( Mr. Dunstan ) in protecting the Cumberland reservation from the menace of bushfires in the coming seasons. Already 175 workers are engaged in cutting a fire break on the northern side of the falls, along the Mount Arnold spur back toward Big River and the Rubicon. Three and a half miles of this break is already completed, and upon full completion of the work a further break is to be cut to the south of the meeting of the waters, from the slopes of Mount Observation. These two breaks, it is considered, will fully protect the beautiful valley and forest reservation from the danger of

obliteration by fires. The policy of the Forests department, as distinct from the policy in years past, is to content itself with narrow breaks (16 ft. is now the standard width, against up to three chains in the past). This narrow break has been found to be adequate, and it is naturally infinitely less expensive to construct and maintain, thus enabling the preventive measures throughout the State to be multiplied with limited funds available.

Mr Gerraty, the officer in charge of the operations in this district, explained in a meeting of the tourist association that the object of the break is not to stop a fire jumping its gap, but to enable a fire to be lighted at the break and be burnt back to meet the oncoming menace. This is quite well accomplished with a narrow break as with a wide one. Mr Gerraty said that so excellent are these break tracks, as year by year they are improved, that a number of those constructed up to five years ago are now constantly used for motor tracks by the cars of the Electricity Commission, and the country at the back of Lake Mountain and out toward Rubicon is in this manner being rendered open to communication more as time goes on. Thus the Forests department is, in addition to its natural function of preserving the forests of the State, doing much pioneering work in opening the back country in the forest areas.

1932

A Snow Trip To The Lake Mountain Country  
by F. W. Higgins.

And so, passing the black waters of the Acheron, undaunted one shot an arrow into Pluto's shoulder, making the dark browed King of Hades roar for pain..... Then Hercules gripped that hellish watchdog, Cerberus, by the throat, and for all the terror of its three barking heads, its poison dripping teeth and its stinging scorpion tail, he swung the leathy monster over his back and brought it up to earth.

-From "The Final Task of Hercules."

And a fair task, too, even for a demigod of the calibre of Hercules. And if precedent counts for anything, they who cross the black waters of the Acheron and venture into the Cerberean Ranges should be prepared for anything. We were met by something for which we were certainly not prepared.

Bram Gurdon and I had planned a holiday for the last fortnight in August at Lake Mountain. Tinned goods had been sent up some weeks previously. This meant that, in addition to the clothes, camping gears, a pair of skis, we had to carry bread, meat, butter, bacon, etc.; we also carried a pair of trampers apiece.

We proposed to stay overnight in Marysville, to go by car to the Lake Mountain turn off (6.5 miles) and to take our time over the ascent, some of which would surely be covered with snow, to our destination. And a very easy job it seemed, particularly when discussed beside a glowing fire after dinner.

We had known Lake Mountain in many moods - fine, calm, stormy, with patches of snow and with general sprinklings from a few inches up to knee deep. Two feet falls had been classed as unusually heavy, and no real difficulty was expected in any circumstances that might arise. Our climb, however, coincided with a fall which shattered all records for over thirty years.

The night we stayed at Marysville was fine; the moon showed dimly through the clouds and there was nothing to indicate the impending snowfall. But next morning I was roused by my fellow traveller who, pointing with pride, said "Look at that." Trees and fences were almost hidden with snow, and snow was clinging to the telephone and light wires, and the ground was covered to a depth of four inches. Marysville was

transformed. It had all happened without the least breath of wind or the least sound to waken us.

After breakfast the sun shone through breaks in the clouds and permitted us views of a white forest far up the spur towards our goal. We were jubilant at our good luck. We had come for snow and we were assured of it. Still no wind, but while we watched, several branches, over laden, broke away from the pine trees in the main street.

The definite lull and sunshine lured us into believing that the fall had ceased, but I think that, in our happy mood, nothing short of a hurricane would have held us back. The motor driver was roused and off we set just as a fresh fall commenced. Mounting Robley's Spur the snow deepened rapidly. A thrilling climb at any time, but with the car slewing wildly and flinging the laden bushes aside and the windscreen obscured by inches of snow - never before did this climb promise so many thrills. But the end came before we had really started. At Jock's Lookout - two miles from Marysville a chain broke, and the driver, brushing the snow off his face, said "That's about as far as I can go." We still had ten miles of climb ahead of us when at 10:30, we set off through snow about nine inches deep.

The long steep mile to Nicholl's Lookout. Which greeted us with pale sunlight on twelve inches of snow, left us thankful that the remainder of the climb was less steep, but we have doubts whether the long pull to Tommy's Bend was really easier. We experimented with the skis, but unfortunately the wax was at the proposed camping place; so was the soap, and we had no means of preventing heavy balling. Nor were the trampers of much use, for they picked up a great pack of snow at every step. By the time we arrived at the turn off thoroughly tired, we had decided to discard both skis and trampers, and push on "per boot".

The Cumberland Road, for all our effort, had held us enthralled with snow, not so much falling as crystallizing fine as dust out of a fog like atmosphere augmented every minute by a shower of powdery white as some sapling shook a bent crest free of its burden.

We arrived at the turn off at 2.30 p.m., and we bow our heads in shame to report that, although we strove for an hour to boil a billy, we did not succeed. For the greater part of that hour spent on the Divide, the snow fell as though it intended to show mere man that no hospitality was to be expected along that way. We took the hint, drank the warm water, cached the skis and pushed on. Just past the Glover Walk signpost we decided to leave some of our heavy food, and made a second "plant" carefully wrapped in a waterproof sheet and hidden in the snow.

Under way once more with lightened packs we made fair progress until the steep grade up Mt. Arnold took its toll. This effort warned me that if I wished to ensure arriving at our destination that night my load would have to be lightened still further. And so a third cache was made - this time carelessly under a log. My Companion, whose leg was troubling him, held he could carry a pack if I could break the track.

By this time the snow was well over knee deep and very tenacious, but we forced our way forward knowing that our goal was getting nearer with every step. A fourth cache was made by simply dumping the meat, bread and butter at the foot of a stump, and a little further on the last lot of food was jettisoned. All we took from here was my sleeping bag and a flask of rum. By now we fully realized our predicament. Under the fresh fall, the old snow, which we had been counting on to hold us, would suspend us momentarily and then let us through, often waist deep. To struggle along here a plough was necessary, and I became the plough.

Snowy Hill at last! but here we were forced off the track by the bent penninervis. Often the insecure base of the cut scrub on the lower side of the track let us through into many pitfalls with a consequent scoring of our shins and an entrapping of our ankles. It is impossible to put into words the eternity of effort expended in that portion of the climb.

Once in the waste of snow we found ourselves a few yards off the track, and in cutting across to meet it again, ploughed a deep angle. A fortnight later, when warm, well fed and as hard as nails, we glided over that spot, we viewed the deep furrow with much the same feelings as a liberated slave might see the treadmill he once operated.

Eventually came the crest of the climb, but change of levels brought no relief. Two steps - three - but never more than ten, and then a halt. Every time as I looked back and saw Bram toiling on, dragging his stiff leg after him, assisting it over obstacles by lifting it with clasped hands behind the knee, I thought we were fortunate to be progressing at all. An hour to do a quarter of a mile! After such an effort we feel justified in broaching the rum, and the smell of it seems to pursue us. Bram insists it is his breath, but later finds the screw cap is not in position and the balance of the rum soaking through his clothing.

At long last, after encountering more than one drift armpit deep, we see our destination. Welcome enough truly; but we are no longer human but mechanical. Another stiff pull uphill and we are there. Midnight. Bram fumbles at the frozen lock. It will not open. My teeth chatter. I am wet through and my clothes are like biscuit. By the time the door is opened I am shivering uncontrollably, and with but one thought - to free myself of my saturated clothing and to roll in the blankets. My fellow sufferer, calling on an unsuspected reserve of energy, possibly due to rum said to have been spilt, lights a fire, and in an instant there is steaming coffee. Then warmth steals over me and sleep wraps me about like a cloak.

Cerberean Ranges and shades of Cerberus! We roused no triple headed demon bristling from his lair, but is it possible that his gloomy master was lurking in that desolation where we stumbled, rose and fell, and rose again? Could we have reached the hut had it been a few miles further on? Perhaps. A man will steel himself to accomplish a task and relax at its accomplishment. But a few miles further on! That is a pudding which two of the Club members at least will not prove by the eating.

The next day saw us half asleep and half awake, not interested in food but soaking up coffee, tea and water like sponges. On the following day, after breakfasting on bread two months old, butter which had been stored in flour since the previous Christmas, and thank heaven! some tinned mutton, we retraced our steps and regained three of the caches.

Another day in bed to recover from that exertion, and after a slight frost away at 6 a.m. by the light of the waning moon and its rival, the morning star, on a never to be forgotten walk to Marysville to warn a couple of friends against attempting the trip. On the return journey next day we collected our remaining "plants," and at last we were in the hut, with all our gear, nearly a week late.

That night we had four degrees of frost, and the following morning found us out on the skis. From then the holiday commenced to pay a hundredfold for the effort involved. Great bursts of sunshine, with an odd storm for relief, gave us an opportunity to get to peaks never before visited on skis. Such were Grouse's Spur, parts of Mt. Jubilee and Mt. Federation. The last named will bear further investigation from a skiing aspect.

The glory of the trips, however, was the ever changing view. Buller, craggy and blue caverned, and misty in spite of its comparative nearness, with its hoary head thrust through the cloud layer, could pass for a Himalayan giant. But Skene, away on the Divide, a perfect table with the sunlight blazing full of its perfect table cloth, complete to the folds running away from the corners, is the dominating landmark from any part of the range. Surely Skene would reward a pioneer skier! There is the mountain; where is the man? The Baw-Baws, Useful, Wellington. Macdonald, the Bluff and a hundred of others piles high and stark; in that clear atmosphere each range was sharply defined as a tuck pointed brick. And

above it all, the blue, separated from the different blues of the ranges by the white snow line.

Viewed sometimes from above and sometimes through the variegated foliage and trunks of the woolly butts, with their warm rich reds and browns predominating and a sprinkling of yellow from the penninervis bushes, the ever changing picture held our unceasing admiration.

Snowy Hill, unjustly regarded as an awkward obstacle on the way to Lake Mountain, is usually a splendid viewpoint. From the extreme easterly point overhanging the Big River valley a small cairn or stand would suffice to lift the wayfarer above the limits of skeletons of old gums, and allow an uninterrupted view in all directions. Looking southward from this point, we were intrigued to see far beyond the eastern shoulder of Mt. Arnold what appeared to be a huge excavation - possibly portion of the Upper Yarra conservation scheme.

At the end of a fortnight we sadly shook the snow of the mountain tops from our feet and returned to the plain. By this time the snow line had receded far into the hills and the way was easy. Our entrance was at the same time as the fall. We had been one with storm and blizzard, had experienced the frost and the sun, and our exit coincided with the thaw. Our presence had been tolerated at one of Nature's grandest performances and we were grateful.

By F.W. Higgins.

1932

By Moonlight to Donna Buang

Francis Bacon in his famous essay on friendship said : "Little do men perceive what solitude is and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love." Although we cannot always bear with the company of our fellow beings I find that the solitude of the mountains is at all times in harmony with my feelings; when tramping over their summits, climbing down their gullies, or viewing them from afar. Every walker has his favourite track and mine is the climbing, winding, falling road from Healesville to Warburton over old man Donna Buang and his brother Ben Cairn. Many times have I walked over it, sometimes with company, sometimes alone; in the bracing breeze of autumn, the biting blast of mid winter, the soft sleepy atmosphere of spring, and the hot glare of a summer's day. I greet every bend, every valley, every view as an old friend. Then one day I planned to travel this road by moonlight, to walk over the mountains when they were in yet another mood.

One hot Saturday last January I caught the evening train to Healesville, arriving there at 7 o'clock. The moon was full that night and I looked forward with anticipation to the night's long tramp of 17 miles, Ben Cairn at midnight and Donna Buang by sunrise. While waiting for the moonrise I rested on a hilltop overlooking the beautiful Maroondah dam and watched the evening breezes scudding over the darkening waters of the lake, while the last rays of the sun climbed up and up towards the crest of Mt. Juliet. Then like a burst of flame the moon rose behind the trees on the skyline and in its soft silver light I strode along the Ben Cairn road.

This road which I thought I knew so well was changed, no longer friendly and enticing one onwards with green roofed tunnels and sharp bends, but sinister and gloomy, deep in black shadow broken here and there with patches of moonlight. Climbing steeply up the mountain side the road crossed the Don gap at 2250 feet, where flying streamers of mist sailed past, carried out of the Don valley on a cold night breeze. In the valleys on either side tall dead timbers reared their white skeletons and in the cold uncertain moonlight they presented a weird sad spectacle, a

graveyard of former glories. Steadily climbing, I could see the clouds forming over the Don valley far below, like a soft white Esmond quilt tucked into the gullies and winding round the spurs.

Just after midnight I climbed up the last steep pinch through long damp snow grass on to the Rock at the summit of Ben Cairn, and stood there gazing over the Yarra valley, the scene so familiar to me in daylight now eerie and indistinct. The sighings of the chill night wind overhead were the voices of the mountain spirits murmuring at my intrusion into their solitudes at this bewitching hour of midnight. Motionless I left the brooding passiveness of the mountains sink into my being, and then as never before I felt the presence of the Master Spirit of the universe as though before me, above me, and around me. Donna Buang was easily seen on the left, like a huge monster, a bluish silver mountain. Other peaks loomed indistinctly in the hazy moonlight. Below were the valleys hidden by rolling mists, and above was a clear starry sky. The fresh crisp air at this height seemed to broaden the smile of the "Man in the Moon," and to smile back at him was to break the feeling of utter loneliness which was creeping over me. At last I turned to leave feeling cold, and as I did so saw in the south a fiery ball shoot downwards into the smoke haze, turn fierce red, and burst. It was a wonderful meteor viewed from 3,400 feet. The sight made my heart beat violently, not exactly fear, but awe and wonder engendered by the strange and beautiful scene on which I had been gazing. I was in that state of mind in which

"In the night imagining fear,

How easy is each bush supposed a bear."

My immediate objective was a hut on the side of the road some 500 yards away. Reaching it I quickly had a fire blazing in the capacious fireplace and for an hour and a half I basked in its friendly warmth, my thoughts dancing here and there like the firelight on the walls.

At 2.30 a.m. I shouldered my pack once more and set off down the five mile road which winds along the top of the spur between Ben Cairn and Donna Buang. The moon played hide and seek among the tall timbers at the side of the road. Beech groves were passed at frequent intervals, and here the moon was totally obscured, a moist dank scent rising from the moss covered earth and trunks. Again where the sawmiller had been at work, and fallen timber lay beside the road, the way ahead was clearly seen, the white musk bushes standing like sentinels along the road. At a quarter to four, three quarters of an hour before sunrise, I turned the last bend and approached the tower on Donna Buang's 4060 feet summit. From its platform I beheld a sight which for sheer beauty and magnificence made me catch my breath. My wish then was to share the magic spell of the next hour with all mankind. But no, I was alone with one of the glories of Nature, sunrise above the clouds.

Below me was a shining silver sea of clouds, extending on all sides as far as one could see; in the south over Gippsland an unbroken ocean, while around Donna Buang and towards the Baw Baws the peaks and ridges showed through like islands, capes, and promontories. A shining pathway led across the clouds to the full moon, now low in the west, while in the east the Baw Baws were silhouetted against the approaching dawn. The sun heralded his appearance with glowing tints in the eastern sky, and then with startling swiftness raised himself past the rim of the cloud line, just beside Mt. Baw Baw. His rays turned the cloud sea in the east to crimson, shading away to soft rose tints, while still in the west was the full moon with its silver track across the clouds. Higher and higher rose the sun, dimming the light of the setting moon, and capping the mountains near at hand with sunlight. I felt strangely awed when each peak threw a long shadow across the clouds, as you or I throw one on the pavement, and then I saw them moving, shortening as the sun mounted higher. The growing warmth of the sun sent the clouds scurrying away to the west, to darkness and coldness. The whole sea of clouds now heaved

and tossed, rolling like waves out of the valleys, and breaking with silent surf on the projecting peaks and ridges. Weary from the beauty of the scene and my long walk I climbed down, sought out a comfortable hiphole, crawled into my sleeping bag, and slept well into the morning.

A hot sun beating down prevented further sleep, so I breakfasted at 11 o'clock. Again I climbed the tower and there once more was the old familiar view. Gone were the lake of clouds, the clean air, the soft tints of dawn, and those distant peaks which I had seen on the horizon. The shimmering haze of another hot summer's day rose on all sides, obscuring or distorting the distant mountains and plains, and the contrast to the ethereal beauty of the dawn only a few hours before impressed the experiences of that long solitary night tramp upon my memory. I had ventured a little further into the "perceiving of what solitude is, and how far it extendeth;" the solitude of the mountains at night.

By P.L. Allnutt.

1932

Mt. Donna Buang, Narbethong, Mt. Monda.

Three Days' Trip; Sleep-out. Approx. 43 Miles.

Excellent Panoramas and Fine Forests.

Take the morning train to Warburton. Follow the Donna Buang short track, which begins behind the State school, to the top of the mountain, where there is a hut and water. This makes a good camping place for the first night and, although no more than six miles have been covered, the walker will have made an ascent of about 3,500 feet.

1933

Healesville to Marysville

Route of Scenic Wonders

The main road from Healesville to Marysville runs in an easterly direction, and from two or three miles out the fine views of the newly constructed Maroondah reservoir are obtained. This large storage is now a scenic feature, the embankment over which a roadway has been formed, being clearly visible from the main road. Rigid control is exercised by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works over this reservoir and its surroundings in order to maintain the purity of the water supply to the metropolis. By the flooding of the valley the old track to the beautiful Mathinna Falls seven miles from Healesville has been submerged. Two miles along the Marysville road there is a turn-off to the right, just past Gracedale House, and this follows the aqueduct for a further mile to Graceburn weir. The bank of the channel found an easy and pretty pathway, and though the weir itself is not an extensive work, it is set in the most beautiful surroundings. A pathway reached by stepping stones below the weir follows along the right-hand side of the stream for a mile or more, and provides frequent glimpses of beautiful river scenery. Six miles from Healesville, along the Marysville road, will be found slip panels which give access to the track (indicated by a notice board), which turning to the right, continues to the camping ground at the foot of Mount Juliet; the summit of the mount is 3630 feet above-sea level and is distant between 9 and 10 miles from the township. It is a stiff climb from the camping ground to the top, and the summit is indicated by a cairn of stones. Water is obtainable about a mile from the summit from a spring flowing from the roots of a large tree on the north side of the track and within a few yards of it. If the trip is made at a time when there is reason to believe that the spring may not be flowing, it is



advisable to carry water from Mosquito Creek, which is crossed soon after leaving the road. A splendid camping place to the east of the cairn and a little below it exists at the summit of the mount. As Juliet is one of the highest peaks in the district, the line of vision in every direction are superb.

Morley's track turns to the right about 300 yard past the rotunda at Fernshaw, on the Blacks' Spur road, and, after following for some distance the course of Morley's Creek, ascends to the summit of the Dividing Range at Carters Gap (five miles), where it joins the boundary track of the Metropolitan Board of Works and continues in a north westerly direction for a further two miles to its junction on the crest of the range with the Blacks' Spur road.

#### The Blacks' Spur

No visitor to Healesville should return without making the most delightful of all excursions - the trip across the famous Blacks' Spur. By taking advantage of the motors run from Healesville this may be brought comfortably within the compass of a day's outing. The cars connect at the railway station with the first train from Melbourne and passing through the main street of Healesville, commence the gradual ascent of this excellent road. The first place of interest on the route is Gracedale House, three miles out a magnificent and commodious house of accommodation standing in spacious grounds, which commands a magnificent outlook over the Yarra flats and to the far distant metropolis. Along the road past Gracedale House are many beauty spots, notably Etta's Glen, Jessie's Bower and Truganina Falls, and seven miles out the Watts River is crossed at the site of Fernshaw at an altitude of 750 feet above sea level. The buildings which formed the little hamlet of Fernshaw - a halting place for teamsters on their way from Healesville to the gold diggings of Wood's Point - were removed when the Melbourne Board of Works took possession of the water reserves of the district to prevent pollution of the metropolitan water supply. Ferns abound along the course of the river, and at this point our present Queen Mary picnicked with members of her staff when on a visit to this State in 1901. The car continues on its way beyond Fernshaw across the summit of the Spur and down the northern slopes of the divide...then on to Marysville.

1933

#### Majestic Marysville

#### Mecca of Tourists

Marysville has been described as a tourists' paradise, and justly so. Its distance from the metropolis, accessibility, height above sea level, wonderfully even climate, guesthouse equipped with modern conveniences, and the prevailing beauty of the whole district, all render it a most desirable place in which to spend a vacation. In addition the village enjoys a boundless blessing of an inexhaustible water supply. In the number of fast running streams, waterfalls, viewpoints high up on the mountain sides, the magnificent forests and vegetation of great variety, there is presented a combination such as is difficult to surpass. All the valleys are adorned by the glorious foliage of the spreading trees, the light green of the sassafras trees, the taller growing blackwoods and screened by this foliage are the crystal streams, here forming deep pools, there rippling along rocky beds or in the deep and mist-filled gorges, tumbling over rock ledges and developing waterfalls magnificent in their setting. Much time can be devoted to visiting the surrounding beauty spots, either by car or on foot. While those who are disinclined

to go far afield are well catered for, as there are numerous short walks through the bush to fern gullies, waterfalls and viewpoints in close proximity to the village. The Beauty Spot, a dense mass of tree ferns of varying heights with numerous smaller ferns lies almost within the township boundary. Michael Dene, a short track though a very pretty fern glade, leads to Wishing Well and the Taggerty River. The Steavenson Falls can be reached by a walk of less than an hour. The foaming mass of water tumbling over the successive cascades presents a striking sight.

Nothing more pleasing of its kind can be seen than in the valley of the Taggerty River along the Talbot Drive, through the appropriately named Valley Beautiful, the Beech Grove, and the Forest of Arden past the Meeting of the Waters to the Keppel Falls. The river in its rocky course, is a long succession of water falls, cascades and rapids, with here and there an inviting pool for the trout fishing enthusiast.

At a distance of about ten miles along the Woods' Point road are the Cumberland and Cora Lynn Falls. These are a delight for all visitors. From a camping ground on the side of the road a well beaten foot track runs for nearly half a mile through a fine avenue of ferns to Cora Lynn Creek, just below the falls. The pathway has been continued down the creek, following the rushing waters to the junction of Cumberland Creek, nearly 100 feet below the camping ground, and returns along Cumberland Creek passing a series of cascades back to the starting point. The triangular circuit can be covered in an hour and a half without excessive effort in climbing, and it encompasses for its whole length the very choicest valley scenery to be found in this continent. It is the glorious combination of beech, sassafras, blackwood, silver wattle and musk trees and huge fern trees rising from a carpet of ferns and mosses, with giant blackbutts towering over all, associated with the music of the rippling streams and the roar of the waterfalls, that invests this place with an irresistible charm.

1933

Mighty Mountain Ash

Outing to Big Trees at Healesville

Towering magnificently above other big trees on the bush track to Mount Monda, about 2.5 miles from the Fernshaw road, above the Blacks' Spur, a giant mountain ash was recently discovered by Mr Harold Furnston, of Healesville. The matter was brought under the notice of the Healesville Tourist Association, with the result that under the auspices of that body a public pilgrimage to the tree was held on Sunday. In addition to many local residents there was a large number of visitors from the metropolis. Included in the expedition were Cr. S.B. Mowie (Healesville Shire president), Mr. F. J. Roberts (president of the tourist association), Mr. M. J. Maher (chairman of the association's publicity committee), Mr. J. B. Cook (association secretary) Mr. C. F. Morath (manager of the Granton sawmill), Mr. W. T. McConnell (manager of the Government Tourist Bureau), Mr. A. D. Hardy (Forests Commission), Mr. Howlison (railway photographer).

A start was made from the Memorial Hall shortly after 2 p.m., and the journey of about 10 miles to the Monda track was most enjoyable under propitious weather conditions. This road - from Healesville to the Blacks' Spur must be one of the most beautiful highways in the world. As the fleet of cars wound around the luxurious vegetated mountain sides, above the erstwhile little hamlet of Fernshaw, enthralling panoramas of the vast basin of the Great Dividing Range gave pictures of unrivalled scenic charm. Deep valleys and gorges revealed cluster upon cluster of mammoth tree ferns, with encroaching hillsides mantled with the bushland

beauties of musk, peppermint and sarsaparilla. Every now and then, as the expedition continued on its journey up the steep hillsides, flashing glimpses of the brilliant reds and blues and greens of the lories and king parrots were reflected in the sunlight.

Safely arrived at the entrance to the track, whose outcome is the summit of Mount Monda (2974 ft.), the cars were parked in long lines with land on one side and vast depths of ravine on the other. Then came the strenuous part of the outing - the 2.5 mile walk along the narrow track hewn out of the dense undergrowth, and the giant mountain ash hove into view. It proved a mighty buttress, and the expedition numbered many who had never before seen a tree of such huge dimensions. It was measured by Mr Hardy, who proclaimed it 62 feet in circumference at a mean height of five feet from the ground. At a mean height of 10 feet its circumference was 50 feet. Its height was calculated at approximately 287 feet. It rises sheer from its mighty base and about half way up the gleaming trunk it shoots off into countless widely spreading branches. It is alive and healthy - and said to be still growing! In close proximity to it are other huge trees, and a short distance down the track are a pair of twin giants - mountain ashes again with a circumference of about 45 feet each.

It is not claimed at Healesville that the tree is the biggest in the world, but it is claimed, and with justice, to that its immense size must prove of absorbing interest to all who appreciate the arboreal wonders of Australia. As the tree is located about arm's length from the pathway, it is remarkable that its giant proportions have not been proclaimed before.

Following the inspection, and after fifteen people had joined hands around the tree, the return journey was made by fastly falling dusk and visitors had the uncommon experience of walking through a big dense cloud, which sprung up and enshrouded the mountain with the oncoming of night.

1933

### Climbing Mt Juliet

To the Editor

Sir,- Attention has been drawn to an article in the Guardian some weeks back, in which the ascent of Mt Juliet was referred to as an unusual if not unique fact. That this is far from accurate many local people can testify. To the young and lusty of pre-war days, as to some more mature and not quite so vigorous, it was a favourite trip at all seasons. Sometimes a party would adventure forth when the summit lay knee deep in snow, or on a clear summer day, to obtain the expansive view that took in ships at anchor in Port Phillip Bay. Or the expedition would leave the township at nightfall in order to see the moonrise over the distant ranges, wait for the sun to rise in glorious majesty, and be home for a late breakfast.

One recalls a church picnic lunching at the foot of the mount and then toiling up the steep ascent, descending again for tea. For this an old van was requisitioned : one that had previously served as a coach plying to Melbourne. A very decrepit vehicle when put aside as a means of traffic, years of disuse had not improved its condition, and much rope was needed for repairs on the way.

Riding parties would leave their mounts at the foot and make light of the toilsome climb. In quite recent years a party was organised to be driven as far as possible, then to proceed further with pack horse and supplies for two days, bivouacking at the top. It is not necessary to add that this was a summertime expedition.

On one occasion a young school master brother of the late Dr. Baird (whose memory is held in the highest esteem locally), returning from a

solo excursion to the cairn on the summit, lost the track. Before the search parties could find him he suffered the most harrowing experiences. At 2 a.m. they succeeded in tunneling a way through the dense cutting scrub, led by his response to their repeated calls, and finally came upon him covered with leeches, tormented almost beyond endurance by mosquitoes, clothes torn to ribbons, hungry, worn and cold - truly a pitiable object.

Then, too, the people of Fernshaw, living in its shadow knew the mount from base to crown, with all its inner fastnesses, springs, waterfalls, creeks and gullies - better perhaps, than many local residents know the hills of their own Healesville. So those who would be pioneers must adventure further afield than Mt Juliet - Yours, etc

"JULIAN"

Healesville 25/6/33

1933

Lost on Snow clad  
Mountain

Perilous Adventure on  
Donna Buang

Last Friday morning two young Wesburn girls Evelyn Lewis and Merle Wilkinson, accompanied by a young man from the city, climbed the mountain to Ben Cairn and then went on to Donna Buang. As they had not returned by 10 o'clock that night their parents became extremely anxious, thinking one or more of the party had met with an accident.

A search party was arranged and at midnight. Messrs Jack Lewis, Bill McCrae, Theo Lange and Laurie Maggs set off by different tracks for Ben Cairn to search for the wanderers. At Ben Cairn they heard from a camping party that the three young people were safe, and intended walking home through Cement Creek and Warburton. The men then returned to Wesburn, procured a car, and met the last one ones at 7 o'clock on Saturday morning.

It was than learned that when darkness overtook the young people they lost themselves on the ski runs and tramped for three hours in the knee deep snow until, exhausted, and the girls in a state of collapse, they at last stumbled into a hut where there was plenty of dry wood, and so spent the night by a good fire.

The pluck and gallantry of the four young men who climbed up and down the mountain on such a night as last Friday was laudable to a degree, apparently chivalry is not dead at Wesburn.

1933

When we were "Lost"

I was eavesdropping so deserved all that subsequently befell me. It happened one night at a Club meeting; I overheard Joe Matthews and "Nick" Tranter planning to walk from Healesville to Donna Buang via the Mt. Riddell Spur. The official Club outing for the weekend was "Donna Buang - Wild Dog - Boobyalla" and it was the intention of Joe and "Nick" to join the weekend party on "Donna" at teatime on the Saturday night.

The proposal had a tinge of adventure about it and the prospect of exploring this comparatively unknown part of our nearer mountain ranges prompted me to ask if I might come, too. I was duly admitted as the third musketeer and on the following Friday we traveled to Healesville and camped at the foot of Mt. Riddell in readiness for the big journey the next day. How we reached our destination at 10 a.m. on the following

Tuesday instead of 6 p.m. on the Saturday is the story I am going to tell.

Although the Distance from Riddell to Donna Buang as the crow flies represents no more than a day's walk, the intervening ridge presents many difficulties which make the going very slow. Almost from beginning to end it is bestrewn with fallen forest giants, lying in indescribable confusion, and in some places piled up to a height of `>Ãhigher atmosphere, and look down on the little village we have just reached from a rapidly gained elevation. The road all along this part is a very adventurous one. It is well made but narrow, and we always have a deep and precipitous declivity on one side and a bank notched into the hill on the other. The nature of the road here is suggestively indicated by the horse teams of carriers conveying goods to Wood's Point. We see four or five strong horses attached to an apparently not very heavily loaded two-wheel dray, and our driver tells me that seven or eight hundred weight is on this road considered a full load for each horse.

As we get up on the higher level we get fuller views of the great blue mountain masses rising in solemn majesty around us. Behind us we have Mount Strickland and the distant top of Mount Juliet, on our left are the fantastic peaks of the Cathedral Range and before us is the lofty crown of Mount Arnold. The forest is at times composed of massive stringybarks, and at other times of the towering, clean-shafted gums of the blackbutt variety. And all the way runs this profound gully at a great depth below us on the left hand. Just before we reach a great loop in the road known as Tommys Bend, the driver stops the coach and indicates us to the proper point to get a view of Sassafras Gully, which runs from the top to the bottom of the great range on the opposite side of the valley.

The view, as we saw it is in the dazzling noonday sunlight, was worth coming all the way from Melbourne for its sake alone. The gully ran down the face of the hill as straight as a line till it intersected with the valley, which it joined at right angles. And its bed was wholly occupied with sassafras trees. They distinguished themselves from the beeches and to clamber up the almost perpendicular mountain side unrefreshed, arriving at the camp exhausted. It was shortly after our return that a very humorous incident occurred, although at the time we were too weary to even raise a smile. With his customary first aid instincts, "Nick" carried a piece of rubber tubing for use as a ligature in case of snake bite and espying a promising looking hole in a log conceived the idea of poking the tube into the hole with the hope that it might tap a hidden reservoir in the old log. It was then suggested that we should each have a suck in turn! Speaking from memory, I think Joe had first draw and the result was a mouthful of something like thick strong tea, tasting like wattle bark and containing a high percentage of sawdust and beetles! Thinking that Joe might have cleared the supply of all debris, "Nick" and I each had a suck in turn, but, alas, we fared no better! On looking back now, I realise how foolish it was to add sawdust and insects to tomato soup, eggs and vinegar in the expectation of satisfying a thirst! There was little sleep for me that night and I whiled away the long weary hours watching and chasing several kangaroo rats which persisted in nibbling our foodstuffs.

Sunday was hotter than the previous day and knowing that it would take us a day to return to the spring near Mt. Riddell we decided to push on, hoping each minute to find water. By this time we had been 24 hours without a drink and were beginning to feel the ill effects of our prolonged abstinence. Our progress, naturally, became slower and the packs most burdensome. I recall that about this time I was threatened with a most violent death for painting a mental picture of one of Mr. Clapp's drink stalls with pretty girls dressed in green filling up long glasses of iced orange juice!

Each member of the party made a struggle to be cheerful and claimed wonderful powers of endurance as far as thirst was concerned. Shortly after a declaration by Joe as to his camel like propensities, I came across our respected Tours Officer lying flat on the ground sipping the morning dew from mountain violet leaves! It was Joe, however, whom we had to thank for finding water that day.

Having read of a lost explorer who stewed nettles in order to extract moisture from them, I decided to prepare some nettle stew whilst my colleagues were searching for water. Whether my experience would have been successful or not, I am unable to say, because, before my pot began to boil, there came through the bush the pre arranged call signifying that water had been found! It turned out to be only a tiny trickle at the head of a stream feeding the Watts River and it disappeared underground a few yards further on, but it was quite sufficient for us. This was at 10 a.m. on the Sunday, just 26 hours after our last drink!

Our troubles were not over yet, however, for here we were 16 hours behind time and still a long way from Donna Buang. After lunch we set off on the next stage of the journey feeling hopeful about future water supplies. Alas for our optimism, for evening came and we had not come across any further signs of water. This time Joe and I descended some thousands of feet into the valley in search of water whilst "Nick" waited on top. Again no luck and a long arduous climb back up to the top of the spur.

In semi darkness we selected a camping spot alongside a fallen mountain ash. By the aid of torches we discovered a light catchment in the hollow of a decayed tree and, as on the previous night, we inserted "Nick's" rubber tube. On this occasion we obtained sufficient water to fill one billy. It was not very palatable, however, and not at all refreshing. Pottering about after tea I was amazed to find underneath the upturned roots of the very tree we had camped alongside a large pool of cool fresh water. Overjoyed at our find, we had tea all over again and had our first wash for two days!

On the Monday morning we could see the lookout tower on Donna Buang standing at the head of the Badger Valley and we fully expected to reach it that day. We now had plenty of water, but food supplies had almost run out. I was carefully preserving a piece of cheese, and Joe had some salami sausage which he had brought "just in case of accident." We needed it all right - it became our sole article of diet!

Any hope of reaching our goal that night vanished when the setting sun saw us still wending our way through fallen trees and no open country in sight. We were exceedingly weary and hungry and not fit to exert much energy. It was a tired trio that made an early camp that night.

Arising early on the Tuesday we had covered barely a mile when, with startling suddenness, the spur opened out into park like country. Nearby was a fresh axe cut in a tree ( the only sign of civilisation for three days and yet within 40 miles of Melbourne!) and a little distance ahead a Board of Works notice stood out among the trees. This was Boobyalla and from there to the lookout tower was a matter of less than an hour. So at 10.30 a.m. we reached Mt. Donna Buang - two and a half days late!

On the way down the timber track to Warburton we met Jack Lewis and from him learned of the concern our prolonged absence had caused relatives and fellow Club members. Jack was on his way to search for us and was carrying a flask of brandy and a haversack full of food! It was only sheer conceit that made us unanimously decline the proffered sustenance. It transpired later that Police and Railway Officials at Warburton and Healesville had been instructed to immediately report our arrival at either centre.

A search party comprising W. Young, M. Bailey, E. Stewart and several other Club members were actually on their way to Warburton when they were informed by Stan Bailey at Ringwood that the "lost" walkers had been

found. Later the members of this party accused us of spoiling a pleasant outing.

1933

The nearer ranges - Healesville to Yarra Junction.

Six days' trip; sleep in. Approx. 90 miles.

At first thought the tour described under the above heading might appear ordinary and commonplace, but nevertheless it traverses some of the most attractive country in Victoria. It is highly recommended to all walkers and lovers of the bush; particularly the latter, because some of the tallest trees in Victoria are passed en route.

On arrival at Healesville the road to Condon's Gully is taken, and as the 17 miles allotted is a goodish step it would be advisable to utilise the car service for the first few miles. From Condon's Gully (4.5 miles) the track continues on to Mt. Monda, near which has been discovered recently what is said to be the tallest tree in Victoria, probably 287 feet high. A track branches off to the tree. Just beyond Mt. Monda, about 4.5 miles from Condons Gully, is a tree in a saddle marked "WATER" - a suitable lunching place. On reaching that, turn east along the road to Narbethong, two miles.

On leaving Narbethong on the second day, the old road will be noted bearing to the right, and it is suggested that it should be followed whenever opportunity offers, which will be several times from either side of the motor road. It is a pleasant bush track, apart from the desirability of avoiding the motor traffic. At about three miles the Acheron River is crossed, and in another mile, on top of the range on the north side of the road, will be observed a turn off marked "To Mt. Gordon." Water should be picked up at the Mill opposite for lunchtime. The Mt. Gordon track is followed for four miles to the end of the spur, and lunch. The magnificent view of the Acheron-Taggerty Valley and the Black Range can be enjoyed while lunch is partaken. A sideling track on the eastern side of the spur is followed southerly into Marysville, another four miles, making an easy 12 miles for the day.

For the third day the distance is 25 miles, and it is proposed that a car should be engaged for the eight miles to Bell-El, site of the former township and now part of the catchment for O'Shannassy Reservoir. This car hire was very moderate, and by that means some arduous climbing is avoided. At about two miles from Bell-El a pathway will be noted on the left leading down to a stream flowing under the road. On following it there will be seen, about 10 feet under the road, a masonry culvert of striking proportions, the origin of which is shrouded in mystery. It is possible to walk through and come up on the other side of the road. Continuing for half a mile, the Cumberland Creek and Falls are reached. Before lunch there is time for inspection of the Falls, which are entered on the right hand track, and the big trees in the clearing on the opposite side of the road are worth seeing also. After lunch the road (known of old as the Yarra Track) is followed for two miles to a finger board on a large tree on the left side marked "To McVeigh's - 14 miles." The distance is actually 11 miles, the explanation being that the board was removed some years ago from another longer track. For the two miles since leaving the Cumberland Creek the road has followed the crest of the Great Dividing Range through an avenue of magnificent forest giants. On turning off to McVeigh's the track proceeds for five or six miles down the ridge separating the Walsh's and Armstrong Creeks, and then it takes to sideling for a while, passing pretty fern gullies and then comes out on the crest of a spur giving an occasional view of the Yarra Valley with the aqueduct in the distance. Ultimately a rapid descent commences on the face of the spur, and about half way down a charming view opens out of

the Upper Yarra Hotel and farm lying 1000 feet below at the junction of the Walsh's Creek with the Yarra.

On the forth day the Yarra is followed upstream for three miles to the junction with Alderman's Creek. Just before crossing the creek a track bearing south is taken following up the Alderman Creek. It lies in the valley for about two miles, and then crosses over low spurs for a mile, after which it is the last water for five miles. Two miles of steady climbing, and then the track comes out on a heavily timbered ridge forming a continuation of the Baw Baw Ranges. A track to the left, to Mt. Horsfall, is avoided, and the correct track bearing south west is followed into the abandoned Petschacks farm. Continuing in the south westerly direction, the cleared paddocks are traversed until a break in the south west corner of the fence denotes the track via an old road to Noojee. The descent to Skerry's Creek is accomplished in three miles, making the half way point. Thereafter the route proceeds via a track, timber tramway and road along the valley of the Loch River for 10 miles into Noojee.

From Noojee, on the fifth day, the timber tramway is followed along the Latrobe Valley to Goodwood Mill (eight miles) and on to Knott's Mill (two miles), after which another tramline, across the stream and coming in from the left, is taken. The track is still going upstream on the right bank of the Latrobe River until, in four miles, it reaches another mill, and the entrance to a tunnel. Go on through the tunnel (with due precautions against trains, and watch for two deep gutters between sleepers), and come out in a gully forming the head of the Little Yarra River. The tramway track is next followed for four miles into Powelltown.

For the last day, the tramway or road is followed for 11 miles into Yarra Junction, the way being interesting and pleasing almost to the last.

1934

#### Prospects for Healesville

By F. J. Roberts, Hon. Sec.  
Tourist Association

In connection with the tourist association's activities in general, it might be mentioned that the giant mountain ash known as Furmston's Tree is now known throughout the length and breadth of Australia. It is proposed in the very near future to hold a walking expedition across the summit of Mt. Monda, passing the giant tree en route. Big trees have always had an undeniable attraction for tourists and there is no reason why the mammoth recently discovered should not take its place among the recorded giants of the Australian bush. This tree measures over 20 ft in diameter at a mean height of five feet from the ground, and is said to be officially estimated as 50 ft taller than the tower of the new Manchester Unity building - truly something to boast about.

The tourist association has prevailed on the MMBW to facilitate sightseeing at Condon's Gully - one of the most beautiful spots in the district and recently voted by Mrs. Drexler, the Victorian Tourist Bureau travel hostess, as being among the most wonderful scenery she had yet come across. The facilities provided by the board consist of clearing at certain vantage points, which give uninterrupted vistas across and into this famous and magnificent gully. This beauty spot is within easy reach of the township, and well deserves greater efforts towards its popularity by local residents.

1934



Old Fernshaw

A Glimpse of the Past

By N.W.

What a stirring event it was in the lives of the Fernshaw folk it was when the old stage coach arrived there from Melbourne. In the very early eighties. It pulled up at Jefferson's and Boyle's well known hostelrys to let down passengers and mails before continuing on to its destination, Marysville. It was quite an animated scene for the school children - the writer was one of them.

At the post office and store the mail was soon sorted and the letters distributed to the lucky ones waiting. Mail for those living in MayTown - a "suburb" of Fernshaw - created quite an interesting story. This little settlement was situated a mile out on the road to Healesville.

What great families were in the process of rearing at this little hamlet at the period under survey. First to one's mind comes the Leeder group. Mr Leeder was a very successful grower of raspberries on his plantation, being ably assisted by his family. Mrs Leeder tended a very fine old world garden facing the road, and this was greatly admired by those who passed by.

Next came the Trask family. Mr Trask was employed by the Government Roads Board. Next to him was a great contingent of Sims, Mr Sims had a remarkable apple orchard round his home, and the school children had their share when the pippins were ripe. On the opposite side to the Sims lived a quaint old person whose name was Keating. He lived alone, had a lovable nature (when not roused) and was highly cultured.

Mention must be made of Mr Hooke (the forest ranger) and family. They lived about half a mile off the road, near the foot of Mt. Juliet, and in those days a fairly good vehicle track would take one to his house. Mrs Hooke had a wonderful display of camellias in her garden, and always in the bud season tourists would come back to Fernshaw laden with bunches of these delightful flowers.

The May Town children numbered well on 20, attended the Fernshaw school, which was situated a few yards south from Jefferson's Hotel. This hotel stood on the right hand side of the road about 300 yards north of the Watts River bridge, and Boyle's Hotel was right at the foot of the Spur, on the same side as Jefferson's.

Miss Hurst was the teacher at the old school, and many of us now living have to thank her for the grounding we got and incidentally some "cuts". All told the school attendance would average well up to 30 children - a good record for the old place.

Those living in Fernshaw itself, outside the Boyle and the Jefferson families, were the Randells and Mr Hossack. Mr Randell, like Mr Leeder, had a very fine raspberry plantation nearly a mile west from the main road, and these old pioneers carted tons of raspberries every year to Melbourne market. Mr Hossack lived in a fine old villa near the Watts River Bridge. Mr and Mrs Howell had their home near the path to the State school. This lady comes in for special mention for the lovely display of flowers always to be seen in her garden. Mr Tom Wilder, affectionately known as Old Tom, an expert trout fisherman dwelt in a lonely hut but a mile or so down the river. Years later Old Tom, who was going blind, was sent back to his native England by some good natured English anglers who frequently visited old Fernshaw and had secured the services of Old Tom to lead them to good spots in the stream wherefrom they would fill their baskets with beautiful rainbow trout.

The little post office and store conducted by Mr. Mason, was located opposite Boyle's family, and the Newman family occupied a cottage between the store and Randell's.

If one's memory does not fail, the names of those who lived in old Fernshaw and Maytown have been recorded. Possibly some old timer may know others, but for the moment the list seems complete.

Without going any further in regards to incidents that happened in the old place, a special article entitled "Old Coaching Days : Melbourne to Marysville," was published in "The Age" on October 1, 1932. It was written by the writer of this narrative, and in it special mention is made of the happenings in old Fernshaw. No doubt most of the old residents read it, so it is quite unnecessary at this stage to repeat them. If sufficient requests are made to the editor of "The Guardian" from those who missed reading them, the writer will be pleased to hand the article to the said editor for re-publication in "The Guardian" for their special benefit.

Before putting the word "Finis" to this old Fernshaw narrative, it seems fitting to add (after a lapse of well over 50 years and paying a visit to the old spot) the pleasure is to think that although the homes and most of the residents are no more, nature seems to have made the place more beautiful.

1934

#### Fatality on Blacks' Spur

A motor accident occurred on the Blacks' Spur, Healesville, about eight miles from the township, between 1 and 2 o'clock on Easter Monday morning. A Model T Ford car driven by Horace Clement Clowes, of 13 St. George's road, North Fitzroy, got out of control when rounding a curve and crashed into a tree on the road side. A passenger, Edward Lee, timber worker aged about 45 years of 275 Coppin Street Richmond, who was sitting next to the driver, was killed instantly. William Martin, 53 Princes street, Fitzroy was detained at Healesville Hospital for observation and treatment of injuries. James Norton, of Beaconsfield parade Croxton, and a forth passenger whose name is unknown, were treated for minor injuries and were allowed to go home.

The car was travelling from Alexandra to Healesville, and it is believed that the breaks failed when nearly at the foot of the Spur. The car gained great speed, and the driver, afraid to continue down hill swung the car sharply to the left into what appeared to be a clear upward slope. The clearing however, proved to be Morley's Track and a deep gutter across the track caused the car to crash into the tree.

Edward Lee was seated on the side of the car that struck the tree. Before the accident occurred the two passengers in the back seat, becoming alarmed, jumped to the roadway. The man who was killed may have been endeavoring to leave the car also, but was actually in it when killed.

1934

#### Donna Buang by Moonlight

By Amy Young

Written specially for The Guardian

Having for over twelve months cherished the desire to walk to Donna Buang by moonlight, It was with pleasurable anticipation that accompanied by three enthusiasts, I set out from Panton's Gap at 7.45 on a recent

Saturday night. The day had been perfect, and the sky was beautifully clear as we started our climb up Ben Cairn.

We had been walking for about half an hour, during which time we occasionally caught glimpses of the lights of Healesville, when rounding a bend in the road, we saw a sight we will never forget - the tall tree silhouetted against the brilliant silver light of a moon just past the full. For some minutes we stood gazing at the sight. On our left the trees in the valley were standing like sentinels in the moonlight, while the further hillside was still in darkness.

On again to Don Gap (2250ft), where another brilliant panorama was laid before us. Mile after mile of moonlit plain, with a mountain on our right throwing a dark shadow. Still on, and then in the distance, the myriad lights of Melbourne, with here and there red splash of light which betokened the new electric signs. Below us Malleson's Glen nestled at the foot of Mt Toole-be-wong.

After two hours walking under ideal conditions we came to the track leading to the summit of Ben Cairn, and on reaching the top another glorious spectacle awaited us - the Yarra Valley bathed in moonlight, with the lights of the township gleaming here and there and Donna Buang standing out on our left from lesser peaks. We rested for half an hour, during which time we partook of chocolate to sustain us on our five mile hike to Donna Buang.

Coming down a steep track though the damp snowgrass, we gained the road about half a mile further on. Perhaps this part of our trip was the most beautiful - walking now in moonlight and now in shadow as we passed through beech groves, with occasionally the sound of a burbling stream breaking the stillness. Leaving the road just before the Donna Buang turn off we followed a track through a fire break and regained the road which we traversed to the summit. Relieving ourselves of our packs we ascended the tower, where an even more majestic sight met our eyes. Ben Cairn in the foreground and Melbourne in the distance, and the plains, with a light here and there as a car traveled on towards the mountains.

Not altogether reluctantly for it was rather cold at that altitude, we descended the tower and prepared supper, which consisted of biscuits and cocoa. Having finished our repast, we prepared for bed. Two a.m. "lights out".

The next three hours were spent dozing, for although we were tired it was impossible to sleep soundly with the win threatening to lift the tent at any moment, therefore at 5 a.m. gathering up our blankets, we proceeded to find a place sheltered from the cold wind, from where we could see the sun rise. We walked for almost an hour, during which time as the moon set, the sky had been changing from grey to pink and gold, and suddenly Old Sol was seen peeping over the mountains close to Mt. Baw Baw. A few minutes and the east reveled in morning sunlight.

Again we climbed the tower and viewed the scene - so different by day. Although some of the hills were shrouded in shadow. Ben Cairn was basking in sunshine. Melbourne was only a blur on the skyline, but beyond could be seen the waters of Port Phillip Bay. With blankets wrapped around us, we stood watching while the sun's rays chased away the last shadows of the night and another day dawned. Once again we descended the tower glad to escape from the wind that always seems to inhabit the summit of Donna Buang. Two of our party decided to finish to finish their nights sleep while the other two wandered down the road, now so different. Back to camp and a substantial breakfast of eggs and bacon, toast, stewed nectarines and tea. Shouldering our packs, we once again took to the road, which we followed to the head of the Warburton foot track. This we traversed until we reached the River Yarra, and finding a shady spot we soon had lunch ready.

Before preparing for our homeward journey we enjoyed a swim in the cool waters of the Yarra, and feeling refreshed, we turned our focus towards

home, while reflections of our trip mingled with the prospects of viewing Donna Buang in another guise - under a mantle of snow.

1934

#### Healesville's Giant Trees

Members of the Field Naturalists' Club were to hold an excursion to the Blacks' Spur on Saturday last mainly with the object of inspecting the Mueller Tree, one of the giants of the ranges. Mr. A. D. Hardy, of the Forests Commission and foremost authority on the big gums, was to lead the party.

Mr. F. J. Roberts, secretary of the Healesville Tourist Association, who with Cr. J. O. Drysdale (president) and Messrs. J. B. Cook and C. F. Morath, went out to the tree to meet the visitors, said on Saturday night that they had not arrived, and the locals had made good use of their journey by effecting an amount of clearing on the track leading to the giant trees, which has been locally named Furmston's Tree.

The Mueller Tree stands near the Mt. Monda track, about one and a half miles from the Fernshaw to Narbethong coach road. It is a mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*), a fine unbroken specimen, with its complete, if scanty, canopy partly hidden by the tops of its lesser neighbours. Its estimated height is 287 feet, and the girth, a yard above ground level is 62 feet. Dense undergrowth kept this giant eucalypt from earlier discovery. In the Metropolitan Board's Maroondah reserve, it is safe from axe and saw, if not from the menace of bush fires, which have destroyed many of its contemporaries.

The tallest tree known in Australia is one of the Cumberland Valley giants. It is 301 ft 6 in, and exceeds the Mueller tree in height, but is of smaller girth. Victoria's "stoutest" tree if not the "largest around" of any tree in the whole British Empire, grew near the Cumberland Creek years ago. Its measured girth was 70 feet. A bush fire destroyed this mighty eucalypt.

1934

#### All night on Mt. Monda

A party organised by Senior-constable Slatter of Healesville, searching the Summit of Mount Monda on Monday for traces of Alan Davis 18 years, of Fernshaw road Healesville, who failed to return to his home on Sunday night.

Davis, who lives with his uncle Mr Rupert Davis, left home after an early breakfast on Sunday, with the intention of hiking to Furmston's tree, the giant mountain ash on the summit of Mount Monda. He took lunch with him. When he failed to return his uncle became alarmed and informed the Healesville police. He then spent the night in the bush searching for his nephew, but with no avail.

On Monday Constable Slatter accompanied by Constable Constable and Mr A. Hort, searched the bush till about 2.30 pm. They found on their return that Davis had arrived home at 10.30 am little the worse for his ordeal, except for hunger and fatigue.

Davis reached the tree, which is about ten miles from his home, and then decided to continue his hike over the walking track to Condon's Gully. When about half way to the gully night fell, and he became bushed in the thick undergrowth. He kindled a small fire, and sheltered in a hollow tree from one of the most severely cold nights of the year. At dawn he began walking again, and eventually reached home.

1934

## Walk Across Mt. Monda

### Tourist Association Effort

Owing, no doubt, to the inclement weather in Melbourne on Sunday last there were no participants from the city in the 13-mile walk from the Blacks' Spur to Condon's Gully. Several members of the Healesville Tourist Association, however, made the trip in good time, and had a very enjoyable day's outing. A number of visitors accompanied the party as far as Furmston's Tree which was also visited by Mr. Homberg, a member of the South Australian Parliament and late Attorney-General for the State, who journeyed from Melbourne for the express purpose of seeing Healesville's mammoth tree.

En route, the walking party passed through some magnificent "big tree" country and typical Australian bush of as wild a nature as the most ardent bush lover could desire. During the descent of the mountain a most entrancing vista of the Maroondah Reservoir suddenly presented itself to the gaze in which the reservoir appeared as a brilliant blue gem in a glorious setting of varying shades of green fringed with the deep golden color of the shores. Viewed from such an altitude Healesville itself presented a most imposing appearance and looked more attractive than ever. Arriving at Condon's Gully, the party partook of a cup of "billy tea," and voted the outing well worth while and one which can well be recommended to walking clubs and others who appreciate the great outdoors.

Mr. C. F. Morath, the instigator of the trip, made good use of the opportunity to record the various altitudes for use on a map being prepared by the Forestry Commission.

1934

### Cumberland Falls

#### Minister Urges Protection of Beauty Spot.

There is no more picturesque beauty spot than the Cumberland Valley, with its meeting of the waters of Cumberland and Cora Lynn Creeks, its beautiful falls and cascades, its ferns and bowers and giant native trees. Seven miles from Marysville, it is a source of great pleasure to hundreds of visitors. But during the summer the flow of water through the valley has been greatly diminished. Resident attribute this to the diversion of water for mining purposes, but the mines department considers it to be due to seasonal conditions.

1934

### Acheron Gap to Healesville A Recent Walk (Contributed)

To take advantage of the April full moon and see the Acheron Way in a new aspect, an extra walk was organised by the Melbourne Walking Club in a program already full.

1934

### Experienced Bushman Perishes

#### Rescued Companion Tells of Pitiful End to Struggle in Snow

Healesville has been shocked this week by one of the most tragic happenings of its history the extreme folly of enticing city folk and other inexperienced outsiders into the forest fastness, with such fatal consequences, has aroused the indignation of all humane and right thinking members of the community, and has resulted in much unavoidably detrimental publicity. The man who so unfortunately lost his life was said to have been a reasonably experienced bushman. If that is so, how much more dangerous is it then, for inexperienced visitors to be lured into the maze like intricacies of the forest? The present tragedy must be taken as a warning, and its like must not be allowed to occur again. Therefore it is confidently hoped that the Metropolitan Board will take immediate steps to close the Mount Monda territory to the public, at least until such time as a safe and properly defined pathway has been constructed.

#### Lost in the Bush

Starved and frozen, Harold Albert Cardwell, of 44 Narong road, Caulfield, one of two men who had been missing in the Healesville bush since Friday of last week, was found at dusk on Sunday by searchers, Staggering through the trees to his rescuers, he cried that his companion, Andrew Robert Robertson, 64, of "Chalet Carinya," Fernshaw road, Healesville, had died from exhaustion and shock when he heard the cries of the searchers.

Cardwell was brought into Healesville on Sunday night, but because of the darkness it was impossible to search for the body of Robertson.

Robertson and Cardwell, who is well over 60, set out from Healesville on Friday morning to walk to Mueller's Tree, near the summit of Mount Monda, Robertson was an accomplished walker. It was Cardwell's first trip. They were dressed in light walking clothes, and were without overcoat or food. Friends became anxious when they did not return on Friday night. Rain was falling, and it was very cold. There was snow in the gullies.

#### Heavy Snowfall

A search party set out early in the evening, but found no trace. During Saturday, Healesville police headed by First-constable J. Constable searched the country as far as Condon's Gully, without success. Heavy snow fell on Saturday night, and on Sunday grave fears were felt for the safety of the men. The search continued throughout the day and towards evening Harold Furmston, one of the searchers, noticed someone staggering among the trees. He called out and ran towards the figure. It was Cardwell, exhausted, starved, and blue with cold. Cardwell was found about eight miles from Condon's Gully, which is about four miles from Healesville.

#### "You've Come Too Late"

As soon as he saw his rescuer Carwell cried, "My God, you've come too late. Poor old Robbie has passed out. Robbie heard you calling half an hour ago, and I think your calls excited him so much he died. I stayed with him for half an hour, and I'm certain he was dead." He told Furmston that Robertson was mentally and physically exhausted. Suddenly they heard the shout of the search party. His friend became excited, but the next moment he sagged to the ground and died. The shock seemed to be too much for him. Cardwell remained with the body for half an hour, and then struggled on, still hoping he would be found by the searchers. During the afternoon a Victorian Aero Club machine flew over the country but the pilot could not find any trace of the man.

The Mount Monda track is about twelve miles from Healesville, and the Mueller Tree is located a distance of about three miles from the Healesville-Alexandra road, near the summit of Blacks' Spur. The track is very narrow and overgrown, and as it goes right into the heart of the forest it is considered by bushmen to be rather a dangerous walk for people unaccustomed to the route. There have been several instances of people being bushed, but fortunately without serious results.

#### Cardwell's Weak Condition

At the time Cardwell was met with it was found impossible to continue the search for the body of Robertson, and it was decided to take Cardwell to receive medical attention at once, and the relief party, owing to Cardwell's weak condition, traveled very slowly back to Healesville.

1934

#### On Mount Juliet at Sunrise

A feast of Color and Panoramic Views.

by W.N.

Away back in the early eighties a party of tourists with guide assembled one summer afternoon at the Watt's Bridge Hotel Fernshaw. They were equipped with light camping outfit. The inevitable "flask" in case of "snake bite" was included. The desire was to reach the top of Mount Juliet before dusk, anticipating a glorious sunrise on the morrow. Moving off, a number of less venturesome souls farewelled them in true bush fashion. Crossing the Watt's bridge, they were soon lost to view.

Turning off to the left of the road before coming to Mr Leeder's old home at Maytown, a mile from Fernshaw, they entered upon a buggy track which led up to the home of the forest ranger, Mr Hook, not far distant from the foot of the mount. Having had a refreshing cup of tea with this fine old family, they started off in high spirits on their long and arduous journey. As each spur was climbed beautiful bush glades became unfolded. Pausing now and again for a breather, they were charmed by the stillness of nature in their eyrie surroundings. Two thirds of the way up they rested at an icy cold spring which flowed from beneath the roots of a large tree. Not seeing a snake so far, a portion of the antidote was broken down with some clear sparkling water, which gave them more courage to negotiate the steepest pinch ahead.

On reaching the top a cairn (erected by the surveyors when the track up the mount was first surveyed) was left till morning to climb. As darkness was setting in a snack and a few whiffs of briar were enjoyed. Rugs were then unrolled and sleep came quickly.

Awaking at sunrise in a rarefied air 3650 feet up, a most beautiful scenic setting from the top of the cairn was encountered. To watch the sun's rays playing on top of Mt. Monda and surrounding peaks was a revelation. It was fairyland in true significance. One moment in beautiful amber shade, and the next moment a deep purple. To say they were spellbound is putting it mildly. During the midst of the display they seemed to be in a world of their own.

The morning was bright and clear with no haze to mar the vision. At this stage everything assumed a cycloramic aspect. Away to the south, Melbourne, the shipping in the bay, the You Yangs, Mount Macedon and other distant features were easily recognised, while a fine view of the country near at hand - the Acheron and the ranges and valleys on all sides - were noted.

Looking on the mounts of Monda and St Leonard's was just a beautiful stereoscopic picture. It left them indelibly impressed.

Descending a halt was made at the springs Banishing all thoughts of reptiles existing in this glorious Eden, they finished the potion. It took the chill out of the water, proving its efficacy in counteracting another danger.

On reaching the hotel they received quite an ovation, and spent many happy moments relating their most charming and romantic adventure.

1934

Lake Mountain and its Environs  
by R.G. Hemmy.

The Lake Mountain district is becoming increasingly popular with walkers who prefer to leave the main roads and explore less accessible areas. Easily reached from Melbourne it is ideal for a long weekend or Easter trip, and as the ridges are over the three thousand feet mark, can be recommended for a short Christmas trip.

The shortest route is via Marysville. About seven miles from Marysville a road leads in from the Marysville Cumberland Falls Road. After about two miles it gives place to a foot track. Lake Mountain is five miles from the Cumberland Road. Just before reaching the mountain a track branches off to the left; this leads direct to Echo Flat where a good camp can be made on the snow grass under protection of the snow gums.

From Mr. M. Keppell's house on the Marysville Buxton Road, about two miles from Buxton, a lane leading in from the road gives access to a bridle track to Keppell's Hut, about sixteen miles over the spurs of the Margaret Range. From the hut the ridge can be followed into Echo Flat.

From Mr. Keppell's home, too, is a track to the Sugarloaf and Cathedral peaks, where rocky nature and steep cliffs are unique among the nearer hills of the north east.

From Rubicon with its hydro electric stations, water races and timber tracks lead into the recesses of the Royston and Rubicon valleys. Snigging and haulage tracks lead up on the ridges and Mt. Federation can be reached from one of these mills.

A very popular through trip is from Lake Mountain to Mt. Federation and thence to Mt. Torbreck (4,990 feet), the most outstanding peak in the vicinity, dominating the extensive Sugarloaf Reservoir. The walker should take a compass and be very careful, in descending into the saddles between the main peaks, not to get off the ridges. Water is obtainable just down from these saddles. Total distance from road, 35 miles.

From Mt. Torbreck one may follow along the ridges to the left, making one's way down and across Snob's Creek wherever the scrub permits. Do not descend too soon, however, as the going along the creek itself is very rough.

To the less venturesome, Lake Mountain or Echo Flat may be made a base and trips made to Keppell's Flat, Mt. Federation and Snowy Hill, a short trip along the old Mt. Arnold track.

1935

The Blonde Captive of the Blacks Spur

A mountain romance of the eighties

Red Gauntlet sharply reined in his horse in a small clearing lit by moonlight on the Blacks' Spur. In the valley below him a few lights twinkled from the windows of homes in Fernshaw. Before making the descent



to the struggling little township Red thought to pause a while and gave Mustang time for a breather, for the upward climb through the dense mountain ash forest had been tiring for man and beast.

Accordingly, Red jumped from the saddle into the long lush grass growing in the small patch bald of trees, around him, and slipping the reins around his shoulder, allowed Mustang to spell out a bit and graze willingly on the dew spangled verdure.

Red pulled pipe and tobacco from the pocket of his khaki shirt, the while he seated himself on a moss encrusted boulder. After a few desultory puffs that sent ghostly spirals ascending into the night air, he drew his revolver from its holster, saw that the six chambers were loaded, and returned the weapon to its sheath the wory handle protruding.

From Healesville to Marysville and as far east as Woods' Point. Red Gauntlet was known to the settlers and gold fossickers as a sort of outcast man of the forest, a lawless bushland ranger, against whom no charge of deep-dyed banditry had yet been laid. To be sure, he defied the established canons of law and order that prevailed in the wild bush country in the year 1886, and was a law unto himself.

A year or so before taking to the bush Red had come up against the law and sampled justice and severity.

He had staked out a gold claim for himself in the mountain fastness of the Cumberland Valley, and worked it silently and unaided. On sinking the second shaft he struck a payable lead. The rest, he thought, was easy. He rode into Healesville to register his claim.

Before giving him his authorisation - or miner's right, as it was called - the Government sent an alluvial expert to inspect the claim. This was often done, it appearing that the government was not over anxious to sign away gold-bearing land indiscriminately, more especially if the field was new, as in Red Gauntlet's case. Too many bonanzas had already slipped through laxity in this respect.

The department expert sent to inspect Red's claim was a crafty stoop-shouldered man named Jabes Dowling, who apparently exercised an inscrutable hold over his superiors, and seemed to get his own way in the dispensation of miners right.

Dowling was in league with an outside mining engineer, an unscrupulous rogue - Murdoch Murcott by name - who batted on men who spent months prospecting in the outback and were eventually lucky enough to strike payable dirt.

Two days after Red lodged his claim at Healesville Dowling caught the stage coach from Melbourne to Marysville, where Red met him and took him out to the Cumberland.

1935

Mt. Donna Buang to Mt. Juliet.

Millions of eyes have seen the high blue range filling the skyline between Warburton and Healesville. How mysterious and austere it looks. The maps show nothing but a range. Let us see what it is like. About eight years ago, Bill Waters and I (J.F. Matthews) walked from Warburton and camped on Mt. Donna Buang (4,080 feet), completing next day, in ten hours gross, the journey to Mt. Juliet at the Healesville end of the range. Arriving at Juliet at 6 p.m. we browsed on a marvellous sunset flushing Lake Maroondah, 3,000 feet below, and tinting a panorama extending from Mt. Macedon to beyond the Cathedral Range. We had missed the train so we ambled down 3,000 feet to Mosquito Creek in four miles and camped until midnight, in a moon flooded forest, before moving off for the early morning train.

An invitation from a party of Rovers to join in an exploration of this country, and my pleasant recollections of the former visit were

responsible for my again undertaking the trip in September 1935. The party comprised Messrs. Waters, Schutt, Strange, Lillie, Ryan, Waghorn, Batheram, and the writer. Cars conveyed our packs to Mosquito Creek; thus only lunch had to be carried; this gave us a better chance of being home that night. On starting next morning 3/4 inch frost crystals and ice were in evidence, and from the watch tower, Mt. Buller glistened under a mantle of snow, with just enough mist over Cement Creek, Watts River, and the Yarra flats to set off the whole, including the Baw Baws, Cerberean Ranges, Mt. Strickland, Black Range, Mts. Despair, Monda, St. Leonard, and Macedon, and Western Port and Port Phillip.

The first point reached was Wild Dog Hill, by following the firebreak along the Great Divide about a quarter of a mile, until it bears sharply to the right to Boobyalla. At no time was the scrub excessively thick and, where parts were burnt eight years ago, new growth was big enough to be not inconvenient. The greatest impediment was fallen trees, piled one upon another, necessitating much aerial work. There were some nice belts of woollybutt on Wild Dog Hill, and, in some places, mountain ash; the best we saw was in three places, when the main spur dividing the Watts River and Graceburn was temporarily missed. On those occasions, luxuriant glades of beech, sassafras, and ferns were crossed - twice on Graceburn water and once on the Watts fall.

No views were obtained until afternoon but, all day, lyrebirds, whip birds, gang gangs, and others were seen and heard. Our arrival at Mt. Juliet was too early for a tinted panorama other than many blues and greens; but near the foot of the descent shafts of light shot through the forest, lighting up much dusty miller and penninervis in bloom. Along the spur, prosthathera and eriostemon bushes were to be seen everywhere but they were not yet in bloom. So the haughty looking range, viewed from the low congested country turned out to be a very pleasant and mentally restful place, and brimful of physical exercise and achievement.

1935

Christmas - and Mt. Vinegar  
" ...and if men ask you why,  
You may put the blame on the stars, the sun,  
And the white road and the sky."

-Gerald Gould.

My first hike, which was through the Acheron Valley, left lasting impressions of the grandeur of the ridge which forms the west wall of the valley - the Vinegar Ridge.

At that time, my sole sources of information were Croll's "Open Road" and a tourist map of Warburton. The latter showed a dotted line from Donna Buang to the Black Spur, while the former remained silent on that section.

Several years passed, and that dotted line seemed clearer every time I opened the map. Unanswered, the call from Vinegar grew louder and louder and more insistent, till, finally, having a long weekend at my disposal, I set off for Donna.

I started from Millgrove, with the intention of following the Dee R. tramway to the Ben Cairn road and thence to Donna Buang. That attempt ended in the scrub, somewhere above Feiglin's Mill!

Last Christmas offered a two days' break, and Big 'un and I jumped at the chance. Our plans were upset by a chance meeting with a Walking Club party on the night train to Warburton, and, instead of leaving Warburton half an hour after midnight to scale Donna Buang that night, we motored with them to the foot of the Boobyalla track, beyond Cement Creek.

Not wishing to disturb the old occupant of the hut, which is just above the road, in the darkness we unrolled our sleeping bags in the stable on

the side of the road. Big 'un remarked at the time that it was the most comfortable camp bed he had ever had. And I agreed with him. We slept.

In the morning, Big 'un poked his head out of his bag and woke me with his "Haw, haw, haw! Look what you've been sleeping on." I looked. Three inches of manure and chaff, a relic of a roadmenders' camp, had been reason for our comfortable bed.

We started early and climbed to the top of the ridge and, turning our backs on the firebreak to Donna Buang, set off for Vinegar. The day was gloriously fine, and till lunch (Christmas Dinner for all but walkers) nothing beyond a few fallen trees had troubled us. This far we blazed trees along the way, and nailed about a dozen metal signs, "To Mt. Vinegar", on prominent trees. Our good luck was not to last, however, and in the next hour we covered less than a mile. Here it was that I remembered my tomahawk, which probably still remains in a log at our lunch spot. The scrub forbade a return for it.

The remainder of the afternoon saw patches of thick scrub alternating with open stretches of snow grass. Water was obtained at the foot of Mt. Vinegar and we carried it to the top through the densest growth of ferns that I know.

The view is only to the east, where Mt. Poley presents a sight reminiscent of the Bogong High Plains from Razorback. No sign of a fire indicated the whereabouts of the Walking Club party, who should have crossed Poley earlier in the day.

Next morning, we were on our way at 7.30 and the mile along the flat grassy top of Vinegar was ample reward for the scrub pushing of the previous day. And then, from the northern, bracken covered extremity where a mob of deer gazed in amazement at us, the ridge fell away steeply. A tangled growth of young timber and sword grass shut out the view towards Carter's Gap, and the idea of going down definitely did not appeal.

Just then, I caught sight of a red-roofed "Dom Dom House" a mile and a half away. It was eight o'clock when we made the disastrous decision to strike straight across to Mt. Dom Dom.

by H. H. Stephenson.

1936

#### Lost in the Bush

Mr H Richards of McGretton's road. Healesville, left home on Tuesday last week to go on a hiking trip across the Healesville ranges. As he did not return home fears were entertained for his safety, and a search party, headed by Constable Constable combed the mountain. Richards arrived at the Hotel Gracedale at 10 a.m. the next day having lost his way on Mount Juliet and spent the night in the bush.

1937

#### Memories of McVeigh's

"I Allus As one at eleven"

There was no village, no street, no shops, it was just "McVeigh's."

What memories that name must awaken in hundreds of old people's minds. What stories the old place could tell of the old gold rush days, when it was, from the day it was built to the day it was burnt down, the half way house between the long deserted stretch of mountain between Warburton and Woods' Point.

The road is a thing of beauty, as it runs beside the Upper Yarra away beyond Warburton. Sometimes it runs level with the river, then it rises

above it. Occasionally a bend in the road and one looks down on a small green patch with a shack and a cow or two, which is a restful change to the eye. So the traveller pushes on mile after mile, and at last runs into a beautiful avenue of immense English trees, - a sweeping bend and come in front of a long verandah across an old weatherboard building with two gaunt tree ferns standing sentinel. He has arrived at "McVeigh's."

I believe "McVeigh's" is not the official name but has never been known as anything else since Paddy McVeigh and his wife went there, with the material for their hotel on pack horses. It was from this old hotel that the famous advertisement originated : "I allus 'as one at eleven" and was a faithful reproduction of McVeigh's houseabout. Many nights I have spent under its roof, lying in a tiny bedroom with boarded walls listening to the lazy splash of the water as it tumbled over the huge old waterwheel - enough water to provide lighting for the house - or the murmur of the river that goes babbling over the stones in the back yard. Yes close by in the back yard.

Away in the solitude of the bush the mopokes seemed to have a note all of their own and no train noises came to disturb the calmness and utter peace of this lovely little spot. And of course, one could never leave "McVeigh's" without having looked in the vast old sheds at the rear. A wonderful place in which to play "Robbery Under Arms". The old broken buggies and coaches under blankets of cobwebs mutely told their own sad tale.

And at this remote stopping place too, one met remarkable folk just people who came and went, but full of interest for all that. I have seen the pack horses leave on the bridle track for their two or three days journey over the mountain into parts where only dauntless hikers dare to go and I see again the tiny parlor with the picture pressed ferns and the tiny piano. Sitting before a large log fire in that isolation always seemed to loosen tongues of all who dropped in for a night's rest. Many and large were the fish yarns we listened, but many and large the fish really were.

Walsh's Creek slipped into the Upper Yarra just beside the hotel, and, apart from the joys of catching the trout and blackfish, it is also a most exquisite spot of murmuring waters and stepping stones and green swards.

I can remember one sad summer night long ago, when a young woman with a stony face sat choking with hard, dry sobs under my window for most of the night. She spoke to no one, neither did she answer when we spoke tenderly to her. She had arrived in a jinker about midnight and in the clear moonlight we had noticed a large box beside her.

I know now that the memory of that night will always be for that woman an unexpressible nightmare. We women - had we known then - perhaps could have helped, but a full month passed before we heard in a casual way while at Warburton about a girl who lived far back in the mountains beyond McVeigh's. Her husband was away in a hospital. We were told how this lonely girl had driven a jinker through those mountains in the dead of night and alone - with her little girl dead in a box by her side.

A brighter memory is recalled to my mind of another night that supplied what indeed might well have been a colorful picture from a foreign country. It was very dark, and we sat on the little old sunken verandah resting after the heat and journey of the day. As the hours wore on strange looking men began to wander in from the bush, and by 10 o'clock there was a group of nearly 40 assembled in that wide, open space before the house, which was brightly lit by a solitary electric globe that hung from the high post. They were mostly Italians. It was pay day and they had come down from the water-works that were constructed high above in the mountains.

And throughout that warm and sultry evening the men danced gracefully one with the other, round and round on the rough roadway, to the quaint

sounds of the steel guitar. banjo and mouth organ, entirely oblivious of their appreciative audience. Sometimes they sang choruses - mostly selections from Italian opera - while the wine bottles were freely passed round it was indeed more like a scene from the "pictures" than an ordinary occurrence in the lives of these men set so far back in the Australian bush - and it remained in our mind for a long time.

That square beyond the door was widened for the turn of the car - as the road ends just there, but I recall the days when a hurricane lamp swung on that post where the electric light hung later, and Cobb's coaches used to swing up to the door with a screaming of breaks.

Truly there was romance in this highest house on the distant Upper Yarra. Looking down from the high road upon the long low roof of McVeigh's, one used to wonder what stories it could tell if only it could speak.

It was burnt down on May 23 1936, but I hear that the great chimneys are still standing in a jumble of roof iron and bricks. Maybe they are dreaming of people who came and went throughout the eighty-odd years of their lives, and we hope some hospitable house will rise again, and that that beautiful little valley where the rivers meet will open to us once more. Let us hope it will still be "McVeigh's."

1937

#### Opossum Skin "Plan" in the forest

"The killing of native game during prohibited periods is a fairly prevalent offence." said Inspector Clift, of the fisheries and Game department, when conducting a prosecution launched against Kenneth Kerslake at the Warburton court last week. "But it is very difficult to detect, as it usually takes place in the forest, in places where it is not possible for any but an experienced bushman to enter."

Kerslake was charged with having on or about October 30, on the Acheron Way, killed certain native game, to wit, opossums, in contravention of the act. Kerslake was also charged with being in possession of 40 opossum skins during the prohibited period. He pleaded guilty, but said he was ignorant of the fact that he was in a sanctuary.

Inspector Alfred Lord of the Fisheries and Game department, told the Bench that on October, when with Inspector Ford on the Acheron Way, he found a secret hide-out in the bush containing 40 opossum skins. At the hide-out was a canvas covering like the roof of a tent, in which were 28 opossum skins hanging up. Outside the tent covering, hanging on a pole were 12 more skins on boards such as are used to shape and dry the skins. Between 5 and 5.30 pm they saw the defendant come to the hide-out. Intercepting him, witness asked, "How many of these skins are yours." Defendant replied, "They are all mine," and later said he caught the animals with snares. In reply to other questions, defendant told witness that he caught them as he wanted to make a few shillings. They were taken on both sides the Acheron Way. He also admitted that he had cut a few tree ferns. Witness explained that the tree ferns were split to act as a lure for mountain opossums, which had a great liking for the kernel in the centre. Snares, traps or poison baits were set on the tree. The skins in question were worth 15/- to 1 pound each in the open market. When the tree fern was cut it was destroyed.

Inspector Ford corroborated, adding that he counted the skins in the defendant's presence and defendant did not dispute the count.

In extenuation of his act Kerslake said he didn't suppose he would have touched the possums but for the fact he was trying to make some money to pay his debts. He had lost a good deal of money during five or six months contracting, and his wife had been in hospital.

The P.M. said the bench would take into consideration the fact that this was a first offence, but the killing of game in a sanctuary was a very serious matter and defendant was liable to a penalty amounting to 400 pounds to 500 pound. Defendant would be fined 25 pounds on each charge - 50 pounds in all - and would have to pay 1 pound 6 in costs, on default distress.

Asking for time, defendant said he had no hope of paying such a fine, as he was heavily in debt.

On the undertaking that the costs were paid forthwith, an order was made for the fine to be paid by installments of 3 pound per month, the first to fall due on January 13, and subsequent installments to be paid on or before the second Tuesday in each month. The costs were paid.

1937

Marysville-Lake Mountain-Cumberland Falls-Walsh's Creek-Warburton.

Four days' trip. Sleep out. 66 miles.

From Healesville railway station go by service car to Marysville and then walk north along the Buxton road. At 5 miles turn to the right into the lane leading to farm house of Mr. Keppell. At 0.5 miles, at a point marked by a small hut, the track forks and the right leg is taken. The left fork goes to Sugarloaf mountain. About 0.75 miles further on the track forks again at a point where there is a small creek on the left in the distance. Again follow right leg and soon afterwards bear to the left and cross the creek. After crossing creek, and now going north-east, commence to climb the range. For about 1.5 miles track steadily climbs and continues along the ridge of the Acheron and Taggerty valleys, with Mount Gordon bisecting. The track then crosses over to the left side of the ridge and continuing east bears south. There are false tracks, but the way is sure by keeping to the ridge and avoiding any descent into gullies. At 1.5 miles the track, still on the ridge and going east, passes a stock yard on the north side. On the south side of the track, at the site of an old camp, water will be found just below; 10 miles from Marysville.

In another 1.5 miles there is a second stock yard and then the track crosses several streams. The first one, flowing east, is 0.5 mile from the stock yard; it is 0.25 mile to the next one, flowing north-east; and in another 0.25 mile is the third streamlet. This third streamlet is flowing down the side of a steep rise, which the track has been ascending. The ridge itself runs north-easterly, but the track sidles to the east about half way up. Owing to fallen trees the track may be lost sight of during the rise, but there are several minor tracks, any one of which may be followed (because all join later), provided it is any of those ascending the ridge. In a short distance the track bears to the right and sidles easterly around the slope of the mountain for about 1 mile to a smooth grassed saddle dotted with trees. On a large stringy bark in the centre of the saddle will be observed a deep irregular blaze mark. Avoid going across the saddle past the blazed tree. Leave it on the right, turn north, and go down the gully in a sidling northeasterly direction. The track soon becomes well defined and sidles around several spurs and crosses three streams flowing west. On arrival at a forth stream, which will be identified by reason of a log on the opposite bank making quite a stair-step out of the stream to reach the track out. A broader track comes in a few feet upstream. That is the track to Lake Mountain. Continue on after passing the fourth stream, and about 150 yards over the spur come to a flat on which is a stock yard and Keppell's Hut. A small stream beyond provides water; 18 miles from Marysville.

Leaving Keppell's Hut follow the track south past stock yard on the right, and avoiding a track to the left, and then avoiding a track on the left arrive at the stream referred to in the preceding paragraph. On crossing the stream, take the left hand track, which immediately makes through another stock yard and then becomes indistinct. Continue on upstream with the stream on the left, and in a little while there is a bridge on the left crossing the stream. Cross over and the track becomes well defined on joining up with another track coming up on the left. Continue on upstream, keeping within reach of the stream on the right for fair distance, and pass a hill on the left. But when the next hill comes close, it will be worth while to detour to the top of it for a fine easterly and northerly view. That being done, the track can be regained at a suitable point further south by bearing to the west towards the little valley which has been followed all the morning. On reaching track again there is another rise to climb, and then on the top a saddle is crossed, containing a morass, from which there is a good view of the Taggerty Valley on the right (west). Now turn left, pass through snow gums, and go down to a morass. This is now Echo Flat, 4 miles from Keppell's Hut.

Cross the head of the morass and follow downstream, with the head of the morass on the right, for about 0.5 mile. There are several tracks around here, but keep within range of the morass, keeping it always on right. It broadens out into a large pool and the track now drops down through gums and crosses a small stream in the morass, but keep to the left of the large morass - eventually it drops into the Taggerty Valley, now opening on the right. The track continues to descend, bearing slightly east and south and a while comes to a grove of slender gums, a line of which is blazed, and in the midst of which there is a stock yard. It is now the main track to Woods Point road. In 0.5 mile there is a group of knotted stringy bark trees, where signs point to "Lake Mountain" and "Echo Flat." A more direct track to the top of Lake Mountain goes straight up the hillside - easterly direction; 2.5 miles from Echo Flat.

To get to Woods Point road continue down the track for 1.5 miles. Woods Point road is 11.5 miles from Keppell's Hut and the road is followed easterly for 3.5 miles to Cumberland Falls. En route to the falls, at about 1 mile along the road, a fence on the right indicates the site of the former village of Bell-el, now a catchment for the O'Shannassy Reservoir. About 2 miles from Bell-el a path will be noted on the left leading down to a stream flowing under the road, a masonry culvert of striking proportions, the origin of which is obscure. Continuing for 0.5 mile the Cumberland Creek and Falls are reached. To inspect the Falls enter by right hand track. The giant trees in the clearing on the opposite side of the road are well worth seeing also; 15 miles from Keppell's Hut. There is a shelter kiosk here, also a hut at the falls.

Continuing easterly by the road (known of old as the Yarra track), follow it for 2 miles to a fingerboard on a large tree, on the right hand side, marked "To McVeigh's, 14 miles." This distance is actually 11 miles, the explanation being that the board was removed some years ago from another longer track. For 2 miles after leaving the Cumberland Creek, the road follows the crest of the Great Dividing Range through an avenue of magnificent forest giants. On turning off to McVeigh's the track proceeds for 5 or 6 miles down the ridge which separates Walsh's and Armstrong Creeks, and then it takes to sidling for a while, passing pretty fern gullies, and comes out on the crest of a spur giving occasional views of the Yarra Valley with the aqueduct in the distance. Ultimately a rapid descent commences on the face of the spur, and about half way down there is a charming view of the site of the old Upper Yarra Hotel and farm, lying 1,000 feet below at the junction of Walsh's Creek and the Yarra River; 13 miles from Cumberland Falls.

From Walsh's Creek the road is followed for 20 miles into Warburton.

1939

Cumberland Falls Mine,

Cumberland Valley.

By J. P. L. Kenny, B.C.E.

The Cumberland Falls mine now being worked by Mr. F. J. Henderson, leases 8109 and 8581 Castlemaine, was originally known as Kerwin's Reward after the prospector who discovered the reef. The mine is situated near the Main Divide on the east side of the Cumberland Valley, about 50 chains south of the Marysville-Woods Pint road, and is accessible by a good track. Two main lines have been located 90 feet apart, while a third reef carrying a little gold has been found about 300 yards to the east.

Most of the work done has been on the eastern main reef. It is nearly vertical with a strike north  $17^{\circ}$  west, intersecting Silurian country rock striking north  $30^{\circ}$  west and dipping east. The reef varies in width up to 4 feet with an average of 1 foot. The outcrop consists of ironstone with little quartz and a trace of copper. Three shafts have been sunk along the line. The north shaft is 30 feet deep and at 33 feet a drive south to 120 feet connects with the main shaft. From this drive a winze 18 feet north of the main shaft is down 11 feet. The main shaft is 65 feet deep and is being continued. At a depth of 60 feet there are drives 20 feet north and 25 feet south. The south shaft is 36 feet south of the main shaft and the reef has been stopped down to the 33 ft. level between the north and south shafts a distance of 156 feet. No water has been met down to 65 feet. The west reef has been stopped from a shaft 50 feet deep. At present, ore is being broken from this reef at a point about 100 yards south of the shaft. A stop here is 20 feet long and down 12 feet on a reef 18 inches wide.

The mine is equipped with a cyanide plant and a 4-head battery driven by an old engine. The gold is fine and the crushed ore is run direct to cyanide vats without passing over amalgamating plates. A race heading from Cumberland Creek gives an ample water supply. The oxidized ore treated so far is evidently the cap of a dense pyritic lode. At 60 feet the ore is becoming mineralized and below this depth it may be necessary to modify the existing treatment plant to obtain a satisfactory extraction. When a sample of mineralized ore is available some metallurgical tests should be made to determine whether it is amenable to direct cyanidation and if it is not, to determine the most suitable treatment.

To date, 1,125 tons have been crushed for a return of 2,600 pounds. The sands assay from 1 dwt. to 2 dwt. per ton, giving a head value for the ore treated of 7 dwt. per ton. Since my visit to the mine the whole of the surface equipment and buildings were destroyed in the disastrous fire on 13th January. If the mine is re-opened it would be advisable to sink the main shaft to a depth of at least 100 feet to determine the amount of oxidized ore available and the best method of dealing with the pyritic ore before the treatment plant is reerected.

1941

Obituary

"Hermit of Cumberland Valley"

The death is announced of Mr Geo Locke, who was known to thousands of tourists as "the hermit of Cumberland Valley." He lived in a humpy near



the famous plantation of mountain ash, which is believed to contain the tallest hardwood trees in the world. Mr Locke would not leave Cumberland, even during the bushfires of two years ago, and he had not been in Marysville for over 14 years. A keen prospector at the Cumberland Valley until his health began to fail a few years ago. Mr Locke in his earlier years was actively interested in the Golden Secret mine at Cumberland and the Wolfram mine near Marysville. Aged 81 years, he was the lone inhabitant of the Cumberland Valley, and spent his last days in a Forests Commission patrol hut, which was built next to his old humpy when it started to fall to pieces.

1941

### Epic Experience

#### Party's Plight on Ben Cairn.

A car load of people had a harrowing and terrifying experience on the Donna Buang road last Sunday. Mr Petersen's party comprised six adults and two babies, and they had driven from their home in East Brunswick around the Acheron Way. Darkness set in early on Sunday, and they reached a point near Ben Cairn rock at about 6 o'clock, to find dense clouds so close to the ground as to make visibility almost nil. They proceeded slowly, but, feeling the car move sideways and having a premonition that something was wrong, Mr Peterson stopped, to find the car overhanging the precipitous side of the road, with a sheer drop to almost certain destruction below them. Even this was a nerve wracking experience, but it was nothing compared with what was to follow.

Carrying the two babies, they all set off to walk for help in drenching rain, without matches or torch. It was so dark that the road could not be seen, and the crunch of loose metal being their only indication that they were still on the road, and they had to keep touching each other to ensure that all kept together.

After five hours of unbelievable horror they were overjoyed to see a light, which proved to be "Doonside" the home of Miss Chapman, then miles from their starting point. Miss Chapman immediately made them hot tea and warm blankets to wrap themselves in and rang for Mr. J. Collins, of Pollards garage. Mr Collins was promptly on the scene and conveyed the party to their East Brunswick home.

On arrival some of the party were too cold to stand, and had to be assisted inside. Nearly all have nothing worse than bad memories as the result of the ordeal.

1942

#### Fire Spotting from Mt. St. Leonard.

#### To the Editor

Sir,- At this season of the year our thought and fears naturally turn to the bush fire danger, and it is gratifying to know that the look-out men on top of Mt. St. Leonard have already spotted fires miles away from the lookout points, and by prompt report to headquarters fire fighters have arrived at the source of the fires and successfully stamped them out.

The most remarkable cases were at one distant place. Burning off of stumps was actually in progress and the arrival of fire fighters completely surprised the man who was innocently at work clearing his land. No doubt a rude awakening came when he found that the first fighters set to work and extinguished the fires.

Another conflagration was spotted miles away on the mountains above Marysville, and the arrival of fire fighters was the first information of the possible fire danger.

Many other fires have been dealt with, and I feel that we should appreciate the good work being carried out by the men employed on such important and perilous jobs. We must remember we are at war and this service is invaluable, and it could be a wonderful asset if a permanent look-out tower could be erected on the top of Mt. St. Leonard, with a large metal dial indicating the numerous points that can be seen in all directions.

I had one trip up to the top, with the shire president and a few other councillors, but we struck a bleak day - and didn't we shiver and gasp for breath when doing the last quarter mile to the top, with a grade at one in five :

Those who have done the trip on a fine clear day are thrilled and they tell me it beats the Blue Mountains Echo Point and the Three Sisters, So why go so far from home to see good things?-

Yours etc,

W. J. DAWBORN.

1943

Lost in the Bush

To the Editor

Sir, - I desire, through your columns, to express my grateful thanks to all those good men who gave their valuable time and labor during the search for my husband, Douglas Blaikie, who became lost in the bush country near Marysville on October 31. I am particularly indebted to Constable Knight and Messrs. Doig, Spark, Walker and J. Lewis, who devoted much time and effort in organising the search parties and planning the next day's program. I regret that I do not know the name of the others to whom I am also indebted. Believing that my husband has met with a fatal mishap, a reward of 50 pound will be paid to any person discovering his body - Yours etc.,

Florrie Blaikie  
Collingwood Street, Sandringham

1949

Maroondah Reservoir Control Tower

The design of this concrete structure was based on the "Temple of the Winds," which figures prominently in the Botanic Gardens overlooking Alexandra Avenue.

The tower is situated about quarter of a mile northerly from the dam and is used to regulate the flow of water from the reservoir into the Maroondah Aqueduct.

Regulation is effected by means of hydraulically operated valves within the structure, the necessary pressure water being supplied by pipe line from the Graceburn River.

The flow from the reservoir to each hydraulic valve first passes through a sleeve valve, one of which appears on the right of the tower. They are situated at different levels on the periphery of the tower to facilitate the taking in of water from various levels, as required.

The discharge from all valves passes down through the central chamber to the base of the tower, thence by means of a tunnel half a mile in length, to Maroondah Aqueduct for supplying portion of the City of Melbourne.

1950

Memories of Healesville

To the Editor

Dear Sir - Enclosed please find a check for subscription to the "Guardian." My father Mr J.H. Buncell, still finds a lot of interest in the paper, and is always waiting for it by Monday morning's post. Although he has almost reached his 87th year, he is still as alert as ever and does a great deal of reading and takes an interest in everything.

Looking back about 60 years, we often picture him walking from the township : my family lived at "Linga Longa" in those early days. I was born in that house, which I believe is a doctor's residence today. My father walked daily to Fernshaw and home in the evenings, and thought nothing of it. During his working years as caretaker of M.M.B.W. watershed he averaged 20 miles daily, and enjoyed it. Maroondah Weir, which is under the dam was included in his daily walk. We recently took him to Maroondah Dam, and he has not finished talking about it! What a beauty spot it is, the way it is kept and the garden layout, etc. Hats off to the men in charge!

When I was a small child I often drove our cattle to graze on the lush flats of the creek, which lies under the dam today. I well remember the building of the Dam, and what a place for snakes that valley was! I remember one Sunday morning, while walking with my father to Maroondah Weir, along the valley where the Dam is today. I was walking ahead of him when he called me to run. Believe me I did! A six foot tiger snake sprang at me from an embankment, and struck me on the back before sliding to the ground. I was not bitten. My father killed the snake.

Donnelly's Creek was also a good place for snakes, where our old home stands today. My parents shifted from "Linga Longa" in the township, to Donnelly's Creek in the year 1889, and the first year my father told me he killed about 300 snakes. The creek was always teeming with fish in those days, and if we kids couldn't get any in the creek we could always try somewhere else. But usually we got as many as we wanted.

Good old Healesville! I've traveled the Commonwealth, except W.A., and have not yet seen any place to compare with the beauty at my beloved birthplace. It is now 30 years since I left Healesville, but there is always a longing to return. I guess there are quite a few of us old Healesville-ites who feel the same. What about a picnic in Queen's Park on Sunday, at which we old residents of say 30 or 40 years ago could shake hands and say "How do?" once again ? -

yours sincerely

Alma Carter  
(nee Buncell)  
39 King Street  
North Fitzroy 19/10/'50

1950

Memories of Healesville

Dear Editor

... Perusing Buttler's Gippsland and Woods Point Directory of 1866.

Glen Watts, situated at Mosquito Creek Bridge just on the Healesville side of Fernshaw, had four businessmen listed, including Thomas Leeder,

father of Alf Leeder of Rutter av. Healesville; also Henry Box (accommodation house) Henry Box is immortalised by Box's Hill well known between Healesville and Fernshaw, quite a formidable climb in the days of horse teams.

Fernshaw was then in its heyday as a village and boasted Reefer's Hotel (Wm H. Johnson) and Watt's Bridge Inn (Matthew Jefferson) and believe it or not, a brewer (William Toogood). It is not recorded whether he used local hops, but there was a hop garden in the Watt's Valley, within the area now submerged by the Dam. Fernshaw has had many notable visitors. An oak tree growing there commemorates a visit by members of the Royal Family.

Speaking of oak, a controversy arose as to the fine specimen of cork at Fernshaw. One man remarked "I wonder how that got there?" the other replied, "You said there was a hotel here. Well there you are, I suppose they were throwing out the corks and one grew!"

Fernshaw, Glen Watts, the hop garden and surrounding country were later acquired by the Government under its scheme for the MMBW water supply. Mr Gilliard, owner of the hop garden, went to law with the Government regarding the price, but was not successful in getting more. A weir was constructed on the river about at a point where the middle of the dam would be, and miles of pipes, tunnels and open channeling conveyed the water to the metropolitan area. The inauguration of the supply took place somewhere in the early 90's of last century. The possibilities of a retaining wall were noted at that stage, and were urged on the Government by the late Sir William Zeal. Survey and boring was carried out, but construction was not started until just after the first World War.

Maroondah or Watts Weir was always a popular drive for tourists in the day of horse waggonettes and drags. A stop was made at a point opposite the control tower, and passengers paid a visit to the mouth of the tunnel (called Echo Tunnel) coo-eeing in to hear their voices reflected, then continuing the drive up the valley to the weir, and rejoining the main road at a point just beyond Maroondah Lake Hotel (at that time Gracedale House). It is still a popular rendezvous down that way but the wall is the limit - Yours etc

H. Philippe  
Healesville 31/10/1950

1950

Memories of Healesville

A Trip to Marysville in the Eighties

The following is reprinted from "The Australian Sketcher" of April 9th, 1884 kindly lent by Mr King James of Healesville. The article originally appeared in "The Australasian" under the heading "Easy" Trips from Melbourne. The name of the author is not given.

We started from Lilydale under luxurious conditions, having chartered for the use of our party, six in all, the comfortable "Tom Thumb" coach of Cobb and Co., which with its well-padded sides and back, is to the ordinary coach what a first-class carriage is to second class. The day was bright and warm and the rich level of the Yarra Flats, after the showery weather which had preceded, looked its best. The country through which this road passes was as brilliantly green as though the season was spring, instead of late summer. Healesville, with its richly-laden fruit gardens, its grand poplars, and its luxuriant Blackberry hedges, looked pretty as we drove through, and when we came to Fernshaw the ripple and dash of the River Watts greeted us pleasantly as the stream sparkled in the bright sun shine. We lunched here, and then started off in advance of the coach up the Black Spur. To some of us the beauties of the road were

familiar delights, and to others they came with all the fresh charm of novelty. The sunshine was bright and hot, and the road was steep and by the time the coach overtook us we were glad to take advantage of it. Indeed, one of our number had been for some time seeing in the long swinging strips of bark peeling off from the huge gum-trees, suggestions of dangling bell-pulls, with genial but illusory associations of whisky and soda-water. These ideas gave zest to the drink we took from the cool rushing stream down under the fern trees on the left of the road. When the ridge of the spur is crossed we get into a new watershed, these streams finding their way northward into the Goulburn. There are grandly massive trunks of eucalypti standing on the edge of the road on the hill-top, and we pass them sufficiently close to be able to realize their huge size. All this trait of vegetation, with its great fern trees, each crowned with its rich cluster of radiating fronds, its beautiful beech trees with their dense dark-green foliage of small glistening leaves, and their mossy and fern-covered trunks, and the colossal columns of the eucalypti impress the beholder with an almost oppressive scene of luxuriance and growth. In its presence the animal kingdom seems so weak and poor compared with the vegetable world, on which Nature seems to have specially lavished her affectionate care and affluence of bounty.

The little settlement of Narbethong at Fishers Creek a few miles beyond the top of Black Spur, has become a favorite resort of the tourists during the last year or two, and seems to supply them with comfortable accommodation. It lies right in the heart of the ranges, and we learned that there are abundant points of interest in the neighborhood to supply pedestrian excursions to the tourist. Some miles further on we crossed the fine stream of the Acheron, which has nothing in its aspect to suggest any association with Hades.

Why the Acheron?

"What is it but a river fair

That gilds the dark hills under?"

But perhaps it was one of the Acherons of Greece and not that more famous one in the realms of Pluto, from which it borrowed its name. As we drive on the huge mountain masses which rise around us, one on the right hand of our road singles itself out from the impression of great comparative height given by its lofty crest. This the driver tells me is Mount Strickland. It is around 4000 ft. high and is the highest mountain in the vicinity. At one time, he tells me, the road to Wood's Point used to cross the mountain and then enter on to Paradise Plains beyond. Again why Paradise Plains?

Was it that after toiling up the long steep slope of the great mountain level mountain country required some very ecstatic term to do it justice? And is it not rather odd that at any time a road should cross the highest mountain in the district? However, it was of more interest to me to learn that Mount Strickland is easily ascended from Marysville, within the limits of a not too long walk, and though the fact was of no immediate interest. I carefully noted it for use on some future visit.

We descended through the forest to the pretty little village of Marysville, then just losing the evening sunlight, as the sun was lowering behind the westerly hills. Like Fernshaw, it is situated on the side of a mountain stream, the Steavenson Creek, or river, as it is properly called by the residents. We take up our quarters at Mr Keppel's Hotel, and then those who are so disposed make acquaintance with his wonderful bath where a cold sparkling rill of mountain water is led into a large square bath neatly slabbed around, and big enough to swim in. An untimely cold prevented me from sharing in the enjoyment of this bath, of which nearly every visitor to Marysville speaks with such enthusiasm, but I was quite prepared to believe in the rapturous account of its delightfully exhilarating qualities given by my companions.

I in the meantime strolled about outside the hotel, looking round on the encircling mountain tops. One prominent hill of apparently conical shape and great steepness was, I was told Nobbly Spur, and over that I was assured our coach road would lie for the excursion arranged for next day. By this time the welcome dinner had arrived, and we brought to the meal highly effective appetites, sharpened by many miles driving and walking in the invigorating mountain air.

We are stirring early in the morning, and strolling about in the cool mountain air. After breakfast our horses are hitched to, and we drive through the little township across the bridge, and soon begin the ascent of Nobbly Spur. This road fully realized the expectations suggested to my mind by the sight of the hill from Marysville the previous evening. The ascent was the steepest up which I have ever driven on a regularly made road, and to get up at all the road has to wind and zigzag about on the face of the hill in a very serpentine manner.

We soon find that we are getting up into a higher atmosphere, and look down on the little village we have just reached from a rapidly gained elevation. The road all along this part is a very adventurous one. It is well made but narrow, and we always have a deep and precipitous declivity on one side and a bank notched into the hill on the other. The nature of the road here is suggestively indicated by the horse teams of carriers conveying goods to Wood's Point. We see four or five strong horses attached to an apparently not very heavily loaded two-wheel dray, and our driver tells me that seven or eight hundred weight is on this road considered a full load for each horse.

As we get up on the higher level we get fuller views of the great blue mountain masses rising in solemn majesty around us. Behind us we have Mount Strickland and the distant top of Mount Juliet, on our left are the fantastic peaks of the Cathedral Range and before us is the lofty crown of Mount Arnold. The forest is at times composed of massive stringybarks, and at other times of the towering, clean-shafted gums of the blackbutt variety. And all the way runs this profound gully at a great depth below us on the left hand. Just before we reach a great loop in the road known as Tommys Bend, the driver stops the coach and indicates us to the proper point to get a view of Sassafras Gully, which runs from the top to the bottom of the great range on the opposite side of the valley.

The view, as we saw it is in the dazzling noonday sunlight, was worth coming all the way from Melbourne for its sake alone. The gully ran down the face of the hill as straight as a line till it intersected with the valley, which it joined at right angles. And its bed was wholly occupied with sassafras trees. They distinguished themselves from the beeches and the huge gum trees of the surrounding forest by the brilliancy of their lightly tinted green, and still more by their regular pyramidal forms, as uniform as though they had been trimmed by the shears of a gardener since their days of boyhood. They formed a wonderful column of brightly-shining sharp-pointed trees rising from the depths of the valley to the crest of the lofty range. The peculiar regularity of their form and arrangements made the scene one of the most wonderful pieces of Nature's landscape gardening it has ever been my fortune to see.

A lover of trees would find matter of scarcely smaller interest in the noble beech tree forest through which the road ran beyond the bend, in noticing the deep, dark foliage of the beeches, their massive moss-clad trunks and branches, so different from the relatively slender formation of the tall gum trees, and the depth of the shadow they cast. At this part of the road we have something of the same luxuriance of vegetation which we have met with before on the summit of the Black Spur.

We drive on a mile or two through the creek, where we were to stay for lunch.

It was an admirable place for a picnic. There had been a camp of a road party on the side of the clear cold stream, and they had cleared a

considerable patch, on which the white clover was now copiously growing. The little clearing was closely shut in on all sides by the lofty forest. We camped for lunch in a delightful spot, deeply shaded by the dense beech forest, through which not even straggling sunbeam could make its way. This pleasantly rippling stream ran within a couple of yards of our fire. At the back of us the clear green patch on which stood the decaying huts of the road party was bathed in sunshine. This was the ultimate point of our journey, and when after lunch we had strolled about under the beechwood shade over the ground richly carpeted with the glossy, green, hartstongue fern, and had packed up our things, and when "cock-shay" had been taken at the final empty bottle on the stump, and we turned back to our coach, to which our careful and civil Driver Newman had by this time, attached the horses, we all felt that we had reached the turning point of a very pleasant outing.

But something yet remained to be achieved, and we got up at 6 o'clock next morning and walked through the cold morning air under the forest shade, not get touched by a single ray of the sun, up to Steavenson Falls. The walk from the hotel is an easy one. You have a capital track, neatly cut round the curves of the hill, an improvement due to Mr. John Duffy when member for the district. On your left, all the way, is the Steavenson Creek, the musical murmur of which at the township later on becomes a loud, brawling sound, as the slope of the bed becomes deeper.

The falls are imminently picturesque. They consist of rushes of the stream down the rock face of the hill for a distance of say 200ft. Although by this time the sun is ascending the sky. It will be hours before it will reach this cold spot, kept moist by the spray-laden air at the front of the falls. We wait some time to enjoy the spectacle, and then return to the hotel where breakfast and the coach await us. And when we parted at the end of our journey we felt that we had spent three very pleasant and well filled days.

1951

#### Lost Picnickers Took Wrong Track

When it was reported late on Sunday night a party of picnickers were missing on the way down from the summit of Mt. Donna Buang, the local police immediately went into action.

The party of four elderly women, a 12 year old girl and a man, were found by Mr Jack Lewis at 8.30 am as they had just picked up the main road from a little used track from the summit to Cement Creek.

It was disclosed that they had taken the Cement Creek track instead of the track to the turntable, and darkness had overtaken them whilst part of the way down.

Fortunately, they noticed one of the old scout huts and decided to spend the night there. A fire was lit, but the party spent a cold and uncomfortable night.

When met by the rescue party, one of the women, Mrs. Vera Harvey of East St. Kilda, said "As we struggled through the bush and ferns I did not think I'd see Melbourne again. We were apparently heading in the right direction, but the heavy going worried us.

1952

#### Hikers Lost in Marysville Alps

Their Desperate Flight From Sunday Till Thursday Causes Nation-Wide Anxiety.

Rescue Parties Impeded By Heavy Snowfalls.

Up till Thursday a party of six young hikers was missing since Sunday in the snow-covered mountains surrounding Marysville. The party comprised Bruce Sibley, 22, Glen Iris; Charles Stone, 24, Nth Kew; Geoffrey Charlesworth, North Balwyn; Nigel Joyce, Marion Nelson, Camberwell; and Joy Williams Tooronga.

They went to Marysville on Friday last week and were going to explore Mt Strickland, Mt Kitchener and Mt Grant.

Hearing this Mr William Hallandale, of Marysville, tried to dissuade some of them from making the expedition, and told them the bush tracks were almost obliterated with undergrowth. But it seems they were determined on the excursion.

Heavy snowfalls blanketed the ranges from the time of their departure until they were found on Thursday, and the temperature was at freezing point.

Their plight was hazardous and till Thursday the many searchers who combed the area failed to find any trace of them. By this time it seemed that the chances of finding them alive were remote.

Search parties were organised and lead by First Constable G. Tranter, of Marysville aided by Forestry Officer Jack Gill, Messrs R. Anderson (mill owner), Tim McKenzie and Jack Lewis (experienced bushman), police, M.M.B.W., and C.R.B. employees, Members of Victorian Walking Clubs, Red Cross skiers, and soldiers equipped with walkie-talkies were to be included.

On Thursday, when it was hoped the dense cloud blanket would lift, R.A.A.F. planes and a helicopter were to join the search. About 300 ground searchers were then operating.

Information to hand when the paper went to press was that the hikers were found, still hiking, about 12 miles from Marysville.

1954

### The Upper Yarra Dam and its Quarrying Works

By H. Baird, Inspector of Mines, and from information supplied by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

To increase Melbourne's water supply for the needs of a future population of two million, the Upper Yarra Dam is being built. The following article outlines the project in general and deals in greater detail with the quarrying work for the construction of the embankment which will be one of the highest in the Southern Hemisphere.

### Melbourne's Water Supply

One and a half million people living in the Melbourne metropolitan area, within 20 miles of the city, are using approximately 40,000 million gallons of water per year. In 1953, the average consumption per person was 60 gallons a day in the winter months, rising to a peak of 150 gallons a day during heat-wave conditions.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works provides the Melbourne area with its water supply, which at the present time is stored in four main reservoirs in the surrounding hill country. These are Yan Yean to the north, Silvan, O'Shannassy and Maroondah to the north-east. Stream flowing into these reservoirs on the southern slopes of the Great Divide have catchment areas totaling 179,000 acres. Present storage capacity



adds up to 21,300 million gallons, and the assured annual supply is about 30,000 million gallons.

#### Upper Yarra Dam

A further dam and reservoir, the Upper Yarra Dam, is under construction. Its catchment area of 81,000 acres comprises the headwaters of the Yarra River and Walsh's Creek - densely timbered mountainous country rising from an elevation of 900 feet above sea level to the crest of the Great Divide at 3,500 feet above sea level. The average annual rainfall is 44.5 inches at the dam site and 56 inches at the higher reaches of the catchment area, where the total annual precipitation, including snowfalls, is 70 inches. The Upper Yarra Dam will store 44,000 million gallons of water and augment Melbourne's assured annual water supply to 75,000 million gallons, sufficient for a population of over 2,000,000.

Of this total of 75,000 million gallons, the Silvan system, linked by pipeline with the Upper Yarra Reservoir, will, after completion of the scheme be capable of supplying a minimum of 56,000 million gallons yearly, compared with its present capacity of 18,000 million gallons.

The Upper Yarra Dam is situated 15 miles north-east of Warburton, or 63 miles from Melbourne, and is accessible by first-class highway. The road from Warburton to Woods Point, which formerly passed the site of the dam, has been diverted to the north, keeping clear of the catchment area.

When completed, the Upper Yarra Dam will form an artificial lake with a surface of 1,850 acres, submerging the Yarra Valley for a length of 6.5 miles.

From this reservoir the flow of water will be directed, according to requirements, into Melbourne's supply network, and the surplus will flow down the natural bed of the Yarra River.

A proposal to construct the Upper Yarra Dam was adopted in 1940, but owing to the war construction could not begin until 1947. In 1951 the original design, which envisaged a storage of 30,000 million gallons, was altered to provide for 44,000 million gallons by raising the height of the proposed embankment. It is estimated that the dam will be in operation in three or four years, subject to the availability of finance from loan moneys.

In the design and methods of construction the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works is following generally methods proved in the United States of America. Two eminent American engineers, Dr. J. L. Savage and Mr. F. C. Walker (of the United States Bureau of Reclamation), have been consulted on the project.

#### River Diversion

To clear the site for the construction of the huge embankment, the Yarra River has been diverted through a tunnel 2,700 feet long, penetrating the hillside to the north of the construction site. The tunnel is 20 feet in diameter, and concrete-lined. A 70-ft. high diversion dam guides the river flow into the tunnel at a speed of up to 18 miles per hour. The outlet curves into Doctors Creek, a tributary of the Yarra River, which it joins a short distance downstream. Provisions are made to plug the tunnel with concrete after the construction works are completed. The tunnel was located 15 feet above the river bed to prevent flooding during construction. The intake and outlet were shaped after hydraulic model tests.

#### Embankment

When completed, the Upper Yarra Dam embankment will be one of the highest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. It will be an earth and rock structure 293 feet high, and 1,600 feet wide at the base. The crest will be 2,000 feet long, 30 feet wide, and its altitude will be 1,220 feet above sea level.

The embankment will consist of a central zone of rolled earth fill and two outer zones of rock fill. Slopes will be inclined at an angle of from 2 : 1 to 3.5 : 1. Approximately 3,400,000 cubic yards of earth fill and 4,000,000 cubic yards of rock fill will make up the material of the embankment.

The central zone of rolled earth fill consists of red clay, soft rock and clayey river gravel and forms an impervious barrier to retain the water storage, whereas the outer rock fill zones on the up- and downstream sides, consisting of sandstones and siltstones, support the inner zone structurally. Durable sandstone will form the outside layers to protect the inner rock layers against weathering and wave action.

There are only eight known dams of similar design and comparable size in other parts of the world, and the problems involved in the construction of the Upper Yarra Dam have attracted world-wide attention.

#### Foundation

The embankment foundation was excavated to bed rock, consisting of soft decomposed to hard Silurian sandstone and siltstones. Preliminary geological investigations included the sinking of trial shafts and of cored drill holes of 200-ft, average depth, as well as structural mapping of the area embraced by the engineering works. Extensive material tests were made of the foundation rock, the embankment materials, and of aggregate for concrete, crushed from hard sandstone.

The overburden, consisting of clayey river deposits and earth and hillside debris forming a layer of from 5 feet to 25 feet, was completely removed. Overburden material amounted to 850,000 cubic yards; most of it can be used as rolled earth fill for the embankment.

To minimize seepage along and through the foundation rock, a cut-off wall of concrete and a deep grout curtain are being constructed along the full length of the dam. The cut-off wall is reinforced with steel; it penetrates generally 10 feet into foundation rock and rises up to 15 feet above foundation level. Below the cut-off wall and at a distance of 30 feet on either side of it lines of holes are being drilled with 1.25-in diamond bits to a depth of 150 feet. Cement grout is injected at pressure into the holes - filling all crevices - to form the grout curtain.

At the present construction stage (March 1954) the lower half of the embankment has been stripped of overburden and 800,000 tons of rolled earth fill material and 960,000 tons of rock fill have been placed in the embankment.

#### Spillway

A permanent spillway will be constructed in the form of an open channel at the left abutment of the dam.

#### Quarrying

Most of the 4,000,000 cubic yards of rock fill required for the embankment will be obtained from a rock-fill quarry about 1.5 miles up stream from the dam site. It is one of the largest quarrying projects undertaken in Victoria.

The quarry is being carved out of the hillside in the shape of a large bowl; its slopes are formed into benches in successive stages. The top bench has been established by blasting out a series of rugged knobs. More

benches, each of 20-ft. average height, are being blasted out, in descending order to a depth of 360 feet allowing for an internal access system for loading and haulage.

The type of rock is medium to hard oxidized interbedded sandstone and siltstone.

Three techniques have so far been applied to the preparation of quarry blasts; churn drilling, waggon drilling and tunneling.

### Drilling

"Churn" drills, that is percussion drills are used generally for major blasting operations. Eight light rigs, of the Goldfields type, each weighing approximately 1,000 lb. gross, are in use at the Upper Yarra Dam. Working by percussion, at a frequency of about 48 strokes per minute and with a stroke length of 24 inches, the penetration rate has averaged 20 to 25 feet of drill-hole depth per machine shift. This is considered a very satisfactory performance. Holes of 4 to 5 inches diameter are spaced at intervals of 18 and 21 feet, and 14 cubic yards of solid burden is obtained per foot depth of hole. A total footage of 4,800 foot has been drilled for a typical blasting operation, with holes reaching a maximum depth of 80 feet. By March, 1954, the total footage of the blast drilling operations has reached approximately 50,000 feet.

To accelerate the blast drilling programme, a mobile "quarrymaster" machine is being procured which is expected to drill 200 ft. per shift.

Four-inch "waggon" drills (mounted pneumatic percussion drills) are confined to the preparation of smaller blasts such as for squaring up and for the removal of "toes" left over after major blasting operations. Typical waggon-drill performances are 100 to 150 feet of drill hole per machine shift in the hardest type of rock, or 300 to 400 feet in a medium hard formation.

The bits in use are detachable tungsten carbide bits of 2.5-in. diameter for soft and medium hard rock.

### Blasting

Blasting operations dislodge in each case from 70,000 to 100,000 cubic yards of rock. A typical blasting round requires 78 drill holes, at an average depth of 50 feet, for the displacing of 100,000 cubic yards. The explosive factor is approximately 0.6 lb. per cubic yard solid, with a total of 18 tons explosive used. Holes are loaded with monograin using a gelignite or "quarry-gel" primer and Cordex fuse. Short-delay (1/40 second) electric detonators are attached to Cordtex at each hole and fired in a series circuit.

A single tunnel or "Coyote" blast has been carried out. In this case two tunnels were driven totaling a length of 260 feet, and six chambers were located along the crosscuts at intervals of 40 feet. The explosive factor was 1.25 lb. explosive per cubic yard of solid rock, and the total of explosives used was 7 tons of gelignite and monobel. This tunnel blast yielded 70,000 cubic yards of loose rock. A second tunnel is now being prepared.

Rigid safety precautions are observed throughout all loading operations and during the handling of explosives.

### Loading and Haulage

To load the broken rock materials in trucks, electric shovels - two type Ruston 100 R.B. and one type Rapier 4142 - each having a dipper capacity of 3.5 cubic yards, are used. Digging rates so far have been

from 350 to 400 cubic yards of loose material in well-broken rock per operating hour, or 2,000 to 2,200 cubic yards per shift.

The main haulage units are fourteen L.V. Mack diesel trucks, each with a capacity of 16 cubic yards. Their performance is 350 cubic yards per shift per truck on a 1.6 mile lead. Seven L.T.G. Euclid bottom dump vehicles are being procured; it is proposed to use some of these for the transport of the softer rock. In addition there are about fifteen trucks with a capacity of 10 cubic yards each.

Bulldozers and graders keep all the roads in the works area in continuous good order.

#### Workman's Township

A construction project of the magnitude of the Upper Yarra Dam embraces many other temporary and permanent structures, including a sizeable township of works buildings and houses for the personnel.

The works buildings consist of administrative offices, workshops, stores, and testing laboratory, covering a total area of 57,000 square feet, most of which is occupied by mechanical, carpentry, welding and reinforcement shops.

There are more than a hundred family houses, quarters for about 700 single men, mess and kitchen buildings for 250, a canteen and recreation hall, a school and a clinic, as well as tennis courts and a sports oval. Electric power is provided by the State Electricity Commission and can be supplemented but diesel generators. Domestic water supply is reticulated throughout the township, and an extra storage of 500,000 gallons is held full for emergencies such as bushfires. All buildings are sewerred, and many are equipped with central heating.

#### Water Conduits

In readiness to convey water from the Upper Yarra Reservoir to Silvan Reservoir and thence to Melbourne, the Upper Yarra aqueduct - a concrete lined open channel, 10 miles long - and the Upper Yarra-Silvan Conduit, 23 miles long, have been constructed. In the meantime this system is passing a limited supply, diverted from the Yarra River 3 miles above the site of the Upper Yarra Dam.

The pipeline of the Upper Yarra-Silvan Conduit is 22 miles long, laid underground and consists of steel units of 30-ft. length welded together. The pipeline has a diameter of 68 inches and a discharge capacity of 75 million gallons a day. A second line, with equal capacity, has been provided for. The conduit pierces Mount Little Joe, near Warburton, by means of a tunnel 1.3 miles long. This horseshoe-shaped tunnel is 9 ft. 6 in. both in height and width and has a discharge capacity of 150 million gallons a day.

The construction of the Upper Yarra Dam is under the direction of the Project Engineers of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. Work at the quarry is supervised by Mr. M. C. Healy, Quarry Engineer.

1955

#### Passenger Bus Over Edge of Acheron Way

A tree saved a 33-passanger bus from a drop of over 200 feet when the vehicle capsized over the edge of the Acheron Valley, three miles above Cement Creek, last Friday afternoon. The bus came to rest on an acute angle, and passengers were able to drop to the ground and scramble back on the road.

The bus, carrying a full load, was driven by Thomas Middleditch, of 52 Salty st., South Kensington.

Nobody was injured.

1955

#### Another Bus Over the Edge of Acheron Way

A small clump of trees stopped a tourist bus from rolling 60 feet down into a rocky gully after the vehicle had gone over the edge of the Acheron Way, on Monday.

The driver and passengers in the bus crawled through the roof escape door and its windows as it lay on a 45 degree angle over the edge of the road.

The bus was returning to Melbourne after a day tour when the accident occurred.

Local police said the bus driver told them he was driving along the Acheron Way when a car coming in the opposite direction swerved towards him.

He swung towards the side of the mountain road, but the edge suddenly gave way beneath, and threw the bus over a 45-degree angle.

A similar accident occurred in the same location only a week ago. Nobody was injured in either accident.

1955

#### Injured Hiker Spends Night in Bush

A 17.5 stone bushwalker, missing since late Sunday afternoon, was found injured in the bush outside Warburton on Monday morning.

He was 56 year old Benjamin Raphael Terracini of Hodgkinson street, Clifton Hill, who was lost on Mt. Donna Buang.

Unable to go further owing to pain and exhaustion, he called for more than an hour before attracting attention to his plight.

Terracini, who had been admitted to Warburton Hospital, said that he went to Warburton by bus on the Sunday morning with friends, and climbed the mountains.

"I started to walk back down the road to Warburton but as it was getting late. I decided to take a shortcut down a track which was signposted '4.5 to Warburton.'"

"The track was steep and difficult, and partly overgrown."

"Before long I found I had lost the track, and by the time I rediscovered it it was dark."

"Shortly after dark heavy rain fell, extinguishing the fire and wetting me to the skin."

"When dawn came I struggled about a mile down the track when I put my foot in a hole and fell heavily, twisting my right knee and ankle injuring my right eye."

"The track then sloped down steeply, so I decided to slide down as far as possible."

"After an hour I was so racked with pain that I could not continue, and I called out for assistance."

"Just as I thought I could crawl no more two local residents came through the bush and carried me to the hospital."

1956

#### Mt. Donna Buang Tower Closed

The lookout tower on Mt. Donna Buang has been closed to the public. The stairway leading from the ground to the first gallery has been removed and a warning sign erected.

The tower will remain closed until necessary repairs have been effected.

Because of the cold, work on the tower will not commence until after the winter.

The Warburton Advancement League and Upper Yarra Shire council failed in a last minute effort to keep the tower open. Both bodies offered the Department of Public Works a 50 pound contribution towards the cost of immediate repairs.

1956

#### Board Worker 28 Dies Suddenly

Francis Aloysius Brennan, 28 years, a shovel operator employed at the M.M.B.W., collapsed and died in his hut at Upper Yarra Dam on Thursday of last week.

Brennan, was a single man, living at Boronia.

Artificial respiration and oxygen administered by Mr Jack Tune, first aid attendant at the Dam, and Constable Adamson failed to revive the dead man.

A post mortem held at Warburton Hospital revealed that the death was due to coronary occlusion.

1957

#### Writing on the Wall

The writing is on the wall as far as the future of M.M.B.W. employees at Upper Yarra Dam is concerned. Last week the Board brought into effect a general re-classification of employment at the Dam and notified that shiftwork on the wall would cease immediately. This means that weekly pay envelopes will be much lighter. Already many employees who are not very enthusiastic about their new jobs have indicated that they will seek other employment. It can be taken for granted that there will shortly be a big reduction in numbers employed at the Dam.

1957

#### Council Case for MMBW Timber Supply

##### Summary of Evidence

##### Marysville's Right

Cr. Fredrick John Barton, J. P., of Marysville gave his evidence in a threefold capacity. He was a Councillor of the Healesville Shire for nearly 40 years; he was chairman of the Marysville Water Trust; also he was a director of the Cambarville Sawmilling Co. Pty Ltd.

Cr. Barton's evidence was not only his personal view, but he said he wished to speak for the people of Marysville and surrounding districts, including sawmillers and their employees.

His evidence, most informative, and showing clearly that the situation in the Healesville Shire's northern outpost was just as bad as it was at "headquarters," was as follows.

"The Cambarville SawMillers Co. was originally started as a partnership between the late Mr. Alex Cameron and myself, and our first mill was built in the forest between Marysville and Buxton, 21 years ago.

"After the 1939 fires we transferred the mill to its present site in the Cumberland Valley to cut fire killed, and other timber. Our original area was cut out a few years ago and since then we have been leading a hand-to-mouth existence for logs.

"A feature of the mountain ash in these areas is its over-maturity. It should have been cut many years ago.

"For our future we are relying on patches some of them previously cut-over, being made available to us from time to time by the Forests Commission. They are doing their best, but the fact is that with fires, over maturity and milling, the forests immediately north of the Divide have about had it, and in a very few years we must get timber from the Board areas or close.

"We have a good mill and have built 19 houses for our men and a school and a dugout. If the mill had not been in the bush with short log carting, we could not have gone on milling the low grade logs we have had to take for the last few years.

"As far as I know there are no "buffer" areas near our mills, but as the Committee was shown, the MMBW timber in the head of Bellel Creek, north of the main road is within a mile of our mill. Here there are many millions of super feet of mature ash going to waste.

"This is not steep country and could easily be logged. It is 15 to 20 miles, the way the water flows, from there to the O'Shannassy Dam. The timber could be taken out without damaging the catchment in any way, or impairing the quality of water.

1957

A Century of Water Supply

Yan Yean Reservoir 1857 Upper Yarra Reservoir 1957

The Maroondah Scheme

The Board of Inquiry, appointed in 1872, looking ahead, had recommended that the catchment of the Watts River, the next major stream east of the Plenty, was the obvious choice for an independent water supply. It was accordingly reserved permanently for the purpose. The Watts had been named after an old retainer of William Ryrie, who had a station on the Yarra near Worri Yallock in the 1840's. Its native name was "Broongkazalk," which means rotten log. The river was strewn with rotten logs.

Even before the Yan Yean extensions had been completed, it was clear that it would be but a temporary alleviation of the supply situation. In 1879 J.H. Davies, an assistant engineer and surveyor in the Railways Department, was called in to make an appraisal of the water potential of the Watts. His report, submitted in May, 1880, affirmed its suitability and detailed two schemes. One involved building a weir and conveying the water to Preston by aqueduct, the other called for a storage reservoir at Healesville. The weir proposal was accepted with practically no alteration and five years after it had been submitted, work began on the scheme.

In the light of experience at Yan Yean, it was decided that there should be no risk of pollution of the catchment by human settlement. Implementing the policy even meant buying the township of Fernshaw and completely demolishing it. From the concrete weir built on the Watts, 2.5 miles north of Healesville, the water was conveyed to Preston by 25.5 miles of open concrete channel, 6.25 miles of tunnel and 14 inverted siphons of a total length of 9.25 miles. (A siphon is a large pipe enabling the water to be taken over difficult country which deviates from the required even downhill gradient.) To supplement the supply an off-take weir was built on the Graceburn Creek, a tributary of the Watts. It

diverted water from that stream into the main aqueduct below the Watts River Weir. The capacity of the main aqueduct was 25 million gallons a day.

The Watts River scheme was officially opened on the 18th February, 1891, when its name was changed to Maroondah, the native name for the locality. The meaning of the word "Maroondah" has never been discovered, for the aboriginals refused to divulge it.

Exactly one month after the opening of the Maroondah scheme, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works met for the first time and the Board has been responsible for Melbourne's water supply ever since. It was not water supply, however, that brought it into being. Although the population was nearing the half-million mark, the city was still without a sewerage system and the menace to health could no longer be tolerated.

In 1889 the Government appointed a Commission under the chairmanship of Professor H. Allen to inquire into the sanitary condition of Melbourne. In Its report, the Commission recommended the creation of the Metropolitan Board of Works modeled on the London Board of Works. The Government was reluctant to surrender its lucrative water supply but was happy enough to let another body wrestle with the problem of sewerage. The argument that sewerage and water supply were complementary prevailed and in December, 1890, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works was created by Act of Parliament.

The Maroondah scheme had relieved anxiety over water supply, at least for the time being, and the new Board's water supply activities were confined mainly to extending reticulation. However, supply was augmented by diverting Donnelly's Creek, a tributary of the Watts, into the Maroondah channel. Supply then remained more or less static for 16 years until, in 1909, the Coranderrk Creek was also diverted into the Maroondah system. But even then it was apparent that, with the ever-growing population, the day-to-day flow of the Watts River would be inadequate in time of drought and that sooner or later a large storage reservoir would be necessary.

Another factor was that Yan Yean and Maroondah were low-level systems and population trends around the turn of the century had been towards the high eastern and south-eastern suburbs. Opinion was divided as to whether the next step should be a high-level scheme to cater for the newer suburbs or the building of a large storage reservoir that had been suggested by Davies in 1880. A Royal Commission appointed in 1909 to consider the alternatives decided that the high-level scheme would cater for more people at a smaller capital cost. Its findings were that a dam of 2,400 million gallons capacity at Maroondah would supply an additional 110,000 persons at about 3 pound 16/- per head; while a high-level scheme using the O'Shannassy catchment would provide for an additional 250,000 persons at about 1 pound 16/- per head. The figures were conclusive and the O'Shannassy scheme was launched. But in 1914, a severe drought was to bring the Maroondah Dam scheme once again out of its pigeonhole and the following year preliminary investigation was launched. Clearing the site for the new reservoir began in 1917 and three years later construction work began. The dam is a cyclopean rubble concrete structure 135 feet high, 956 feet long, with a maximum width of 104 feet at the base and 16 feet wide at the top.

The artificial lake behind the dam has a capacity of 6,289 million gallons, most of which is available without resort to pumping. At top level-460 feet above sea level - the surface area is 486 acres. The catchment area covers 43,000 acres. The original weir now lies beneath the water of the reservoir.

Maroondah has been made so beautiful with lawns and gardens that it is easy to forget its utilitarian nature. Even the outlet tower looks like a classical temple although the whole reason for its existence is that it enables water to be drawn off at any level through hydraulically-operated



valves. The water is discharged into the original Maroondah aqueduct, which was enlarged in 1927 simply by raising the walls of the channel and duplicating the siphons. That expedient boosted the flow to a potential 50 million gallons a day.

### The O'Shannassy Scheme

Prescient men had long realised that, as the population grew, more and more land would be needed for catchments. At far back as the '80's, thanks to William Davidson, the Government had been persuaded to reserve for water supply purposes the catchments of the O'Shannassy River, Armstrong's Creek and the Upper Yarra. The move was none too soon because the Lands Department had already begun surveying the area with the idea of throwing it open for settlement.

In the latter part of last century it was anticipated that these streams would be brought into the system by extending the Maroondah aqueduct eastwards to intercept them. But the unforeseen and abnormal spread of population to the east and south-east rendered this impracticable because all water would still go to Preston and from there it would have to be pumped to the high, rapidly developing areas. A 32-inch main had been laid direct from Yan Yean to Surrey Hills in 1891. It gave the high suburbs gravitational water but it was only a temporary expedient.

Anticipating even more development to the south and south-east the Board of Works made application to have the O'Shannassy catchment vested in it with the intention of using it as a gravitational source of supply for these areas. As a result of the findings of the Royal Commission of 1909, the Government vested the area - 32,650 acres - in the Board.

Like so many Australian places, the O'Shannassy River had other names before "O'Shannassy" appeared on the maps. It had first been called the "Bellel". Next it was named the "Ligar", after an early Surveyor-General. It was finally named "O'Shannassy" after Sir John O'Shanassy, three times Premier of Victoria. Where the extra 'n' came from is a mystery.

Work began on a concrete diversion weir on the O'Shannassy River in 1912. The weir was 3.5 miles above its confluence with the Yarra. Simultaneously, a start was made on the 48.75-mile aqueduct that would take O'Shannassy water to Surrey Hills. Some sections of the aqueduct were constructed to its ultimate capacity of 60 million gallons a day.

The first stage of the O'Shannassy scheme was finished in October, 1914, just in time to avert a serious water shortage because in the following summer there was a severe drought. Gaugings of the O'Shannassy at the time showed a minimum flow of 12 million gallons a day - a warning that storages must be provided to ensure flow during periods of drought. A preliminary survey for the site of a dam on the O'Shannassy was made concurrently with the surveys for the Maroondah Dam. Topographical considerations and the steep grade of the river bed ruled out a large reservoir in the O'Shannassy catchment. Instead, a small reservoir to equalize the river's flow was proposed. Work began on the dam in 1923 when, 14 miles to the west, the massive concrete wall of the Maroondah Dam was already halfway to completion. The O'Shannassy Dam is of earth-fill construction with a concrete core wall. It rises 113 feet above the river bed and is 740 feet long. It impounds 930 million gallons at a top water level of 1,211 feet above the sea. The water discharges from the reservoir directly into the natural bed of the O'Shannassy River and flows along it to the original weir half a mile downstream. To cope with the extra flow the dam would make available, the balance of the aqueduct was enlarged by building up the sides and the pipelines were duplicated.

The O'Shannassy supply was further augmented in 1929 by building a new weir on the Coranderrk Creek and diverting its flow into an aqueduct near Worri Yallock. Twenty years previously the Coranderrk Creek, which is

actually in the Maroondah catchment, had been diverted into the Maroondah system via the Graceburn aqueduct. With the new weir, Coranderrk and Graceburn waters can be diverted into either the Maroondah or O'Shannassy systems.

### The Upper Yarra Scheme

The headwaters of the Yarra were first considered as a source of water supply as long ago as 1872 when it was realized that Yan Yean would not be sufficient to supply the city for very many more years. In 1888 William Davidson, the Engineer for Water Supply, persuaded the Government to reserve the Upper Yarra catchment. When the newly-created Board of Works took over three years later, however, no mention was made of the area. Yan Yean and Maroondah were vested in the Board and the O'Shannassy catchment was reserved. But the Upper Yarra had somehow been left out of the schedule of water reservations.

It was obvious that this catchment would sooner or later be needed. In 1908 the Board began preliminary investigation into the catchment to discover possible dam sites. In the following year stream-gauging was established.

Early schemes for utilizing the Yarra headwaters envisaged a number of small reservoirs on the Upper Yarra and two of its major tributaries. By 1922, nine tentative sites had been considered and the heights and capacities of possible reservoirs had been calculated - six on the Yarra, two on Walsh's Creek and one on Armstrong's Creek. The Engineer of Water Supply, E. G. Ritchie, recommended three dams in all. Their total storage capacity would be 30,000 million gallons and this, he estimated, would exhaust the catchment. "Taking into account rainfall records, gaugings of stream flows so far recorded and losses by evaporation, it is estimated that there will be an average annual yield of water equal to the requirements of about 900,000 people," he reported.

The Upper Yarra was first tapped when works were in progress to satisfy the urgent demand for supply in the high-level areas of the metropolis which were developing at an unforeseen rate. It was decided to construct the upper sections of the Upper Yarra wonderful column of brightly-shining sharp-pointed trees rising from the depths of the valley to the crest of the lofty range. The peculiar regularity of their form and arrangements made the scene one of the most wonderful pieces of Nature's landscape gardening it has ever been my fortune to see.

A lover of trees would find matter of scarcely smaller interest in the noble beech tree forest through which the road ran beyond the bend, in noticing the deep, dark foliage of the beeches, their massive moss-clad trunks and branches, so different from the relatively slender formation of the tall gum trees, and the depth of the shadow they cast. At this part of the road we have something of the same luxuriance of vegetation which we have met with before on the summit of the Black Spur.

We drive on a mile or two through the creek, where we were to stay for lunch.

It was an admirable place for a picnic. There had been a camp of a road party on the side of the clear cold stream, and they had cleared a considerable patch, on which the white clover was now copiously growing. The little clearing was closely shut in on all sides by the lofty forest. We camped for lunch in a delightful spot, deeply shaded by the dense beech forest, through which not even straggling sunbeam could make its way. This pleasantly rippling stream ran within a couple of yards of our fire. At the back of us the clear green patch on which stood the decaying huts of the road party was bathed in sunshine. This was the ultimate point of our journey, and when after lunch we had strolled about under the beechwood shade over the ground richly carpeted with the glossy, green, hartstongue fern, and had packed up our things, and when "cock-

shay" had been taken at the final empty bottle on the stump, uilt instead of a number of small dams. It would be less costly. This decision was arrived at in 1939 and after that, A.E. Kelso, the Engineer of Water Supply, directed all subsequent investigation towards working out the most suitable site and most suitable type of dam. Cost ruled out a masonry dam. An earth-and-rock fill type had been decided upon when World War II put up the barrier to any major constructional work.

However, exploration and geological work continued. Earth and rock materials were tested and surveys made of the various possible dam sites. In 1940 the Board's Water Supply Committee recommended that the dam be constructed half a mile below the confluence of the Yarra and Walsh's Creek. The dam was to be 240 feet high and would impound 30,000 million gallons.

No earth-and-rock fill dam of such immense size had ever been attempted in Australia so expert advice was sought overseas. In 1941 the Board invited Dr. J. L. Savage, of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, to come to Melbourne and act as consultant. Dr. Savage accepted the invitation and after examining the proposals and the area, he reported : "The engineering officers deserve commendation for thoroughness in the investigations and for soundness in their engineering work." He made certain recommendations and these were adopted.

Mr. Kelso died in 1943. Mr. F. M. Lee, his successor as Chief Engineer of Water Supply, continued the site investigations and, in 1946, his recommendation for a slightly amended design on a site some half-mile further downstream was approved by the Board.

Work began in 1947, but before the construction of the embankment proper got under way plans were revised, mainly for economic reasons, and the height of the dam was increased to 280 feet. This would add another 10,000 million gallons to its capacity. A high proportion of the cost of the works would be accounted for by housing, river diversion, spillway construction and soon. These would be more or less constant, whatever the size of the dam. So the additional 10,000 million gallons would be achieved at a lower cost per gallon than the first 30,000 million. Another amendment to design made in consultation with Dr. Savage and Mr. F. C. Walker, Engineer for Earth Dams in the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, effected further economies.

Finally, in 1953 the design height was increased to 293 feet. This would provide available storage for 44,000 million gallons. At last the stage was set for the great work.

Building the great embankment was, however, only part of the work - certainly the most obvious part. But there was an enormous amount of preparation necessary. A township had to be built to house the major portion of the work force, many of whom had wives and families. A school had to be built. The project had its own electric power station until a high tension supply was brought from Warburton.

The old road between McVeigh's and Wood's Point was closed because it ran through the catchment and it is the Board's unbending policy to keep all catchment areas closed to public use. This meant that the Board had to build a new road skirting the catchment area. Then came workshops, messes, administrative blocks and a sawmill. A bridge was constructed across the river at Doctor's Creek, and a railway built at Warburton.

The visitor who sees the finished dam will probably not be aware of some of the other necessary work - the temporary diversion of the river, for instance; before the wall could be built a diversion tunnel 25 feet in diameter had to be driven half a mile through a spur abutting the dam site. The tunnel was then lined with concrete before the river was diverted through it. The area that would be submerged had to be cleared of trees and undergrowth and all debris burnt.

The vast project involved equally vast organization. Much modern earth-moving equipment had to be acquired. All men, plant and materials had to

be disposed so that work could proceed smoothly and without wastage. Calculating, planning and coordination became as important as the actual work of construction.

For ten years the work continued - and not without anxieties and crisis. In 1953, for instance, torrential rain produced one of the highest river flows ever recorded. This was on the eve of the projected diversion of the river through the newly completed tunnel. Trucks dumped load after load of rock to be bulldozed into the river bed until the first water began to trickle from the tunnel. But the river continued to rise. Eight tractors worked feverishly to keep the bank above the level of the river. Then the flow reached its peak and held steady. The crisis was over and it was possible to strip the foundations of the dam down to bedrock.

The following year the building of the huge embankment began. A trench in the foundation rock was excavated to a depth of about 10 feet and a concrete cut-off wall running across the bedrock foundation was poured into the excavation. The wall rises 10 to 15 feet above the rock into the impervious earth fill that is the core of the embankment. Every foot of the 3.5 million cubic yards of earth fill had to be compacted by many rollings of grooved and "sheep's foot" rollers. In addition 4 million cubic yards of rock fill were placed on the flanks of the earth fill. The work was of necessity slow, but it crept higher and higher until in March 1957, it was completed. It reared up 293 feet from the old bed of the river.

Four stub outlet towers were constructed together with the system of control valves. A vast concrete spillway was made on the southern abutment. The diversion tunnel was sealed with a concrete plug. Two permanent outlets through the plug were fitted with 42-inch diameter valves. When the valves were closed the river was trapped. By September water was rising steadily in the enormous basin behind the embankment. The Yarra Reservoir was a reality. It only remained to mark the occasion in time with an official opening. This was done by His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, General Sir Dallas Brooks, on November 26th.

1958

#### 'Coo-ee' Led to Rescue

An elderly man coo-ed for help when he realised he was lost on the slopes of Donna Buang at 8.15pm last Sunday night.

His Coo-ees were heard by Mrs Haversfield who lives on the slopes of the mount.

She immediately contacted the police at Warburton.

Snr Constable Tarrant and First Constable Sligo were quickly on the scene, and it did not take them long to solve the mystery of the cooees.

They found an elderly man who had tripped and fallen into dense scrub and blackberries at the side of the Donna Buang shortcut.

The man, Thomas McKay of Middle Park, who was spending the weekend at the Palatine Fathers' camp at Millgrove told his rescuers that he became separated and lost when darkness and fog overtook him while hiking with a party down the shortcut.

1959

#### O'Shannassy "Out of Bounds" to Anglers

#### Four men on Trespassing charges

Upper Yarra's famous O'Shannassy Reservoir is said to be one of the best fishing haunts in Victoria, and there are many enthusiastic anglers

who would give anything to spend a few hours in a secluded spot on its tree-lined banks, amply stocked with bait, and armed with a good stout nylon line.

But angling in the O'Shannassy is "out" so far as the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works is concerned. The Board has even gone so far as to clear a boundary track through dense timber right round the reservoir, and at strategic points, has erected notices warning intruders they will be prosecuted for trespassing.

It's said that only privileged members of the Board can obtain permits to enter no-man's-land and toss lines in the precious O'Shannassy waters.

Four men who found out the hard way that trespassing by outsiders will not be tolerated were Laurie Johnson of main street Warburton; Noel Platt, Highfield road Warburton; Ralph Story, Damman's road Warburton, and Albert Manning, 3 Adrian Street Ringwood. At the Warburton Court on Wednesday, they were arraigned before Mr. L. Froude, S.M., on charges of trespassing, and being in possession of rods capable of being used for fishing in the reservoir. The offences were alleged to have occurred in the early hours of December 27 1958.

Waited for Return.

Bernard Shaw Castles, caretaker of O'Shannassy Reservoir, told the court of his discoveries when patrolling the eastern boundary of the reservoir at 8 p.m. on December 26. He said he noticed marks which indicated that somebody had gone down a track towards the reservoir boundary and upon investigation, came across an unoccupied motor car. He waited near the vehicle until 12.45 a.m., and was finally rewarded when he saw three men - the defendants Story, Manning and Johnson - coming from inside the Board's territory.

Castles said he intercepted the three men, one of whom attempted to go back into the bush. He took the names and addresses of Story and Johnson, then called the third man, Manning, from the bush. When Manning came out he did not have a fishing rod and claimed he had not been fishing.

Fourth man appears.

Castles said he ordered the three men off Board property, but they replied they were thirsty, and had some soft drink before driving away. Soon after they had left a fourth man (Platt) came out of the bush, gave his name and address, and said he had not been fishing. He then went along the track after the others.

Witness claimed he searched the bush where Manning had been and found a fishing rod. Further back behind a log he found another rod and bag containing two or three fish.

Castles was subjected to cross-examination by the defendants, Story and Manning, the only two to appear. He described the defined track which had been cleared around the reservoir for boundary and fire-fighting purposes, and said a large warning notice stood in the vicinity of the spot where he intercepted the four men.

Asked if he knew the Armstrong Creek and whether it was included in the Board's territory, Castles replied in the negative, and said he could not say whether it was a mile away.

He agreed it would be possible for anyone walking down Observatory road at night to cross into Board territory, but suggested they must know, as they would have to cross the cleared track.

He emphatically denied an implication by Story that he said at the time he intercepted him "Had you been on your own it would have been alright."

Charges Dismissed

Mr Froude said he was not prepared to accept the inference by the prosecution that because fishing rods were found in the bush they belonged to Manning and Platt. He dismissed the charges that they had possession of rods which could have been used for fishing at the reservoir.

Both Story and Manning declined to give sworn evidence in their own defence, but Story was permitted to make a statement in which he claimed it was strange that members of the Board were able to fish and not prevented from doing so.

To a suggestion that permits were obtainable he claimed these were only available to Board members. "When you see fishing open to Board members you feel you should have some rights," said Story.

He further submitted that he had been seriously penalised by the confiscation of the fishing gear. "The rods have been held for over four months and to a keen fisherman, that is a great penalty" said Story.

For entering the Board's territory without permission to fish in the Reservoir while the general public was banned each of the four men were fined 3 pounds with 3 pounds 8 costs. Story and Johnson were fined a further 2 pound and 5/- costs for having rods in their possession.

1959

#### Car Hit by Tree

A late model Holden sedan was badly damaged when struck by a falling tree while travelling up Mt. Donna Buang road at 1.10 p.m., on Monday.

The driver, Peter Saxton, of Lane Cove N.S.W. was not injured.

Country Roads Board workers were felling trees on the top side of the road.

1960

#### Some Highlight of the Marysville Trip.

These notes deal with the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria excursion to Marysville on April 22-25 this year. They were submitted by Jean Galbraith.

The creaking notes of King Parrots began at dawn and their brilliant red and green made flecks of colour in the oak trees in gardens and streets as they busily cracked acorns and nibbled the "meat" inside.

In a time of few flowers, berries delighted us. The curved wands of Turquoise Berry (*Drymophila cyanocarpa*), with lance-shaped opposite leaves, bore fruit like blue beads hanging down from the upper leaf-axils. Large purple-blue berries of Flaxlily (*Dianella tasmanica*) and Appleberry (*Billardiera longiflora*), the first on erect branching sprays, the second on climbing or trailing stems, were not less beautiful because they are familiar. Less familiar were the opaque pearl-white fruiting calyces of the Waxberry (*Gaultheria hispida*) - like clusters of white berries above their net-veined bright leaves - on snow-wreathed Mt. Arnold. There, too, were big orange-red fruits of Rough Coprosma (*Coprosma hirtella*), which when very ripe darken to the colour of black coffee, and the oval scarlet beads of Prickly Currant-bush (*Coprosma quadrifida*) among tiny leaves.

Part of the treefern trunk, used in a bridge near Cumberland Falls, was cut so that the oval outlines of the bases of old fronds showed clearly on the flat surface. One member pointed out that every oval was outlined in green, for countless prothalli (some with a first frond already developed) were growing there, in what had been the outside of the dead fronds.

Bushes of Mountain Correa (*C. laurenciana*) grew thickly along all the cooler mountain roads. Though these tall shrubs with big ovate leaves, rather leatherly and backed with a felt of white or brownish hairs, were not familiar to everyone, all who know the Common Correa (*C. reflexa*) could recognize the characteristic oval buds hanging from calyces like

brown suede. We did not find the red form, but a few of the greenish bells were touched with pink. We were too early for any but the first scattered flowers. One member was delighted by the picture made as an Eastern Spinebill hovered before the pale green bells.

Here, as in similar places throughout eastern Victoria, the lacy foliage of Elderberry Ash (*Tieghemopanax sambucifolius*) was conspicuous along the roads and, as usual, it varied from a graceful form with narrow-linear leaf segments to a rather solid-looking one with broadly ovate segments, with every gradation between the two.

Bushes of *Acacia frigescens* were found where the road dips down Mt. Arnold toward Cumberland Valley. This extends the known distribution of this recently-described wattle, but it is country where one would expect it, with a heavy forest cover similar to that in the Baw Baw area where it is common. Its grey-green phyllodes, with very strangely marked parallel veins, distinguish it from Blackwood (*A. melanoxylon*) even when it is not in flower and its smooth bark is not visible. When I first saw it near Tajil Bren I was reminded of the leaves of *Hakea laurina*, so strongly that it seemed a pity the name *Hakea Wattle* already belonged to another species.

Because plants are warmer for less cold) than snow, it was interesting to see them looking up through the round holes they had melted in a snow-blanket about six inches deep. It reminds me of the holes melted around sitting Adele penguins after an Antarctic blizzard.

Slender Clubmoss (*Lycopodium laterale*), like a giant moss, up to a foot high, with erect little-branched stems and hairlike leaves, interested members who found it near the Stevenson River.

1961

#### Man Walks to Safety

#### Long Bush Trek with Dog Companion

Once again police, bushmen, and other volunteer helpers assembled to conduct a search through dense bushland when a man was missing last Sunday from Mt Donna Buang.

Mr Howard Bradbrook, of Eltham, left his car on the summit of the mount and continued on foot, intending to spend the day fishing a mountain stream. Later in the day he was unable to find his way back to his car, and realised he was lost.

Clad only in shorts, shirt and sandshoes, and accompanied by his fox terrier dog "Rusty" Mr. Bradbrook spent Monday wandering through the bush until 5 p.m., when he reached an upper section of the Watts River. The man and his dog slept on the bank of the stream and soon after sunrise again were astir, following the course of the river.

At 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday the pair reached the MMBW camp at Fernshaw, where they were given food. They had traveled about 19 miles in what Sen. Const. Cameron of Healesville Police Station described as "incredible" time. They had accomplished in 60 hours a trip for which well organised hikers usually allow themselves three days.

When Mr. Bradbrook and his dog were brought to Healesville, about 60 searchers were assembling to conduct an intensive search through the dense bush of Mt. Donna Buang.

During his walk, Mr. Bradbrook discarded his socks, also his shoes, which were cut badly by sharp river stones. The pair saw a dozen black snakes. One 5ft specimen which attacked them, was dispatched without delay.

1962

Bush tragedy - four children die in flames

The tragedy occurred at the nearby timber mill settlement of Cambarville while Mr and Mrs Noel Murphy were watching television in a neighbour's home, only about 100 yards distant.

The father had been home to see that the children were safe, and apparently all was well. Later he was called to the burning weatherboard home, but could not get inside because of smoke, flames and intense heat. The Murphy children who died were Lawrence 7, Heather 5, Michael 3, and Neville aged 11 months.

The fire is believed to have been caused by sparks emitted from an open fire in the lounge.

1962

Cambarville fire claims 4 young lives

Four young children were burnt to death on Tuesday night when a fire razed a four-roomed weatherboard house at Cambarville, an isolated sawmill settlement 11 miles from Marysville.

The children were alone in the house while the parents, Mr. and Mrs. Noel Joseph Murphy, were visiting neighbours.

They were Lawrence John 7; Heather 5; Michael 3; and Neville 11 months.

The fire was first noticed at 9.40 p.m. by another neighbour, Mrs Alan Shuttleworth. Within seconds the house was an inferno and Mr Murphy and the other men from the settlement had to stand by helplessly while it burned to the ground.

Neighbours said that only a short while before Mrs Shuttleworth gave the alarm Mr Murphy had been across to check that the children were alright.

The rooms of the weatherboard house were variously lined with hardboard, caneite and paper over felt.

Garden Hoses.

The only means used to combat the fire was low-pressure water through garden hoses from a nearby dam. Despite these the rubble was still a glowing mass at 2 a.m. - three hours later.

The bodies of the children were located apparently where they had been sleeping, after a grim one-hour's search by First-Const. R. Chamberlain of Marysville police and Messrs Frank Heritage and Roland Thomas of the Healesville ambulance.

No Communication

Cambarville has no means of communication and Mr Delwyn Salisbury drove the 11 miles to Marysville in 20 minutes along the tortuous Marysville-Woods Point road to tell Const. Chamberlain of the tragedy.

Const Chamberlain left immediately, accompanied by Mr A.W. Halliday, manager of the Cambarville mill.

Cause of the fire is unknown but a fire which had been burning in the lounge fireplace is suspected.

To Hospital

Mr and Mrs Murphy were taken to Warburton hospital where Mrs Murphy was admitted suffering from shock. Mr Murphy received treatment for a gashed hand sustained while trying to force an entry into the burning house.

They had been at Cambarville only two months and had planned to leave at the end of this week.

1962

Search for Girl Hikers could have been avoided.

Probably the most common reaction in Healesville to last Friday's search for four girl hikers (Pauline Klein 16, Nicola Weimann 15,



Margaret Newman 16, Valmai Howe 15) thought to be lost on the slopes of Mt St Leonard, was one of annoyance at the needless trouble and expense that a number of people were given.

Generally the annoyance did not go very deep and was outweighed by the relief that the girls came to no harm - but it was real enough, nevertheless.

Whether the fault lay in the girl's lack of instruction, or in neglecting to follow instructions, it is not clear, but had they told their plans to the authorities at Camp Maroondah, where they were staying under the Youth Hostel Association Scheme, searchers would have known exactly where to begin the search.

What is perhaps more to the point, they would have been told that they walk they were planning was quite impossible in the day anyhow, what looked like a pleasant jaunt up a creek included seven or eight miles off, as Mr. Henderson was reported in the "Herald," "Some of the most rugged country in South-Eastern Victoria."

Hike along Donnelly's Creek

The girls left Camp Maroondah at about 9.15 a.m. on Thursday, intending to hike along Donnelly's Creek to a hut at Barnes Junction on the Ridge Road, an M.M.B.W. patrol track that runs along the crest of the Great Dividing Range.

They intended to follow the road south-east until they struck the Condon's Gully track, then descend this back to the M.M.B.W. aqueduct, and thence back to Camp Maroondah.

They talked generally of their plans to friends in another hut, and to a young lad assisting at the camp but no one had any definite knowledge of their exact intentions.

The going up creek was much harder than expected, and the girls had to "bush-bash" most of the way. Near dusk after being nearly lost several times, they found the hut and camped in it for the night, lighting a good fire, and taking turns to keep watch.

Recognised Fire

At sunrise on Friday "we cooked one frankfurt each and ate half a sandwich" and set off to find the way back, plunging down the side of the mountain through rotten undergrowth, and at times knee-deep in slush and mud. More by luck than knowledge they struck Donnelly's Creek again and recognised a spot where they had stopped for lunch the previous day.

They followed the creek and for about an hour and a half waded in rather than "bush-bash". The water meant nothing to them because they had been soaked to the skin by heavy rain shortly after setting off.

At 2 pm. the girls had reached the track alongside the aqueduct and walked into a party of M.M.B.W. men who took them back to Camp Maroondah, where for a considerable time they faced a barrage of newspaper and TV cameras and reporters.

"We weren't found," they insisted "because we were never lost."

"It was rather funny really," said one of the girls, but was serious later when she said that they were fortunate there had been no injuries, "We would have been in trouble then," she added.

Meanwhile

When the girls failed to return on Friday morning, Mrs Henderson reported to the Healesville police, and First Constable Ron Fletcher sought the assistance of the local M.M.B.W. office to organise a search.

The Board's forest gang, under Mr Ron Furmston commenced the search. George Start who had been working at Blacks Spur, searched along the Ridge Road from the Spur back to Mt. St. Leonard, where he met up with Ron Furmston and Constable Fletcher.

1962

Marysville

Mrs Hill, I presume," was the classic greeting 1st Constable Ray Chamberlain used when Mr and Mrs Byron Hill pulled up at the police station on Sunday morning, October 7, after being out on Mt Margaret all night.

The couple were never in any danger but were scared to turn on the narrow Mt. Margaret Road in the snow conditions, so had kept going, looking for a safe place to turn, and getting bogged every now and then. When they finally decided to back out, they bogged every now and then. When they finally decided to back out, they got bogged some more, and there they had the good sense to stay until they were found by Ron Simmons and Frank May at about 3.30am on Sunday, October 7, where the hills had gone, and secondly, that the car could have left the road at almost any point and be lying in a deep gully, where it would be difficult to see.

Norm Cox and Jack Haycraft searched along the Lake Mountain Road, but returned at about 3.40. Previous to that Jack and Ray Chamberlain had gone out along the Mt Margaret track, but not far enough.

Apart from several people spending a very cold and miserable night, no harm was done, but the incident did show up the excellent co-operation between the police, forestry and local people.

1963

MMBW clear new fire track

Fourteen miles of fire access track in the M.M.B.W. catchment area at Healesville is being constructed by the Board's forestry gang.

The main track runs from Mt. Riddell to Mt. Donna Buang, with a spur to Mt. Juliet. Two bulldozers have been engaged on the job since before Christmas.

The track, which will be suitable only for four wheel vehicles will be scraped clear of growth each year and gradually improved.

It will provide access to previously inaccessible country for fire-fighting and equipment, and will also be useful for hikers who fairly frequently get lost in the region.

1963

Donna Buang will be more accessible

Improvements on the narrow Healesville-Donna Buang Road will soon be commenced by the C.R.B.

These should assist considerably to lessen the traffic congestion and hazards which occur each winter.

At Ben Cairn the road will be widened and parking facilities will be improved. The second turntable parking lot will be one and a half miles on the Healesville side of the summit of Donna Buang.

The work is expected to be completed well before the coming winter.

With this improved access and a new lookout tower to be built at Donna Buang, the mountain should become more popular than ever.

1963

News report states that logging should be allowed in the closed water catchments controlled by the MMBW.

1964

Mathinna Falls!

After 40 Years

High up on the steep slope of Mt. Monda, in dense bush, the famous Mathinna Falls have been unsighted by any but Board of Works Forestry parties for 40 years - until Easter Sunday.

The old district guide-books, and a few survivors of Healesville's tourist hey day - give pride of place to the Falls as a district scenic spot.

They are 8 miles from Healesville on the steep slope of Mt. Monda, but for the past 40 years they could just as well have been on the slopes of Mt. Everest.

District maps all show this spot as "inaccessible," and a dozen parties which tried to locate it in recent years have agreed with the description.

Mathinna is one of the noted tourist attractions which was swallowed up in the Maroondah catchment area and, although nobody seems sure of the precise position as to public access, the Board of Works discourages exploration in the area.

However several residents of Healesville have been moved by the spirit of adventure and the challenge of the word "inaccessible", and have competed in attempts to re-locate Mathinna.

Overnight

One party almost succeeded, but an accident immobilised one member, who spent a night in the bush and was eventually ferried out across Maroondah lake only four weeks ago. Undeterred, another party spent Easter Sunday on the attempt and succeeded. How much of their success was due to good bushmanship and how much to good luck is still being hotly argued. Outsiders without some knowledge of the country would be foolish to venture into the jumble of valleys, ridges and gorges in this no-mans land, but the initiated know that any track or stream going down-hill must eventually land them at Healesville.

Bleak as the prospect appears, some turn of the wheel may yet re-open this vast scenic area to the people. There should be some way of giving limited access to tourists, as is done in many corresponding areas, without the slightest danger to water supply.

1964

Nine Lost Hikers  
Had Cold Night

Of a group of 27 visiting teenagers who scaled Mt. Juliet on Sunday, nine became detached from the main party on the return trip and spent a night in the cold and rain before being found at dawn on Monday.

Leader of the party was well-known tennis coach, Mr Keith Rogers, and the 27 young people were his pupils, whom he took on the hike for the declared purpose of getting them fit.

They reached the top of the mountain without incident, but on the return down the steep sides nine of them, including two girls, took the wrong track and eventually found themselves lost as darkness descended.

Huddled between two logs, they heard car horns, blowing earlier in the night but were unable to decide the direction from which the sounds were coming, and as a precaution decided to stay together.

At about 4 a.m. heavy rain began, and, as most of them were lightly clad and without shelter, they were very wet and exceedingly uncomfortable when Mr Rogers and a companion found them at dawn, after having searched during the previous night until 1 a.m.

However, after warming themselves at a log fire and doing justice to a barbecue breakfast they were little the worse for their adventure and returned home without further incident.

The usual spate of publicity from press, radio and TV stations accompanied the search, and the Healesville police station figured prominently in TV films of the group shown on Monday evening.

1964

#### Car Smash

#### Three Dead

Three men are dead and another injured as a result of a car accident on the highway near the Spur on Saturday afternoon last.

All were visitors to the district though the injured survivor is a former resident of Alexandra, and had accepted a lift back in the car after revisiting friends there.

The accident occurred at about 2.30 p.m. when the car apparently skidded on a curve near the 46 mile peg, struck a guide post, rolled down an embankment, and crashed sidewise into a tree two of the four occupants being thrown out.

Killed instantly were Messrs Noel Clyde Goode (31), of Ferntree Gully, and Barry John Page (24), of Tecoma.

A third Mr Colin Shalto Brown (27), of Ferntree Gully, was taken by Healesville Ambulance to the Austin Hospital, where he was admitted, suffering from serious head and internal injuries, which finally proved fatal.

The fourth young man, Mr. Geoffrey Hall, escaped with a broken arm and body contusions, and after treatment in the Healesville and District Hospital was later allowed to go home.

The car was completely wrecked, its condition being mute testimony of the force of the two major impacts.

1967

#### Plans for Donna Buang deferred

The committee of the Donna Buang Scenic Reserve were informed that their plans to have a modern amenities block and first aid room constructed at the turntable had been deferred by Government authorities, and these may not be completed until next year.

Parking fees will be charged at the turntable this season and the money will be used for track marking and sign posting in the area. This will be a valuable asset to all tourists.

At present there are three runs, and the committee plans to have a safe children's playing area, and ban the indiscriminate use of unsuitable tin and boards.

1969

#### Melbourne's "little Snowy"

In April this year the Board accepted a tender for the construction of the Thomson-Yarra tunnel. When completed in 1973 it will divert 20,000 million gallons of water a year from the Thomson River into the Upper Yarra and so boost the flow into metropolitan storages.

And just how much is 20,000 million gallons? Well, a tank with its base filling the entire arena of the Melbourne Cricket Ground would have to rise more than three miles to contain it all.

Yet the Thomson-Yarra Tunnel is only the first stage of the Thomson-Yarra development scheme.

The Thomson-Yarra Development is one of two major schemes designed to keep Melbourne's water supply ahead of requirements as the metropolis advances towards the 21st century - and a population of five million.

This scheme might be described as a "little Snowy" because it, to, involves borrowing from one river to pay another, as it were, by diverting the waters through a mountain tunnel. The Thomson, which rises to the north of the Baw Baws, flows generally south-east to join the Latrobe near Sale, in Gippsland, and empty into Lake Wellington. Now a goodly part of its waters will be made to flow west to serve Melbourne.

The scheme will be carried out in two, and possibly three, stages:

- The imminent construction of the 12-mile middle section of the Thomson-Yarra Tunnel (stages 1 and 1A)

- Extension of the tunnel east and west to tap the lower reaches of the Thomson.

The possible third stage would be the construction of a large dam on the Thomson which will have the dual purpose - to hold back seasonal flows for use as required by the metropolis and a guarantee supply to irrigation farms in the lower Thomson Valley. Rulings as to the sharing of the water have been determined by the Parliamentary Public Works Committee.

During the early planning stages, ordinance and geological survey maps provided a general picture - contours, river levels, types of rock, and so on- from which the approximate route of the diversion tunnel could be fixed. But more accurate information was needed for the preparation of detailed proposals. This was derived from a detailed geological report and from more accurate maps produced from aerial photographic surveys.

Next came core drilling near the proposed line of the tunnel and ground surveys to translate the project from paper to actual topographical locations. The Board's survey parties had to penetrate deeply into virtually unknown country. Wherever possible, the most modern technical equipment was pressed into use. For instance, a Lands Department tellurometer team was enlisted to save time and toil in the difficult mountain country.

Finally, detailed constructional plans were drawn and a contract was let in April 1969 for the construction of Stages 1 and 1A. The tunnel will be driven by a monster tunnel-boring machine.

Twentieth-century technology will play a big role in the work. For instance, that comparatively recently developed wonder, the laser (already in use in tunneling for the South-eastern Trunk Sewer) will be used to control the direction and slope of the tunnel. The laser throws a pencil-like parallel beam of light for, theoretically, an infinite distance. So setting a laser beam to the correct direction and declination makes control a simple matter of keeping the laser beam right in the middle of the tunnel excavation. Tunneling will begin from both ends and meet somewhere in the middle of a mountain, the breakthrough, thanks to laser control, being absolutely precise.

Another very modern precision instrument that will be used is the gyro-theodolite, which was developed for use in the immensely-deep mines of South Africa. It is used for determining azimuth. When oriented to true north on the surface, the gyro principle maintains orientation while it is lowered to the underground working area.

Construction of 23 miles of access roads alone will cost \$480,403.

Priority was given to this work to enable the contractors to make an early start on the tunneling. All operations are being coordinated by a system of radio communications.

Another prelude to construction proper will be the establishment of a small temporary town, complete with all normal amenities, to house three or four hundred workers and their wives and families.

1969

Snow is On

The snow season has begun in earnest on Mt. Donna Buang. Seven inches of snow at the turntable and 12 inches on the summit attracted 72 buses and 642 cars on July 26 and 27, ranger, Mr Bert Hamilton, reports.

New additions to facilities at the mountain are a sheltered barbecue area, a new walking track to the summit and toilets with changing rooms have been completed at the "10 mile" turntable and summit.

An access road to the summit will be completed before next winter. Parking areas, additional toilets and barbecues will also be erected.

1970

School has its own camp

Students at Box Hill Technical School have built themselves a modern, almost luxurious bush camp at Reefton, about 15 miles east of Warburton.

The first few campers moved in about three weeks ago and during the next year each of the 800 students at the school will spend a fortnight there.

The project started about 12 months ago, the idea of the principal Mr. G. Fountain, when the State Forest Commission gave the school three acres of land and permission to use more than 1000 acres.

All the buildings were constructed by the boys in school and transported to the site for erection.

As well as giving the students valuable educational training this cut the cost of the project - estimated at \$ 50,000 by half.

Parents gave valuable support by organising working bees at the site each weekend and by helping to raise the necessary \$ 25,000.

A fete at the school recently raised \$ 3,400. Parents built the ablution block containing five showers and toilets separate toilet facilities for the male and female staff with water pumped from the nearby Yarra River.

The boys worked hard felling timber and clearing blackberries, assisted by a tractor bought by the school to transport wood and gravel and level undergrowth with the fitted blades.

The camp now consists of five sleeping units 36 ft. by 12 ft., where 50 boys and about six staff can be accommodated at one time. Double decker bunk beds with electric blankets keep out the cold of the altitude's evenings.

The up-to-date kitchen is equipped with everything from an electric stove, deep fish frier, girdle and hot plate to a refrigerator and deep freeze.

This, the dining-room and laundry with automatic washing machine is the domain of Mrs. Kath Tanner, cook and resident caretaker at the camp with her husband Murray.

One of the couple's three sons is himself a student at Box Hill Technical and spends every weekend with his family at Reefton.

Mr. Tanner is a scout master at Warburton.

During their stay at the camp, boys take their lessons from the environment. Mathematics, surveying, physics have a practical aspect, and each week a representative of the Forestry Commission gives a lecture.

Plans are in hand to build a classroom and a recreational hall and to develop a flat area for volley ball and tennis courts.

An assault course is already under construction the future should include canoeing, archery, hiking and forest camping.

For a mere \$10 a week boys who are otherwise unable to get away from their usual surroundings can live in the bush.

Mr Fountain said they hope to make the camp available to other schools particularly in the metropolitan area.

1971

#### The Thomson - Upper Yarra Tunnel

A laser beam guides an 80 ton mechanical mole as it bores through Mount Gregory, in Gippsland, on the Thomson - Upper Yarra scheme.

The 12 mile long tunnel will divert water from the Thomson River into the Upper Yarra.

It is the longest ever attempted through hard rock using a mole as the primary tool. About a mile has been covered so far.

The tunnel is being cut on a 20.6 million M.M.B.W. contract by Atkinson - International (Aust) Ltd. and John Holland Constructions Pty. Ltd.

1971

#### Woman not found

A woman who disappeared in the Marysville area has not been found and a search for her has been terminated.

Mrs Daisy Stanford about 45, of Surrey Hills disappeared after parking and locking her car in Talbot Drive on Friday, August 24.

Police Rescue Squad and Forestry Commission workers have completely searched surrounding bush and the Taggart River before the search was called off on Friday.

An intense search for footprint in the area failed to find any trace of the woman.

Her husband has told police he and his wife visited the area regularly prior to their wedding, 25 years ago.

1972

#### Trees Slaughter is Shocking Residents

Residents, not just from Badger Creek but from many miles around, are shocked by the desolation apparent on the southern slopes of Mt. Riddell.

From as far afield as Lilydale and Coldstream, Mt Riddell is Healesville's best known landmark. And in all that 12 or 13 miles of highway approaching the mountain side is being robbed of trees.

Badger Creek residents have for days been hearing the chain saws and the thunderous crash of forest giants felled.

And it is to them, a terrifying reminder of a summer 10 years ago when Mt Riddell glowed bushfire red.

Over the past weeks great billowing smoke has again poured from Riddell and at night it has again glowed red as loggers burn off all that the timber jinkers have left.

The Board of Works calls of "forest harvesting" and promises "regeneration treatment to all logged areas."

The board says the logging is "part of an important research project concerned with testing the effect of forest harvesting and subsequent vegetation changes upon water yield and quality.

Mr George Conder of Allambee Guest House calls it a "disgrace."

He says : "For years now that view of Mt Riddell has given me a lift and made me glad to be leaving the city and heading for home.

"But now they've ravaged the beautiful mountain... it looks like an old dog with the mange."

Mrs Judith Donkin of Badger Weir Road says : " It's the saddest sight I've ever seen."

" I've lived all my life in the Badger Creek area and I thought the miserable subdivisions happening around here were bad enough, but what they're doing to our mountain is shocking."

From a reliable source came an interesting theory that the board has bowed to pressure from the Government who in turn have been pressured by logging interests to allow "forest harvesting" to be carried out in catchment areas.

Perhaps the board hopes it will prove, once and for all, that catchments are adversely affected by logging?

Mrs Mardie Lambert of Badger Creek says : " In the meantime we are the guinea pigs it seems."

"Our mountains will probably be eroded and our water supply silted up before logging companies can be convinced that catchments should be left alone."

"If they are not convinced, heaven help us. Mountains could be denuded throughout the state."

Her husband adds : "And it's a pity that people who have bought land here because they like the untouched environment will probably not, in a lifetime, see that mountain the way it was before the operation started."

1972

How Spur road got its name.

Blacks' Spur Rd. in Healesville Shire has an interesting history linked with the original Aborigines of the district.

Its name is one of the most frequently misspelt in Victoria. It's correct title remains Blacks' Spur Rd.

The name originated from the fact that long before a road or even a pack horse trail was envisaged, a large settlement of Aborigines was located between the Bonnie Doone and Acheron.

They were dispersed at Government insistence, as the mortality rate was high, and it was hoped that they would do better in a milder climate.

A large tract of land was made available to them in the area which eventually became the Corranderrk settlement, near Healesville.

This possibly was the first Government attempt to improve the lot of the aborigine.

Later came the Aborigines Protection Board.

In the same way as early explorers eventually crossed the Blue Mountains in NSW, the Aborigines struggled through rough country on the long trek to their "promised land."

They crossed the high country, rather than skirting the lowlands.

It was on this section of the range that the Aborigines made the last stage of their journey - consequently, the route became known to the few local settlers as the Blacks' Spur.

Pack-horse deliveries followed the mountain trail.

When the first road was put through, constructors kept to the route originally used by the blacks. It was called the Blacks' Spur road and the name became permanent.

The overall route later became the Maroondah Highway, but certain sections retained many local names.

1972

New Trees Growing on Mt Riddell

There's a new development on the sections of Mt Riddell where Board of Works clearing of trees aroused strong local protests earlier this year.

The Board of Works announced last week that eucalypt seedlings were already appearing where replanting had been undertaken.

The Board said the seedlings were appearing on its Coranderrk experimental area on the southern slopes of Mt. Riddell. The re-planting had been done, after the area had been cleared as part of the Board's



catchment hydrology research project. Mt Riddell is about four miles south-east of Healesville.

The Board's acting secretary, Mr. R. H. Engelsman said the experiment was designed to obtain information which would enable the Board to define an efficient water supply catchment management policy based on scientific results and more specifically, to test the effect of controlled logging and regeneration practices on catchment values.

Since 1954, there had been continual collection of data from each of the catchments in the research area - Picaninny Creek (130 acres), Slip Creek (154 acres) and Blue Jacket Creek (160 acres).

Following the correlation of data from each catchment, the first treatment was applied to the Picaninny area. It involved the utilisation of all merchantable timber by local contractors under Board supervision. The area was then burnt during autumn, producing receptive seedbed conditions for the sowing of eucalypt seed in late April and early May.

Mr. Engelsman said preparations were being made for the treatment of the Blue Jacket Area which would involve a similar utilisation operation.

Regeneration, however, would be permitted to occur naturally, without silvicultural treatment.

1972

Cogs in the Wheel

The forest officer

Melbourne's water supply comes from about 230,000 acres of catchments in the mountain forests to the north-east and east, so the Board maintains a Forestry Section within the Watersheds Department. The Section is staffed by specialists headed by Bruce Fryer, a graduate of the Victorian School of Forestry, Creswick. Before coming to the Board eight years ago. Mr. Fryer was a field officer with the Forests Commission. His responsibilities as Forest Officer to the Board obviously include fire prevention and suppression, security, forest mapping, inventory, and a host of related activities. Not so obvious is his concern with the actual composition of the forests on which the quantity and quality of the yield depends.

Until now, the Board's catchment acquisition has kept ahead of water-supply requirements; but rising costs and rapidly expanding population have accented the urgency of extracting maximum yield from the available areas.

The relationship between vegetation and water yields is extremely complicated and not yet fully understood; therefore, any projected change in the state of the forests must be approached with caution, for the cost of error could be high - it might well mean a drastically reduced yield for 80 to 100 years hence, that being the rotation age of a mature forest crop.

Only a proportion of the rain falling on the catchments reaches the storages; climatic, vegetational, geological and geographical factors all play a part, with evaporation absorption by the vegetation, and deep seepage contributing to the losses.

Of course, 100% yield could be achieved by clearing the catchments of all vegetation and covering them with concrete, but cost apart, the aesthetic result would be deplorable - and even if it were not, a period of very heavy rain would see the run-off roaring down into the catchment dams, filling them rapidly, and then tumbling over the spillways before it could be transferred to reserve storages.

A catchment with deep soils, and protected by a good vegetative cover, stores water in the soil mantle for continuous release to feeder streams, and thus modifies spasms of spate and dry.

The problem then, is to discover what sort of vegetative cover will provide the maximum yield of good quality water and release it as evenly as possible throughout the year. Overseas research has indicated that the species of a vegetation in a catchment, together with its physical state, has a ver considerable effect on the run-off from a watershed; so, in 1954, the Board instituted an hydrology research program its purpose is to obtain information that will lead to the defining of an efficient catchment policy on a scientific basis. It includes investigation of the effect of timber harvesting upon water supply.

This long-term investigation by the Forestry and Water Supply Design Sections, involves a number of other disciplines, operating within the Board, including chemistry, bacteriology and electronics.

The work is centred mainly in three creeks in Board property at Coranderrk, which lies outside the water supply catchment boundaries. The catchments of these creeks average about 150 acres each. Their vegetation is similar to that in much of the water supply catchments. Basic instrumentation on the three streams was achieved in 1958, and their respective performances have been calibrated using the data obtained since then. The performances of any two catchments under undisturbed conditions can now be accurately predicted by reference to the third. Once this has been established, the next stage of research could get under way. One stream is being retained in its present condition as a control. The second has been treated by conventional forest-harvesting followed by silvicultural operations to promote a fresh eucalypt crop. Next season, the third will be subjected to logging treatment with regeneration being allowed to occur naturally.

The performances of both areas following the treatments and subsequent regrowth will be checked against the control and compared with the performances that would have occurred had they been left in their natural state.

In addition, the quality of the water will be assessed at all stages because it is possible that increased yield could only be achieved at the expense of a falling-off in quality e.g. unacceptable changes in acidity, color, turbidity, bed load movement, dissolved chemicals and bacterial performance. Many other factors that affect streamflow are also being assessed, such as "throughfall", "stem flow", "fog drip", soil moisture storage and so on.

The mind boggles at the difficulty of relating so many interacting factors and deriving from them a picture of ideal catchment condition. Fortunately, a computer will be available to assist staff in sorting out and analysing the massive amount of data which comes from a project such as Coranderrk. These studies will result in a deeper understanding of the hydrology of forested catchments. They could well point the way to catchment management practices that, by improving catchment efficiency, will relieve Melbourne o water anxieties for even further into the future than is already promised by the vast construction programs.

1972

Harvesting and storing more water is the only practical anti-drought insurance policy

Melbourne generally has enjoyed a remarkably dry, mild and sunny winter; but there was some concern among some members of the public as they watched the streamflows into the storages dropping lower and lower. The critical drought conditions of 1967/1968 are still fresh in their memories as the driest year in Melbourne's 132 years of history.

The drastic water restrictions that had to be imposed in 1967/68 and the anxiety in regard to the replenishment of the depleted storages were soon forgotten when the great drought finally broke...and most people

relaxed into the comforting belief that it couldn't happen again for another 100 years anyway!

Yet it was made clear - the law of averages and statistics notwithstanding - the dry years and an even worse drought in the near future were at least a possibility even though it might not be very probable. This year has provided ample justification for such an apparently pessimistic outlook.

More water - and a place to store it

Since the Board must concern itself with possibilities, 1967 saw the initiation of a program to provide more water resources for Melbourne to carry it over a series of dry but not necessarily drought years. It is economically to provide for unrestricted supply of water under drought conditions.

The augmentation program consists of first, the permanent diversions of Starvation, McMahons, Armstrong and Cement Creek, which works have been completed; second, the permanent diversion of the Thomson River into the Upper Yarra Reservoir and, third the creation of a vast new storage in the Cardinia Creek Valley which will store the surplus waters from the Upper Yarra and Thomson catchments in good seasons as a carry-over supply for dry years. It is now five years since the great drought, and both the Thomson and Cardinia projects are approaching completion. These are vast projects - the one concerned with driving a tunnel 12 miles long, deep under the Gippsland mountains, the other with building nearly three miles of embankment dams to heights of up to 260 feet. Both make huge demands on time and money.

The Thomson-Yarra scheme was designed to be implemented in stages, over a number of years thus making it possible to bring additional water into the Yarra by the earliest possible date.

The Thomson-Yarra tunnel

The first stage is the driving of a 12-mile central section of 12-feet diameter tunnel. This will bring some Thomson water into the Yarra with a minimum of time and work - but "minimum" in this case is a purely relative term! Even before the work on the tunnel itself could begin, an enormous amount of preliminary work was required.

More than 20 miles of costly access roads had to be constructed - costly because they had to be pushed through difficult mountain country and, furthermore, had to be capable of carrying extremely heavy traffic in extreme weather conditions - multiwheel vehicles transporting heavy equipment as well as the regular conveyance of workers to and from the sites of the adits leading to the tunnel faces.

A township, situated about 16 miles from both the Thomson and Yarra portals, was another expensive preliminary, since there were no centres within practicable distance which could accommodate the work force of hundreds of tunnellers, surface workers, administrative staff, machine operators, maintenance personnel, and electricians - not to mention the engineers.

The Thomson water will be channeled into the Easton portal, whence it will flow down a steep adit to the tunnel proper. After gravitating along the tunnel for almost 12 miles, it will rise by another steep adit to the Yarra portal and spill into the Yarra.

Deadline : Spring 1974

Originally the contractor proposed using a tunnel-boring machine, but the rate of advance in the rock he encountered was too slow as well as being too costly. It soon became necessary to revert to conventional

drill-and-blast techniques. The failure of the machine to cope with conditions caused many months' delay; but such has been the rate of progress since, that the project is now progressing very satisfactorily. The work goes on around the clock - day shift, swing shift and "graveyard" shift - six days a week. Three faces are being worked - one from the Yarra portal and the other two from the Thomson portal which open to an adit that descends nearly a half mile by a one-in-four gradient. From this approach the tunnellers are driving east to break into the Easton tunnel and west to meet the drive from the Yarra portal. The breakthrough on the eastern side should be made in November and the two drives on the western side are expected to meet up early in the New Year.

There will, however, still remain about 18 months of work before the tunnel is brought into service. Although most of it will be unlined, in some sections support measures will be necessary. In some places concreteing, using a rapid-setting spray-on-mix, will be required. Then a considerable array of equipment will have to be dismantled and removed from the tunnel - miles of rail, trucks, muckers, ventilation systems, the electrical installation, and so on.

The engineers are confident it can be brought into operation in 1973 if required and that all will be in readiness to divert spring flows from the Thomson in 1974.

Meanwhile, the metropolis is experiencing a dry year and 20,000,000 gallons a day is being drawn from the Thomson and West Tanjil rivers, along a channel constructed in 1967.

1972

#### Water Tunnel News Finish

The largest "hard rock" tunnel in the world is taking shape near Warburton.

Its purpose is to provide enough "water reserve" to stop gardens drying up, stock dying of thirst, and areas on a Melbourne "tap water" supply from facing water restrictions.

The Board of Works announced last Friday that the State was faced with severe drought this summer.

The water storage gain for October was 700 million gallons. Normally in October it is 8000 million gallons.

The tunnel under construction is 12 miles long and 11 feet in diameter.

It will divert waters from the Thomson River into the Upper Yarra River and cost the Board of Works nearly \$21 million.

The tunnel is the longest attempted in the world through hard rock - using a mechanical "mole" as the primary tool.

It will benefit Lilydale as much as it will benefit the Upper Yarra and Yarra Valley areas.

It will ensure an adequate water supply nearer Melbourne.

The Board of Works with this tunnel and the huge Cardinia Reservoir is engaged in its biggest ever water supply construction program.

1973

Barry J. Rankin, 23, of Fumina, near Neerim, was killed in a railway accident at the Thomson project last Wednesday.

He was thrown from a locomotive in the tunnel.

Mr Rankin was a carpenter employed by Mr G. Stillman of Warburton.

Work in the area for construction of a tunnel to carry water from Thomson River to the Upper Yarra Dam was started in 1969.

The break-through of the tunnel was completed this year.

A spokesman for Atkinson and Holland, Mr Bob Hall, said the accident rate was low and every precaution was taken.

There have been three fatal accidents in the tunnel.

1973

Two hours trapped in truck

A 15 year old boy, Robert Herbert, was trapped in the cabin of a truck for almost two hours when the truck driven by his father skidded down an embankment.

The accident occurred last week on the road four miles on the Narbethong side of the Acheron Gap.

Robert's father Mr Austen Herbert, had shortly before purchased the truck, and was driving to Barnwatha, near Albury.

He moved to the side of the road to allow an oncoming car room to pass. The soft edges gave way, the truck skidded and went down the embankment lodging against a tree approx. 12 ft. down. This broke the drop of about 100 ft.

Mr Herbert was able to extricate himself - but the Warburton police and two tow truck drivers and several other helpers took almost two hours to free the boy who was jammed in the badly damaged cabin. One false move could have proved fatal.

1973

STOLEN! -WW1 relic

A pair of powerful binoculars the property of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, has been stolen from the look-out tower on Mt St. Leonard, between Healesville and Toolangi.

The binoculars, a souvenir of World War I, were valued at from \$500 to \$1000 and are said by the board to be irreplaceable.

They were mounted on a stand and were invaluable for fire spotting in the mountains.

The thief broke into the look-out and removed the heavy pair of binoculars from the stand.

Det. Sgt. John Carroll, who is investigating the theft of the binoculars, said they came into the possession of the board in 1946.

They were so powerful that the names of ships in the bay could be read on a clear day.

The theft of the binoculars is a serious loss to the board's fire spotters and could hamper their work in the bush-fire season.

Det. Sgt. Carroll appeals to anybody who has information that could result in the recovery of the binoculars to get in touch with him at Lilydale CIB or contact Healesville police.

1973

Deer shot, left to die

A female deer was shot and killed at the Upper Yarra Dam on Tuesday night, September 29.

It had been standing just inside the closed gate of the dam and was shot through the neck.

It was left to wander around until it bled to death.

A spokesman for the Fisheries and Wildlife Department said the slaughter would be investigated.

A worker at the dam said that it was possible for people to get within ten feet of the deer.

"It's about time something was done to stop the senseless slaughter of deer in the Upper Yarra Valley," he said.

"Every weekend people in vehicles come into the area loaded with dogs and hound the deer until they can't run, then they are shot."

District forester at Marysville, Mr Peter Brown, said recently that deer would become plentiful in the highlands if deer shooters could be controlled.

"They are keeping the numbers down," he said, during a recent tour of the Marysville Forest area by neighboring shire councillors.

1973

#### Police Alert for Deer - Killers

Warburton police and members of the Board of Works at the Upper Yarra Dam are on the alert for people shooting and killing deer in the area.

The police said that early this month, a deer was shot through the lower jaw and left to die.

After this incident, one person was charged and will appear in the Warburton magistrates court.

His offences include hunting in a restricted area.

A Warburton resident said : "These beautiful animals are diminishing in number and every effort is being made to preserve them."

1973

#### Second deer shot at dam

A second deer has been shot at the Upper Yarra Dam within a month.

They were in protected areas and were virtual pets.

Both animals, which were easily approachable and often fed by visitors to the Upper Yarra Dam, had been critically wounded and left to die in agony. As a result of the first shooting which took place last September, officers of the Fisheries and Wildlife Department stepped up surveillance activities in the area.

This resulted in the apprehension of three people.

They are expected to face Warburton court in the near future, one person on two separate charges.

A spokesman for the Fisheries and Wildlife said officers will continue to pay attention to the area.

1974

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works is making a study of water run-off in the Coranderrk and North Maroondah areas of the Upper Yarra Valley.

It is believed that results from the study will influence the board when it evaluates its present closed catchment policy.

Considerable pressure, especially from the Sawmillers Association, is being put on the board to make its catchment areas available to the public for open multi purpose forests.

Millers claim that thinning milling and continual generation is beneficial to forests and is not detrimental to the water supply.

With the present timber shortage at a critical stage, their argument may gain support.

The board, however, claims that it has not been proven that open multi-purpose catchment areas are in the best interests of the public.

In its twice yearly publication, "Living City", the MMBW expresses its feeling toward closed catchments.

It says that Melbourne has traditionally drawn its supplies of fresh water from catchments in the densely forested mountain ranges east of the city.

And since the earliest days of supply, catchment areas have been used solely for water harvesting.

The policy of closed or single use catchments was adopted by the State Government in the 1860s and has since been pursued by the Board.

The policy has prevented pollution of Melbourne's water supply catchments as well as preserving a small part of Victoria in its natural state.

The Board is strongly of the opinion that the closed catchment policy must remain in force until scientific studies determine whether a multiple use policy can be safely adopted.

The Board's research in two eucalypt forests near Healesville will be extensive and should provide the material for a proper evaluation of the situation.

Research will determine the effects of water quality and quantity of various types of forest management.

The Coranderrk experimental data is being obtained by a network of rain gauges to measure stream flows.

Plot experimental investigations using ground level trough gauges have also been established to measure the influence of vegetation on the actual amount of water reaching the soil.

Soil moisture storage is monitored by a network of soil moisture boreholes.

Treatment of the three catchments began in 1970 after the establishment of a satisfactory correlation one to the other and an analysis from 1955 of stream discharge against other factors such as time, rainfall, soil moisture storage, silt loads and water quality.

The Slip Creek catchment has been retained in its natural state to act as a control catchment while Piccaninny and Blue Jacket catchments have been subjected to treatment.

The treatment in 1970 consisted of construction of the necessary roads to service the subsequent timber harvesting operation.

In 1971 within the Piccaninny catchment trees were harvested for sawlog and pulp-wood, and debris burnt, and the area resown with eucalypt seed to promote a dense new forest crop.

The burning off was a controlled operation to remove accumulated debris and promote a suitable seed bed for regeneration.

The operation within Blue Jacket catchment was less intense and was directed towards maximum production of sawlogs with no burning or reseedling - natural regrowth being allowed to occur.

The response of the treated catchments was evaluated immediately after treatment and this evaluation is continuing during a recovery period to extend over a number of years. Post treatment collection of information on the water production performance of the treated catchments, with their changed forest cover, has continued.

The analysis of data from Slip Creek will give a guide to the probable performance of these catchments had they been retained in their original state.

1974

#### A Good Fall Ends Donna 'Famine'

Very little snow has fallen on Mt. Donna Buang for several years. Consequently, the number of visitors to the mountain has dropped considerably. The result last year was that the Donna Buang Reserve Committee funds were in the red! And you can't run a reserve without rangers.

This year only an inch of snow dusted the mountain in May.

June fared badly. Usually the season gets under way about the middle of the month. This year, however the snow depth board in the town recorded a consistent nil.

But July is trying to make amends.

After a "dry" first Sunday, several hundred cars the following week found to their surprise a good covering of snow on the summit.

And when the one and only bus arrived, during a snowfall which continued throughout the day, ecstatic squeals echoed through the trees as delighted youngsters tumbled out into the snow.

Despite grading, the last mile to the summit was too icy for traffic; and a minor traffic jam occurred.

But there was snow and everyone was happy.

After several lean snow years Mr G Said and his partner Mr J. Borg found that running the kiosk, after the long run from Melbourne's suburbia, was not a paying proposition. Now the business is in the hands of Mr Heinz Psuetzenreuter and his wife Ada.

The young couple run the Warburton House Holiday Flats, with Heinz also working as a bricklayer.

Mrs Reuter (they use that abbreviation at times) well remembers last Sunday. While returning to Warburton for extra supplies, she felt her car slipping sideways. Touching the break, in almost a split second she reversed her direction, facing uphill instead of down, and then slewed into the bank. The supplies arrived in time, however, as a slightly bent front fender was the only damage.

1974

Cr. raps plan to 'open up' dams

Croydon City Cr Noel Smith claims that arguments to open the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works closed water catchments to the public have been made on emotional grounds.

1974

Vandals blast the Blow Hole

Vandals have gelignited the Blow Hole at the Big Peninsula, McMahon's Creek.

Two members of the Upper Yarra Angling Club who were fishing in the area recently heard the blast and went to the Blow Hole, but they were too late to see who was responsible.

Anglers estimate that the damage caused by the blast will ruin fishing in the area for up to four years.

1974

Mining to be 'a benefit'

Large scale mining operations in the Reefton area would benefit the region, not destroy it, a goldminer there said this week.

"The area as it is now is completely useless", Mr Ted Minifie, of McMahon's Creek said.

It was riddled with dangerous holes, relics of goldmining activities of over a century ago.

Scarred

It was badly scarred by eyesores - gravel pits covering some four to five acres once used by the Country Roads Board and Forestry Commission.

"They're full of stagnant water and during winter months are just breeding grounds for bacteria." Mr Minifie said.

The region had very little landscape mining operations could damage.

Few trees.

"All that's there is scrub, blackberries."



The Save the Yarra Valley Committee is protesting strongly against Lone Star Explorations intentions to mine the area.

(The company has three applications with the Mines Department to carry out open-cut mining there. If successful it will buy Mr Minifie out.)

Mr Holding stated after making a brief inspection of the proposed mining region that he believed large scale mining there would destroy the area's scenic value.

He said he would do everything in his power to prevent mining being allowed there.

He has since written to the Minister for Conservation, Mr Borthwick, asking him to stop the scheme from going through.

In an article in this paper on June 26, the Save Yarra Valley Committee said it had already written to the Premier, Mr Hamer, Environmental Protection Authority and Mines Department of local ratepayers' objections to the Lone Star proposals.

It is planned to send petitions signed by ratepayers to the Upper Yarra Council and to Mr Borthwick.

It said it would seek expert advice from university geologists and mining specialists on the effects of siltage and heavy alkali deposits seeping into stock water stream flows from large mining operations.

It also intended to discover who the shareholders and backers of Lone Star were.

Mr Minifie believe most people - particularly the protesters - were unaware of the stringent controls the State Government had over mining.

He said mining operations were restricted to areas which were known, through extensive investigation, to contain gold.

"So the mining company would not be digging up the valley at random, shifting houses and farms in the process, as some people believe", Mr Minifie said.

Complete

An onus was placed on the mining group to restore the area to its original conditions once mining operations were complete.

In this case, Lone Star had indicated that it would vastly improve the area by re-forestation by filling in the gravel pits, which constitute part of the proposed mining area, and by excavating through and re-filling all present mine holes.

Mr Minifie added that there wasn't even the slightest chance of mining operations polluting the Yarra River - another fear protesters held.

"When we bought the mine five years ago people protested on this ground" he said.

"They used to say we were polluting the Yarra even before we began operating."

However, when the relevant government authorities went up to investigate, they found the biggest pollution as sewerage from farms and the township he said.

Mining regulations demanded that all water run-off from crushing plants be channeled into a settling dam system for purification, he said.

Blackfish thrived in his final purification dam.

"If Lone Star do get the lease, it will create a lot of employment in the area.

"In the 1880s, some 1743 people were employed in the mines here.

"It would be an enormous tourist attraction.

"We used to have an average 50-60 school children a week visit it.

"Pensioners also come out to see it."

It would boost national revenue.

"Many people don't know that for every dollars worth of gold in the national reserve bank has to cover it." he said.

Mr Minifie indicated that if Lone Star's application were refused, he would continue to mine in the area.

He said he had already poured over \$100,000 into equipment - he needed to continue to work it to get some of his outlay back.

"But you really need to let somebody in to mine it properly.

"I believe there is atleast 40 to 50 years of mining left in this district.

Managing Director of Lone Star Exploration, Mr Paul Teas Junior, also said this week : "What people don't seem to understand, as far as we are concerned, is that we would not do anything to the detriment of the Yarra Valley.

"I can't emphasise that enough

"We do think there could be commercial gold in the area.

"Assuming that this is so, our first consideration would be how to get this gold so as to leave the area in not only as good, but in better condition than we found it."

Restoration

Mr Teas said his company would consult with the forestry and Fisheries and Wildlife Departments, conservationists and experts in relevant fields about possible restorative techniques.

He said if there were any possibility that the valley could not be restored satisfactorily after mining operations were complete, then his company would scrap the whole proposal.

Mr Teas added that the company was Australian owned, despite having three Americans heading it. He himself is American.

He also indicated that the majority of its shareholders were Australian.

1974

Gold Mining is blocked

Permits to mine gold in the Yarra Valley at Reefton have been refused, the Minister for Conservation, Mr Borthwick, has announced.

Notice of refusal for three applications by the Lone Star Mining Co. appeared in the Government Gazette. Mr. Borthwick said he had discussed the applications with the Minister for Mines, Mr Balfour, who recommended the applications be refused. Lone Star Exploration N.L. gave notice of their applications to mine gold at Reefton last May.

Mr. Borthwick said residents feared the intended sinking, driving and open cut mining could destroy the beauty and character of the Upper Yarra.

1975

Artist and conservationist, Neil Douglas, last week found the headwaters of the Yarra River.

Mr Douglas described the experience as a "magic pilgrimage that led me literally to one of Nature's hidden springs - the headwaters of the Yarra - turned out to be a waterfall under the earth."

The river's beginning marked the end of the artist's survey of the Yarra Valley for his exhibition, Yarra Valley Heritage.

He said the search started in an attempt to live up to the "high sounding" title of the exhibition.

The exhibition, a feature of Moomba, will open at Georges Gallery on February, 24.

It was commissioned by the Yarra Valley Conservation League to draw attention to the beauty of the valley.

The idea for an exhibition grew from the success of an earlier exhibition commissioned by Westernport conservation groups to help fight to preserve it from development.

Mr Douglas said : "I wanted to find the very spot where the Yarra springs out of the earth."

"The Yarra of course is fed by five or six streams, but the main one of these is the Yarra Creek, also known as Falls Creek."

"Since it is the largest I decided it was logical to treat its beginning as the head-waters of the Yarra."

"The Yarra is 112 km long and its valley has unique features, magnificent aspects that people don't treasure... billabongs, the red box forests full of orchids, and forests larger than any others in the world that are within 100 km. of a big city."

"These are features that make the Yarra unique."

"Naturally I had to see where the river began, and its source turned out to be the strangest feature of all."

"We located the ridge that divides the Thompson, Goulbourn and Yarra catchments."

"It was surrounded by a wild bush garden of shining gums, heath and tea-tree scrub, dense sweet smelling bushes, several kinds of olearia (white daisies), various mints, splendid myrtle beeches, clumps of mountain flux lily, and three metre long hopper ant nests."

"Underfoot was a carpet of scaevola, carpet kunzea and carpet fern."

"In the bog itself there was a whole collection of tussock grasses, including the giant tussock grass two metres high."

"I have never seen so many big tussocks before."

"Nor have I seen so many big tussocks before."

"In one spot there was a little rivulet winding through the bog, only 15 cm. wide 15 cm. deep and five metres long. The Yarra in miniature snaking around in a sphagnum bog and surrounded by sun orchids."

"Past experience of following rivers to their source has taught me that their beginnings are always miraculous."

"That is the only way to describe the start of the Yarra."

"It literally starts as a tiny waterfall you can't see."

"The first part of the Yarra bubbles out of the ground almost on the crest of the Dividing Range."

"Surrounding the spring is a big fallen tree covered with moss, tree ferns and mother of ferns and three metres away a 10 - 15 tonne granite boulder, as old as the planet itself and a symbol of where it had all started, and how it had all endured."

"I scooped a little pool so I could taste the water."

"The earth there is granite sand and the bottom of the pool glistened with mica."

"Suddenly I heard a little hidden waterfall in the bank of the earth above the point where the water emerges."

"You couldn't see it and you could only hear it if you sat in silence."

"It had obviously worn a course through the earth, around the roots of the old burnt tree trunk underneath the fern."

"This marvellous mysterious, secret source of the Yarra set the scale of values for the exhibition."

"It epitomises Nature's way of exceeding our highest expectations wherever we uncover a little more of her mystery."

"It shows how Nature invariably repays us no matter how minute or detailed our investigation, how her ways excite the imagination and temporarily stun the senses."

"Above all, at this point in man's development, it is an invitation to preserve the little that is left of the Yarra Valley's heritage."

Mr Douglas said the warning signs were within a few metres of the head of the Yarra in the form of an introduced subterranean clover and pussy willows, the legacy of timber cutting.

## Donna Buang hut raided

Vandals used a chain saw to cut their way into the Forestry rangers hut at the Donna Buang 10 mile turntable.

The kiosk has been burgled twice this season.

When Heinz and Ada Reuter arrived last Saturday morning to prepare their "hot dogs", soup (not all the 57 varieties!), coffee, etc., they found that thieves had broken into the turntable kiosk. To gain an entrance, roofing iron had been lifted and a hole bashed through the ceiling.

While they put on a party, the thieves made themselves comfortable by using the kerosene heater. When they left (through the hole in the ceiling) they took \$50 worth of soft drinks.

This was the second time in a few weeks that the Reuters have lost \$50 worth of stock.

Bashed.

The first aid and rescue shelter at the summit also suffered. An unsuccessful attempt was made to bash open the door to the phone room.

The door will need extensive repairs.

Rangers, kiosk owners, and St. John volunteer are disappointed (to say the least) that buildings and services established to help Donna Buang visitors, should suffer in this way.

1976

## Rescue Room Smashed

Vandals have wrecked the interior of the First aid and Rescue building on Mt. Donna Buang.

They also wrecked the women's toilet block.

Damage is estimated at \$1000.

Gaining entrance to the first-aid rooms by cutting off two heavy padlocks and forcing the lock, the systematically set about destroying everything.

They smashed tables and chairs with axe, and a first-aid cupboard and bench and ruined the large heating stove.

Sweeping all first aid supplies from the cupboard shelves, they left the floor littered with broken bottles and ruined utensils.

AWASH.

The vandals also turned on the 44 gallon water supply, leaving the whole place awash.

Padlocks were wrenched from iron shutters, windows were shattered and a phone damaged.

After smashing the iron clad room, they turned to the scenic reserve toilet block.

Here they smashed all six of the toilet pans in the ladies section and left the washroom flooded.

The "men's" fared a little better. A tap was removed and the urinal cistern smashed from its fixture and left spurting water as it dangled from its copper pipe.

Blankets, gas bottles, lamp and burner were stolen.

A trail of bandages, dressings and containers were strewn along a nearby road.

The vandalism was discovered by PMG party checking a Forestry Fire tower phone fault.

Said Bill Kilroy : "The mess was awful. The place was a shambles - unbelievable. I was disgusted.

The work that St. John does on the mountain is a necessity.

1976

"There are two types of water supply authority, those with closed catchments and those who wish they had them." The time-proven philosophy behind those words has formed the basis of the MMBW's policy relating to the management of Melbourne's water supply catchment areas for the past 85 years. Happily, Melbourne has a realistic control over its water supply catchments which is the envy of most water supply authorities in the world. But there are very strong demands that the heavily-timbered catchments north-east and east of Melbourne be opened up for commercial timber and recreational pursuits, with the result that scientific studies are being undertaken to determine whether the current 'water supply only' policy toward the catchments is to be changed. Put more simply, it's ...

A question of management.

Firstly, what is a catchment? In water supply terms, it's basically an elevated and forested watershed of a stream where rain falls in sufficient quantities to provide a residual amount of water over and above the forest requirements. This residue appears as run-off to form small rivulets which, in turn, grow in size and gather momentum to form creeks and rivers. We then dam these creeks and rivers, or sometimes simply divert some of their flow, for our water supply.

This sequence of events has its genesis in the hydrologic - or water - cycle, whereby in what is virtually a gigantic distillation process, the sun's heat evaporates sea water, giving off salt-free vapor which rises into the atmosphere to form clouds, and where the lower temperature and pressure of high altitudes cause it to condense and then be precipitated as rain, hail, sleet or snow.

But fresh water is not as plentiful as one might reasonably expect. The oceans, in fact, comprise 97% of the world's water and only 3% in fresh water, which originated from the oceans through evaporation and precipitation anyway!

While Australia overall, is a very continent, there are many areas which receive good average annual rainfalls, although not always on a regular basis. Melbourne, for example, has a respectable average annual rainfall at about 660mm - and in the upper sections of the catchment areas the average can be up to nearly three times that amount - but in dry and drought periods the rainfall figures can plummet alarmingly. It's then we start to wonder where all the rain has gone, and perhaps begin to appreciate how valuable a resource fresh water really is.

If we could rely on bountiful rainy seasons year in and year out, it would put an entirely different perspective on the provision of water to communities such as Melbourne, but instead we have to make use of what is, at best, a very unpredictable and very frustrating situation - total reliance on the natural climate cycle.

For this reason a water supply authority such as the Board of Works needs to know all it can about catchment areas from which it harvests water - the conditions that provide the best quality and highest quantities of run-off; the natural processes that take place within the catchment areas; whether other activities might be detrimental to their prime purpose.

Activities restricted

Melbourne draws its water supply from forested catchments south of the great dividing range, mainly from the Yarra catchment, and more recently from the catchment of the Upper Thomson. These catchments are 'closed' for all but water supply purposes to restrict any activities which could adversely affect water yield and quality. Soil erosion is one thing that must be guarded against, for example, because it could lead to further problems such as siltation and coloring of the water.

But because of increasing calls to also allow timber harvesting and certain recreational activities in its catchment areas, the Board has for

some years been involved in an extensive program of scientific research - known as forest hydrology - to determine future management policies for the catchments.

The studies, involving hydrologists, foresters and engineers from the Board's Water Supply Division and Watersheds Department, are being carried out at Coranderrk and North Maroondah, two eucalypt forest areas some 55 km north-east of Melbourne.

At Coranderrk, three adjacent slopes of Mt Riddell - and covered mainly in old growth mountain ash - were selected for various forms of 'treatment'. One was left in its natural state to act as control. The second catchment was cleared of all trees, the ground was burnt to provide an ideal seed bed for mountain ash which regenerates quickly after fire, and then the area was sown with mountain ash seed. The third catchment was selectively logged - i.e., only mature trees suitable for saw milling were removed - and natural regrowth was allowed to occur. Results of the Coranderrk experiments are expected some time in 1978.

At North Maroondah, where the trees are a regrowth crop from the widespread bushfires of 1939, the Board is investigating the effects of water yield of the careful and selective removal of some trees from new-growth mountain ash forest. The answers to some very important questions are being sought - e.g. can the existing forests be thinned to increase water yield without affecting water quality? If so, how many trees should be removed? When and how?

#### Cost a Main Factor

You might well ask what all this really means. Well, the Board feels that these controlled scientific studies are the only way to determine whether there should be any change in the 'closed catchment' policy which has served Melbourne so well for so many years.

There are costs as well as benefits in making catchment areas available for purposes additional to water harvesting, but multiple uses would certainly lead to comprehensive treatment of the entire water supply and thus add greatly to the cost of the system. And this is a major consideration, bearing in mind that the objective of the Board's water supply program is to provide a safe and adequate water supply as economically as possible.

The Board is specific that any water supply authority - if it is to be responsible for the quality of the water it produces - must have a very big say in the control of activities which are allowed within catchments, both to minimise any effects on water yield and water quality and to minimise the cost of remedial measures.

All this is not to deprecate the views of those calling for multiple use. The Board is saying only that the supporters of such proposals have not yet been proven correct as far as the situation in Melbourne is concerned. And until such time as there is sufficient evidence that multiple use of Melbourne's catchment area can be compatible with the harvesting of water, the existing policy will remain in force.

It's not a case of the Board being overprotective towards attractive forest areas which undoubtedly have a lot to offer in the way of timber resources and as areas for recreation. Rather, it's ensuring that any decisions made are based on the best scientific evidence and are in the best interests of future generations of Melburnians.

1977

Chairlift idea 'no' on finance.

The Ministry of Tourism has rejected a suggestion that it finance the construction of a chairlift from Warburton to the top of Mt. Donna Buang.

The proposal was put forward by Upper Yarra Council, following a massive traffic jam on the Donna Buang Road during the winter.

Cr. Norm Golding said at a recent meeting it was obvious that the road could not handle tourist traffic at peak times.

He said recurring traffic jams would inevitably lead to pressure on the CRB to widen the road.

"Rather than have that happening, we should be thinking of alternatives now."

"The money would be better spent on a chairlift up Donna Buang.

1978

That's Life  
with H.G. Davis  
at Donna Buang

Ten Mile Tears

Hold it! Don't expect tragedy

Instead, It was the happiest, most unexpected, coincidental meeting of friends you could imagine. And the tears were pure Italian tears of joy!

Twenty-five years ago Romolo Cardalisco and his wife Iole decided to leave their home in Benevento and migrate to Argentina where they settled in Buenos Aires.

Iole's friend and neighbor, Marie Sgalia was saddened by the separation, especially as she had no husband to ease the parting.

Five years later she too, migrated - but to Australia, where she met and married Leo Sforzati.

Fathers Day.

After spending 20 years in Argentina, the Cardaliscos decided that Australia was the place for them, and for the past five years have lived in Victoria.

On Father's Day with their daughter Maria and her husband Frank Bruno they carried out their plan to visit snow covered Donna Buang.

The Occasion was a special one for Father's Day this year coincided with the birthdays of both Maria and Frank.

It also happened that Leo and Maria Sforzati had also made the decision to spend that day on Donna, and there at the Ten Mile turntable met her friend Iole - after 25 years - without having even the faintest idea that she and her family were any closer than Argentina.

And what a meeting!

What a celebration!

And what tears of joy!

Joyful news indeed!

They just had to share it with us, though total strangers.

So we rejoiced with them, with beverages of our choosing, wished each other health and happiness.

1979

A wheel that lit the lonely night.

A part of the Upper Yarra's history has been brought back to life. It recalls the nights Board of Works men spent at the only place in the area they could relax while building the Upper Yarra Reservoir - McVeigh's pub.

At one stage Charlie Mitchell, Dame Nellie Melba's brother, came from Lilydale to help run the hotel. And if one old Board of Works man's memory serves him correctly, the diva herself came by coach one night and

sang for the men until the early hours. Now the hotel is a victim of the progress it supported - buried beneath the waters of the vast dam.

#### Power

All that is left now is the large water wheel which used to power the generator to provide the lighting of the hotel. The wheel has been restored recently by three board workers. They have erected it in the public picnic area at the dam. They built a sluice to have it functioning again.

The dam's construction is well remembered by Fred Walker, a board forester who has just retired after spending all his life at Upper Yarra. Fred recalls that another famous identity at the pub was Sam Knott, later to achieve immortality as the man on the Carlton and United Brewery poster who "allus has wan at eleven".

The Upper Yarra scheme ran from 1946 to 1957, but survey parties were in the area well before World War II, Fred recalls. "There was a sort of pioneering spirit among us all as the dam was the biggest earth and rock fill wall the board had built.

1979

#### Healesville SES to the Rescue

On Sunday, August 26, just after 5.30 pm the Healesville State Emergency Service Rescue unit responded to a call from the Controller of the Upper Yarra S.E.S., requesting lighting equipment, a generator and search teams to help in a search for three missing teenagers on Mt Donna Buang.

The Healesville unit consisted of 16 rescue personnel an equipment trailer towed by a private vehicle (and if you think that's a subtle way of saying Healesville S.E.S. should have a better vehicle, you're dam right). The unit reached the summit of Mt Donna Buang at approximately 6.30 pm.

After setting up the equipment to supply lighting for the Welfare ladies, a small team stayed on the mountain to maintain the generator while the others returned to Healesville for some sleep before resuming the search at first light on Monday morning.

Other S.E.S. units attending were Lilydale, Croydon, Doncaster-Templestowe led by Regional Officer John McCracken, from Dandenong, and his deputy Peter Watts of Healesville. Two units were on stand-by : All together there were 45 search and rescue personnel involved - some in search teams, others maintaining operations and communications centres at the summit - with three fully equipped vehicles and Healesville's one rescue trailer!

Searchers found the three teenagers wandering along a Board of Works track at 10.40 am, Monday. They were first sighted by a Board of Works crew from Warburton who came down to them in a snow cat. Another Board of Works team, comprising Denis Hegarty, John Lalor and Bill Phillips from Healesville brought them in.

Peter Watts of Healesville S.E.S. says the three were found only 3 or 4 km from the summit but because of the dense bush and darkness he feels they must have kept moving through much of the night.

The three young people, from a West Heidelberg Church group, had wandered away from the summit without food, without suitable clothing, and without thought for the worsening weather condition.

1981



## Man Dies after "Spur" Crash

Thomas McNair of Marysville who was involved in a serious accident on the Black Spur on the night of January 30, died in hospital last week.

Mr. McNair, who was married with two small children, had only lived in Marysville for two or three months.

He had been in intensive care since the accident.

Mountain Views sends sympathy to his widow and young family.

We are told that Mr Dudley Jones of Marysville and his wife Mary were the first on the scene of the crash and were wonderfully helpful.

Mr Jones went back to Healesville to alert police, ambulance and tow truck.

Frank and Reinett Vrooland of Marysville Post Office also happened along soon after Mr. McNair's car had crashed - and helped guide traffic around the accident scene until police arrived.

All of which confirms in our minds that this Shire of ours has some wonderfully community minded citizens.

1981

## Night Fun in the snow

With assistance from "Eveready" lanterns Nanda Binya Ski Lodge, just 15 minutes drive from Lake Mountain, Victoria has introduced a new dimension to nordic skiing and night time fun.

Twice a week weather permitting, the proprietors, Connie and Graham Pannan and Tom Chlebowski, take their guests away from the cosy pot belly stove in the Nanda Binya dining room to the shelter at Gerraty's car park for a barbecue and night time nordic skiing.

1982

## First Snow at Donna Buang

April

The snow season has started early at Donna Buang this year. Mountain Views visited the scenic reserve last week with Mr. Bob Morton of the Committee of Management, to look at improvements that have been carried out over the last 12 months.

We are amazed to find patches of beautiful crisp snow at the 10 mile turnabout and to find the summit completely covered.

During the past 12 months \$25,000 has been spent in a combined effort by the Shire, Forestry Commission, and the Committee of Management.

Car parking at both the summit and 10 mile area has been improved as have picnic shelters and two new gas barbecues have been added.

Major improvement has been carried out on the toboggan run at the summit.

A complete regrooming, dangerous stones and rocks have been removed, filler added and the runs have been formed into a correct configuration for successful tobogganing with proper run-ons and run-outs.

The whole area was top dressed and suitable grasses were sown.

Mr Andy Banks from the Forestry Commission at Powelltown who supervised much of work, told us that tenders had been called for toboggan hire and it is hoped that this service will be operating this season.

Mr Banks warned people on the use of correct toboggans, these will help maintain the run and contribute greatly to peoples safety.

Mr Banks said that the use of plastic garbage bags or other plastic for slides is very dangerous and will be discouraged. Mr Banks told us that

it is very early for snow at Donna Buang and that at least 60,000 people are expected to visit the scenic reserve during this season.

1982

#### Illegal entry 6 charged

In Warburton Magistrates Court on Friday, July 2nd 1982, in two separate cases, six men were convicted and fined for illegal entry and possession of firearms on Board of Works land.

A Wildlife Officer told the court that at 11 pm on November 2 nd, 1981, whilst he was on patrol in the vicinity of the Yarra Portal he had seen spotlights and the headlights of a vehicle.

On investigation and search of the vehicle ( a landrover ) he had found two large hand held spotlights, rifle ammunition, and a small hand held spotlight.

A rifle was found a short distance from the vehicle.

In a record of interview, a passenger in the vehicle had admitted that they were hunting deer.

In the second case three men were convicted for illegal entry onto the O'Shannessy (sic) Catchment.

They were further charged with searching for game and carrying firearms.

The court was told that the car in which the defendants were travelling was seen at the O'Shannessy Weir at approximately 10pm. by Police officers.

The driver of the vehicle had left his mates at the weir overnight and returned early next morning.

Later that morning Police interviewed the men at a house in Alpine Street, Warburton.

The men were found to be in possession of several rifles and admitted that they had been hunting deer.

Stipendiary Magistrate Mr. Winton-Smith told the court that the fines for illegal entry as allowed for under the Act were far too low.

"However" in imposing these fines, it is hoped that others may be dissuaded from this practice" Mr. Winton-Smith added.

1982

#### Costly Tree Fern

Two men, one from Dandenong and another from Endeavour Hills, found helping themselves to a tree fern expensive in Healesville Court on Wednesday 8 December 1982.

Constable Winters of the Traffic Operations Group gave evidence that he had seen two men walk from the forest on the Black Spur with an object wrapped in a blanket. He later saw the two men on a motor cycle with the tree fern between them in an upright position proceeding towards Healesville on the Maroondah Highway. When interviewed the men admitted cutting the tree fern from the forest.

Prosecuting, Sergeant Neville Willmott of the Healesville Police said that an offence had been committed by each of the men against the Wildflowers and Native Plants Protection Act.

District Forester Rod Incoll of the Toolangi Forests Commission gave evidence that the plant was a soft tree fern *Dicksonia antarctica*, a protected plant which could not be picked from private property without a licence and could not be picked from State Forest or other public lands except with the express permission of the Minister.

Mr Walker SM convicted and fined each defendant \$150.00 with costs and \$16.50 compensation.

Outside the court, Mr Incoll said the Healesville area was a popular visitor destination and if even a small proportion of visitors removed ferns for their gardens the natural beauty of the district would quickly be spoiled.

A permit system enabled the commercial supply of ferns under supervision and there could be no excuse for fern stealing. Other cases were pending, he said.

1983

A tree fell on car

"Freak accident" is how police are describing the death of a Montrose woman, killed when a tree fell on the car she was a passenger in last Wednesday evening.

Mrs Gwynneth Margaret Taplin, of Sunrise Hill Rd Montrose was in the car her husband was driving south along the Maroondah Highway in the Fernshaw area, about 1 km north of the Watts River, when a gum tree fell from the western side of the road on to the car.

Mr Taplin was not injured in the accident which happened about 6.30 pm.

School Mourns tragic loss of Mrs Taplin

Hundreds of Tintern Grammar students and their parents are mourning the death of Mrs Gwen Taplin killed in a tragic accident last week.

Mrs Taplin and her husband the Rev Stewart Taplin, were returning from a few days in the snow at Lake Mountain, when a tree fell on their car at Maroondah Highway, Watts River, killing Mrs Taplin.

The Rev Taplin, former chaplain of the Yarra Valley School, escaped uninjured.

During assemblies of the junior and senior school at Tintern last Friday the school chaplain, the Rev Andrew Schreuder told the girls the love and care given them by the late Mrs Taplin would be part of their memories for ever.

"Her Christian attitude to everyone was an inspiration to the school, its teachers and students" he said.

Mrs Taplin retired at the end of third term last year after five years teaching arts and crafts at the school, first in the junior school and the last two years with the seniors.

Her school work went far beyond the classroom.

Children adored her. They would spend much of their free time chatting with her and absorbing her wisdom and advice.

Perhaps she will be best remembered for her behind the scenes work with school musicals and plays.

She arranged some of the music and taught her music students to prepare the backdrops and props for their annual big night of the school year.

1983

Youth lost in bush

Healesville Police were yesterday searching for an 11 year old boy reported missing near the Maroondah Dam on Sunday afternoon.

Peter Skondcras of Brunswick was on a picnic with his family when reported missing at 3 pm.

Police helicopter, SES and Board of Works volunteers searched for the youth in dense bushland near the dam on Sunday and throughout yesterday.

Police said Peter was wearing light clothing which consisted of a T shirt and jeans.

He was found last night 5 km from where he had wandered.

1983

Leadbeaters Possum likes our catchments.

The Board's closed catchments offer ideal tracts of land for use under the Reference Area Act of 1978, and large samples of undisturbed vegetation, which provide habitat for such rare animals as Leadbeaters Possum.

High in the Board's O'Shannassy catchment, 995 hectares are reserved forever as Deep Creek Reference area, a sample of Victoria's high rainfall forest in its natural state.

O'Shannassy catchment has large areas of old Mountain Ash forest, which provide abundant hollows, ideal habitats for such rare species as Leadbeaters Possum.

Deep Creek Reference Area is one of nine set up in Board catchments under the Victorian Reference Areas Act 1978. Comparison with the original natural systems can often help solve problems on land which has been altered by human activities.

'Reference areas could one day help us make wiser decisions on the use of land and its management,' says Charles Curry, the Board's Forester responsible for researching and documenting reference areas within its catchments.

'When something goes wrong on land under any form of use or management, looking at land in a condition close to the way nature managed it could well provide valuable answers.'

Reference areas in Board catchments are Deep Creek in the O'Shannassy catchment; Walshs Creek and Mount Gregory in Upper Yarra catchment, Watts in Maroondah catchment; Stony, Disappointment and Joey in Wallaby Creek catchment; and two in Yan Yean catchment.

O'Shannassy : nationally significant

In wildlife terms, the Ministry of Conservation Study Team classifies O'Shannassy as 'nationally significant'. It came under Board control in 1910. Most of it has never been logged, and about 80% of it survived the worst of the 1939 bushfires. Its main vegetation is ash type forest with lush damp understory.

Several wildlife species uncommon elsewhere seem to be more abundant here. The sooty owl, a large species which preys on mammals up to the size of rabbits, is widespread throughout the area, and several breeding pairs have been found. Another uncommon species, the powerful owl, has also been identified.

Leadbeaters Possum has been observed at one site numerous times, and may be widespread throughout much of the catchment.

Leadbeaters Possum, *Gymnobelideus leadbeateri*, the only member of its genus, has soft grey and black fur. It is like the common sugar glider, but lacks gliding membranes. Its long baseball bat shaped tail is very distinctive. It is about 3 centimetres from nose tip to tail tip.

Formerly known only by five specimens, all collected before 1909, Leadbeaters Possum was long thought to be extinct. Systematic searching failed to produce any trace of it.

Then one night in April 1961, Eric Wilkinson, a young mammalogist spot-lighting in ash forest near Marysville, caught in the beam of his light the only Leadbeaters Possum seen since the first decade of the century. Since then it has been found at about 40 sites. Only since 1977 has our knowledge of Leadbeaters Possum been more than rudimentary. It was then

that Andrew Smith, from Monash University, began his study of this charming little possum.

Parts of Board catchments provide ideal habitat for Leadbeaters Possum. It builds a nest home in the centre of a hollow tree, usually a Mountain Ash. Such hollows start to occur when the trees reach about 120 years of age.

The next, made of shredded bark, is about 300mm in diameter, and may be 10 to 35 metres from the ground. Up to eight possums live together here, usually an adult female, one or more males and some juveniles.

Leadbeaters Possum breeds only when Mountain Ash flower, and it can feed on its nectar. Mountain Ash do not generally flower until they are over 30 years old, and then only every second year. The possum's normal diet includes insects, sap from wattles in the understory, and nectar from various blossoms.

Its most suitable habitat, therefore, is forest with old Mountain Ash and a wattle understory of the type found in the Board's O'Shannassy catchment.

The yellow bellied glider has been seen or heard at many sites, along with the typical V shaped notches it makes in the bark of certain eucalypts to get sap. Four individual sightings of the tiny and seldom seen feathertail glider were made by the Study Team. The greater glider and the sugar glider are common.

Many of the old Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*) trees, often 75 metres or more high, have hollows in them, which helps explain the high populations of many species. Ground mammals are also quite abundant.

The 25 bird species recorded include wonga pigeon, yellow-tailed black cockatoo, whipbird, pilot bird and lyre bird. Other birds, notably honeyeaters, appear when the trees and shrubs flower, in spring and summer.

Most of Victoria's mature Mountain Ash forest has been cleared for farms, destroyed by fire, or logged over a period. The substantial remnant of undisturbed old Mountain Ash forest in O'Shannassy, with some trees probably over 300 years old, plus the wildlife it supports, is of incalculable conservation value.

O'Shannassy is a significant area for the region, the state and the nation. It is one of the few areas left in Victoria where such forests still exist over a large area.

Maroondah: regionally significant

Maroondah became water catchment reserve in 1891, and since then the vast majority of the area has been little disturbed, other than by fire. About 80% of it was heavily burnt in the 1939 bushfires, so a large part of its Mountain Ash forest is now regrowth.

An alluvial delta where the Watts River flows into the reservoir has a swampland vegetation of common reed and tussocky sedge which supports a population of swamp rats. Bandicoots are also present, as the typical conical pits they dig while foraging have been found there.

Seven species of bats were found in the catchment in one night of trapping by researchers. The bush rat and the brown antechinus occur throughout the catchment, the dusty antechinus only in wetter forest.

Upper Yarra: nationally significant

The Board's Upper Yarra catchment is of considerable botanical significance, mainly because of its floristic and habitat diversity.

The 1939 bushfires devastated most of this catchment. Much of the area was subjected to selective logging up to 1957. Since then, the catchment has been closed to timber operations and public entry.

Great variety in topography and vegetation leads to habitat diversity and so to animal diversity. The area supports several populations of the smoky mouse and the broad toothed rat, as well as one or more populations of Leadbeaters Possum.

Surveys in this catchment have usually yielded high mammal counts. Long nosed bandicoots, uncommon elsewhere in the Yarra Valley, have been identified on the sedge flats near the reservoir. The area is good for lyre birds and many other bird species.

#### Classifications

Nationally significant. Supports large proportion of the total known numbers of a species.

Regionally significant. Has high diversity of habitat representative of habitats within the study area or supports a species not widely distributed within the study area.

Locally significant. Has habitat of high conservation value or provides continuity between larger areas of natural habitat.

1984

#### Stolen Electricity and Life Underground

Healesville Police were alerted to some very strange "goings-on" recently.

The Board of Works at Graceburn Weir had found a tunnel which had been widened to take beds, lamps, cooking utensils and other odds and ends - including a few stolen goods.

About the same time a nearby resident reported to Healesville police that some "person or persons unknown" had tapped in to the electric pump which they use to pump water to their house.

They showed police the electrical fuse box near the water tanks. The "persons" had very cunningly slipped a conduit in behind the switches and down the post (inside the tin sleeve) and along the ground into the bush.

No one would have suspected anything if a visitor to the house had not noticed newly turned ground and followed the trench which took the conduit into the Graceburn reserve.

It seems that those persons had simply plugged a lead into the end of this and ran it to the underground hideout.

The family says they have often heard loud voices and laughter in the vicinity, but had no idea that several people were actually living in this hole in the ground.

It is not thought that the hole was being used by homeless young people. Local police believe they would be adults and the Board of Works is believed to be keeping an eye out for marihuana plants.

The tunnel has now been filled in by the Board of Works.

It had originally been built to take run-off water from a natural gully through the tunnel under Maroondah Highway.

1985

#### Danger on mountain

Warburton police had a taste of things to come when a search was mounted for two men lost near Mt. Donna Buang recently.

Police Search and Rescue, Upper Yarra State Emergency Service and Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works personnel were involved in the search on Sunday, April 21.

The two men, in their early 30s, were missing for over 11 hours.

Light snow had fallen in the area and conditions were cold for hikers.

They were later found by MMBW inspector John Harrison.

One of the men was injured after he fell and hurt his leg.

The wives and children of the men were waiting on the Mt Donna Buang summit and alerted police when the two had not arrived.

Four-wheel drive and search and rescue vehicles were involved in the search.

Officer in charge at Warburton, Sgt Ray Mathieson, said that it was a "common occurrence for people to get lost in the area.

Police have issued a warning to hikers in the area to take extreme care with the approaching snow season.

1985

Fine of \$2000 on 'pot'

A 33 year old man was fined \$2000 at a special hearing in the Lilydale court last week for his involvement with a marijuana plantation.

Mr Grigori Tsiakopoulos of Deakin Av. Mildura, was found guilty for his part in the cultivation of narcotic plants at Ben Cairn 16 km south-east of Healesville.

Mr Tsiakopoulos, formerly of Clayton, appeared before Mr Max Saunder, SM, on Wednesday, May 8.

Mr Tsiakopoulos pleaded not guilty to the charges of cultivating narcotic plants and felling trees in a protected area.

A charge of felling trees in a protected area at Ben Cairn between September 1-19, 1984 was dismissed.

Mr Tsiakopoulos was found guilty of delivering provisions and other items to a marijuana plantation at Ben Cairn.

Mr Saunder deliberated for 25 minutes before handing down his finding.

Mr Tsiakopoulos spoke little English and gave evidence to the court through interpreters.

Mr Saunder said it was clear the defendant had difficulty with the English language, but he was convinced Mr Tsiakopoulos knew of his involvement with the drug operation.

The court was told that on Tuesday, September 18, 1984, Mr Tsiakopoulos, driving a truck, was followed from Glen Waverley to Ben Cairn by Det. Sen. Sgt. Adrian Mason and Det Sen Const Geoff Askew, of Waverley CIB.

Detective Mason and Askew approached the truck parked on the side of the road at Ben Cairn which was being unloaded by Tsiakopoulos and two other men.

The two men fled into thick rain forest and disappeared.

The truck was later found to be loaded with 84 bags of manure.

The court heard that the manure was for "the plants" and Tsiakopoulos received \$200 to make the delivery.

Police later found two hot-houses containing a total of 1920 marijuana plants at a cleared area on the valley floor, after being guided to the area by Tsiakopoulos.

Two shelters with food and clothing were found at the site.

Tsiakopoulos, a father of two young children, has been unemployed for the past four years and only recently moved to Mildura to open a coffee shop.

Mr Saunder allowed Tsiakopoulos three months to pay the \$2000 fine.

He was also directed to pay a total of \$116.59 in court costs.

Waverley CID is seeking two men who fled from Ben Cairn area when police arrived.

1985

Dramatic Rescue

The police helicopter was involved in the dramatic rescue of a 49 year old woman who fell down a rock face on the Ben Cairn Shelf on April 21.

Police and emergency services spent four hours last Tuesday afternoon involved in the rescue of the Ferntree Gully woman who was hiking with her teenage son and a friend. They had been hiking through the bush and stopped to rest at the Ben Cairn Nature Reserve, an area popular with rock climbers. The woman walked down a track around the face of the rock shelf and onto a ledge where she slipped and fell 17 metres (50 feet) onto a rock shelf.

Two school teachers and two boys who were hiking in the area assisted the woman. One of the teachers drove to Healesville and alerted police. An ambulance from Healesville sped to the scene.

Five members of the Upper Yarra SES and two men from Lilydale SES worked with a Special Police Unit and an experienced climber from the Search and Rescue team until nightfall. Special lighting equipment was sent to the scene and the Police helicopter provided a spot light.

Ambulance officers trekked through the bush to the rock face where they administered first aid.

The woman was placed in a specially designed litter and carried part way up the rock face. SES members then hauled the litter to the top of the rock shelf for the Police helicopter. She was transported to a park opposite the Heidelberg Police Station where a waiting ambulance rushed her to the Austin Hospital.

The woman was severely injured in the fall, she had a broken leg and an injury to her spinal column. She is expected to be hospitalised for at least six months.

An Assistant Commissioner of Police spoke highly of those involved in the rescue. Sergeant Ray Mathieson of Warburton Police said that all people involved in the four hour rescue had efficiently combined their various talents and had worked well together.

1985

Fall victim in a stable condition

A 49-year-old woman fell 19 metres down a cliff last week after slipping off a rock ledge while hiking at Ben Cairn, 16 km south-east of Healesville.

Mrs Lois Wilson, of Edward St. Upper Ferntree Gully was hiking with her 16 year old son and his friend about 3 pm, on Tuesday May 21.

Sgt Ray Mathieson of Warburton Police said Mrs Wilson slipped on a wet rock on the south side of Ben Cairn and fell down the cliff.

Police, ambulance and State Emergency Service units were involved in the delicate three hour rescue operation.

Mrs Wilson was airlifted from the accident scene by police helicopter and rushed to the Austin Hospital with serious back injuries.

A hospital spokeswoman said Mrs Wilson was in a stable condition with serious spinal injuries "She is not expected to walk for at least a couple of months," she said.

The drama unfolded after two local school teachers, also hiking in the area, heard screams from a rock ledge and notified Healesville police.

Warburton police, Lilydale and Upper Yarra SES and Healesville ambulance were alerted and raced to the scene.

Sgt. Mathieson, after realising the delicacy of the rescue operation, called in the police helicopter to assist in the rescue.

The helicopter arrived just before dusk, and with the aid of its powerful "night light," SES members were able to hand Mrs Wilson up the



cliff in a wire cage. She was then transferred to helicopter and rushed to hospital.

Sgt. Mathieson said there was a heavy dew in the area at the time of the accident.

Mrs Wilson's husband, Fred, said his wife was not an experienced hiker.

"Lois had hiked in the particular area where she fell only once before," he said.

Mr Wilson praised the efforts of the police, ambulance, SES members and the helicopter crew.

Police again issued a warning to hikers in the area to take extreme care with the approaching snow season and the imminent wet and cold conditions.

1985

#### Board gets tough on trespassers

The Board of Works will step-up patrols of local catchments, following a security problem with shooting and trespassers.

The board's regional manager Mr Austin Byrne, said patrols would centre on the Upper Yarra, Maroondah and O'Shannessy catchments.

He said the patrols were designed to catch and deter trespassers illegally fishing, shooting and camping in the area.

The patrols were not a "blitz" but part of a constant surveillance of the area.

Last year the board prosecuted about 30 people for trespassing, fishing or shooting in the catchments.

Under the MMBW Act (1958) by-law 192 carries a maximum penalty of up to \$1000 for each trespassing offence.

"The patrols are a deliberate attempt to make the catchments as safe as possible," Mr Byrne said.

"Over the years ( the board ) have tried to protect and catch people who illegally trespass.

We are making a concentrated effort to make sure people are not getting away with anything." he said.

The police have given their full support to the increased patrols and will co-operate with the board.

The board will deter potential trespassers with conventional gates and block off the catchment roads with barriers.

Senior Forester Mr Frank Lawless said the board had provided picnic areas at Maroondah, Upper Yarra and O'Shannessy catchments and most people are happy to go there.

"We're after the people who bloody mindedly want to go into the catchments and shoot game." he said.

1985

#### Woman killed.

Lynne Marie Lavander, 30, from Warburton was killed on Friday July 19, at 2.50 pm when her car left Donna Buang Road 2.5 km north of the Warburton Highway intersection, and struck a tree.

Brett Thomas Jackson, 28, from Mt Waverley, a passenger in the car, was injured and taken to Box Hill Hospital.

Mr Jackson is in intensive care in a serious but stable condition.

1985

#### Police probe snow fire

Police forensic experts have been called in to investigate a fire which destroyed a Mount Donna Buang ticket box.

The blaze broke out between 5 pm on Saturday, August 3, and 8 am August 4.

The fire caused about \$25,000 worth of damage.

The six-year-old ticket box was operating the Cement Creek Reserve on the Warburton Donna Buang Rd.

The blaze was the fourth case of vandalism on Mt Donna Buang this year.

Warburton police describe the fire as "an apparent act of wanton vandalism."

One policeman said the bluestone ticket box fitted in with the appearance of the mountains and "there was no need to destroy it."

Police said the ticket box arsonists gained entry through a window and attempted to open two safes.

Following unsuccessful attempts to crack the safes, the box was then set alight.

"Nothing was stolen from the ticket box" police said.

Conservation, Forests and Lands spokesman, Mr Ray Baker said the ticket box would be demolished as soon as possible.

He said a caravan would be used as a temporary box until a replacement could be arranged.

1985

Upper Yarra Dam favored for hydro

The Upper Yarra Dam favored for hydro.

The Upper Yarra Reservoir has been named one of the four most favorable sites for the development of a small hydroelectric plant.

A report just released by the SEC on Victoria's hydroelectric potential follows a 12 month study.

Of the eight possible sites for small hydroelectric plants named in the report, the Upper Yarra Reservoir would be the most economical.

It would require minimal civil works, would have little effect on the existing facility or the environment and would provide an assured and predictable water supply the report says.

A small hydroelectric plant would have a generating capacity of between one and 20 megawatts.

The other existing storages identified as suitable for this type of development are the Thomson Reservoir, Lake Mulwala, Lake William Hovell, Lake Hume, Lake Nagamnie, Lake Glenmaggie and Lake Buffalo.

The Upper Yarra Reservoir scheme would make use of existing outlets supplying the Upper Yarra aqueduct.

The power station would discharge into the existing outlet basin and could be connected to the electricity transmission network by a 5 km extension to the distribution line supplying Reefton.

It is estimated that a two megawatt unit would generate nine gigawatt hours of energy a year.

The direct capital cost for the project would be around \$1.6 million with annual operation and maintenance costs of \$21,000 for the automatic, unmanned plant.

A typical development for small hydroelectric plant would allow up to five years from the initial identification stage to the final commissioning.

However, the Upper Yarra scheme would have a significantly reduced program due to minor works needed at the dam site to install a unit.

The Upper Yarra scheme, the report says is simple based on an assured and predictable water supply and with minimal social and environmental effects.

Preliminary estimates of the cost of energy sent out from the proposed plant are also favorable at around 2c a kilowatt hour.

The SEC invites expressions of interest from government agencies, and private developers with an interest in future investment in small hydroelectric developments.

1986

Mount Donna Buang attracts tourists and funds.

Funding for improvement works at Mount Donna Buang had increased five fold since the inception of the Alpine Resorts Commission.

Alpine Resorts Commission Projects Manager, Mr Ian Parfitt in addressing Upper Yarra Council's June meeting, said that funding had increased from \$20,000 to \$100,000.

He said that developing areas like Lake Mountain, Donna Buang and Mt Baw Baw had received an injection of funds to get various projects off the ground. The Commission was hopeful that improvements would eventually attract a cash flow to justify the expenditure.

The Alpine Resorts Commission took over control of Donna Buang Baw Baw and Lake Mountain in mid May.

Mr Parfitt spoke about the Commission's interim "A" quality.

The Royal Commission before referred to says of the O'Shannassy River in its report:- "During our inquiry we visited the O'Shannassy River during a period of heavy rains, when it was discharging much in excess of its normal volume, and were surprised to find the water absolutely pellucid. We do not know of any other stream of equal magnitude that under similar weather conditions would present an appearance so favorable in relation to a town water supply."

The river has been diverted by means of a concrete weir at a point about 3.75 miles above its confluence with the River Yarra.

From this point an aqueduct and pipeline, 48.75 miles in length, delivers the water into a new service reservoir of 15,000,000 gallons capacity at Surrey Hills.

The O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Aqueduct consists of 23 miles of open covered channel, 3 tunnels 6 feet and 7 feet in diameter aggregating in length a little over half a mile, 22.75 miles of steel pipes 34-inch to 36-inch in diameter, partly riveted but mainly lock bar pattern, 0.25 of a mile of reinforced concrete pipes 38.25-inch in diameter, and 2 miles of wood stave pipes 30-inch to 36-inch in diameter, or a total of 25.5 miles of pipe line and 23.25 miles of channel and tunnel.

The fall of the channel is 2.1 feet per mile, and that of the pipe lines from 16 feet per mile to 42 feet per mile.

The channel is at present lined with cement mortar to sufficient depth to carry 20,000,000 gallons per day for the greater part, but in sections it is constructed to a depth of 5 feet 2.5 inches, and a top width of 12 feet 10.5 inches, to carry 60,000,000 gallons per day, the tunnels being already completed to the latter capacity.

By duplicating and triplicating the pipe lines and raising the sides to approximately one kilometre long was held up for over an hour while tow trucks righted a semi-trailer following an accident on The Spur on Monday, September 1.

The semi, owned by G. B. Timber Pty Ltd of Narbethong, was carrying a load of sawdust from their Narbethong sawmill to Geelong when the accident occurred.

The driver, Mr Norman Trask of Biragurra near Colac, escaped from the accident uninjured.

The accident happened at 7.40 am on the Healesville side of Fernshaw Reserve. Police officers from the Nunawading Traffic Operations Group who attended at the accident said it appeared that one of the off-side driver axle tyres had blown out as the semi came down the hill into a left-hand bend. The truck cut across the bend and overturned down a small embankment on the far side of the road.

Senior Constable Pringle of Nunawading said that once the load of sawdust had started to shift there was nothing the driver could do. He said the driver had done a good job to put the semi where he had and added that the accident could have been a lot worse if it had not been for the driver's skill.

A front end loader from the Shire of Healesville was brought in to unload the trailer and police halted traffic while the semi was winched back onto the road returning traffic back to normal by midday.

1986

#### How Safe is Our Dam

Remedial works on the spillway and retaining wall at Maroondah Dam are to be carried out as a matter of high priority.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works says, in a recent report, that its preferred option is to enlarge the existing spillway from a width of 17 metres to that of 36 metres and to strengthen the dam wall itself so that extreme flood flows can be taken over the crest of the dam.

The MMBW report says : "Recent studies to satisfy recent changes in safety standards have indicated that the spillway is of insufficient capacity and the dam would no longer be able to pass the high flood levels now proposed.

"Given the state of the dam wall, the proximity of the dam to Healesville and the implications concerning recent safety investigations, remedial works should be commenced as a matter of priority."

The report continues: "Test drilling has indicated cracking within the upper levels of the dam. Although the dam is considered operationally safe at low water levels, the structural integrity of the dam is questionable at the extreme flood levels now being considered. Hence strengthening of the dam wall by post tensioning is required.

"Strengthening of the wall will be achieved by the insertion of multiple cables through the dam and into the rock foundation. Large tensioning forces will be applied from the crest to hold the dam together under all conditions of extreme flooding. This will entail the removal of the top two metres of weathered concrete from the existing dam and replacement with a heavily reinforced concrete cap."

If the Board's preferred option of a 36 metre wide spillway is accepted, excess flood flows will be discharged over the crest of the dam. It is proposed that the existing concrete balustrading will be removed when the strengthening capping is constructed. This feature of the dam will be replaced with identical pillars and new panels which will not obstruct the flow during excess flood flows. (The Board is proposing to replicate' the current balustrading with some design improvements which will allow the panel to swing or lift out of the way in the event of a flood topping the dam wall.)

The Board of works has sought the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority's and Healesville Council's agreement to the proposed remedial works. It is proposed to establish an Environmental Working Party to oversee the project.

Spokesperson for the MMBW, Bronwyn Thwaites says the Board will be making a statement on upgrading works in the next few weeks.

She says there is no need for the community to be concerned about the safety of the dam, as the work to be done is merely for improvements.

\$10m upgrading begins next year, says Board.

The Board of Works says it will start upgrading the Maroondah Dam early next year at a cost of about \$10 million.

The Minister for Water Resources, Mr Andrew McCutcheon said last week the project would involve widening the existing spillway and refurbishing the dam.

He said the upgrading works would meet the latest design standards and provide a safety factor for all conditions of extreme flooding.

The Board is acting now to ensure the dam's continued reliability and long term safety he said.

The first stage of the project would involve removing about 60,000 cubic metres of rock to enlarge the spillway. The better-quality rock would be made available for use by local authorities.

The dam later would be strengthened by the insertion and tensioning of cables through the dam into the foundations. This would involve removing the existing dam crest and replacing it with strengthening concrete.

The dam's appearance would be kept as close as possible to the original.

Mr McCutcheon said an independent panel of specialists had reviewed and endorsed the Board's proposals.

Members of the panel were the former Director of Engineering of State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, Mr Jack Maver, Professor of Geology at the South Australian Institute of Technology, Professor David Stapledon; former Chief Engineer of the Hunter District Water Board, Mr David Andersen; and geomechanics consultant from the University of New South Wales, Professor Robin Fell.

Mr McCutcheon said a working party would be established to ensure the environment was protected. It would include representatives from the Shire of Healesville and the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority.

The project is scheduled for completion in 1991.

#### Dam background

Maroondah Dam lies in the Watts River Valley, immediately upstream of Healesville. The dam is a masonry gravity type and was constructed in 1920-1927. Many residents of Healesville can recall the over-head cable construction which carried huge buckets of sand, screenings cement and other materials above the shops and trees, all the way from Healesville railway station to the construction site at Maroondah Dam.

This "Flying Fox" was a familiar and noisy part of the town's life for some four or five years during the construction of the big retaining wall. The current spillway is 17 metres wide and has a capacity of 120 cumecs. Current design criteria according to the Board of Works, requires a spillway capable of discharging the extreme flood flow of 1355 cumecs.

It is proposed that the bridge across the existing spillway will be removed and an alternative road access will be provided from the picnic ground to the northern abutment area.

The report says that there will be some loss of mature pine trees for construction of the spillway and the enlargement of the saddle dam. Upgrading of the access roads to the north of the dam will require the loss of some native vegetation, however this will be minimised and any affected areas will be revegetated following completion of the project.

Mr George Wright, Director of the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority, says the Authority resolved, last week, to advise the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works that it does not object to the

preliminary concept for the widening of the spillway, post-tensioning and other remedial works associated with the Maroondah Reservoir subject to appropriate rehabilitation of all areas effected.

1986

#### Trial blasting at Maroondah dam

Trial blasts will be made at the Maroondah Reservoir on Thursday, November 20, by the Metropolitan Board of Works.

There will be three blasts made in the spillway area to obtain design data for the first stage of the \$10 million Maroondah Reservoir upgrading program.

The first stage involves enlargement of the spillway and as scheduled to start in March 1987.

The Board's acting Upper Yarra regional manager, Mr Alan Nelsen, said the final blast would be made between 8.30am and 10am.

Construction of access tracks and works areas within the board's land will also start soon.

Mr Nelsen said the upgrading works would meet the latest design standards for storage dams and provide a safety factor for all conditions of extreme flooding.

The spillway enlargement involves removing about 90,000 cubic metres of rock by controlled blasting between 8am to 11am on weekdays.

Mr Nelsen said there would be no blasting during weekends or public holidays.

1987

#### Facelift for dam

The upgrading works on the Maroondah Dam are on schedule.

The Board of Works project manager, Mr Colin Mayfield, said stage one of the preparatory work had been completed and new access roads, river crossings and on site offices for workers had been installed.

He said blasting to enable the dam's spillway to be widened would go ahead in about two weeks (mid January).

The spillway is 17m wide and when completed, will be 38m wide.

Mr Mayfield said the work on the dam was part of the board's policy to review existing dam structures.

"Maroondah was built more than 60 years ago and has begun to show signs of age," he said.

Because the method of estimating floods has changed so much over six decades, Mr Mayfield said the estimates were many times the original estimates.

"This means we had to alter the dam to cope with the present day estimations," he said.

The work will be completed in 1991.

1987

#### Vandals spoil Donna's beauty

This wasn't meant to be a story about vandalism. It was supposed to be about the work being done at Mt. Donna Buang to help people enjoy the snow season.

Unfortunately however, for Alpine Resorts Commission operations manager Frank Wood and local Committee member Peg Dulvey it was hard not to talk about it, because vandals have been frustrating their every move.

Half our budget goes on repairing the work of vandals, said Mr. Wood.

"For example the barbecues. They used to be coin in the slot but people in four wheel drive vehicles equipped with chain saw, bolt cutters and sledge hammer, have destroyed the barbecues in order to get at the money box."

"It has just cost us \$2,000 to have them converted to no charge. It will pay us in the long run."

The catalogue of insults to the hard work of the Commission, the department of Conservation Forests and Lands before them, with local people, is long. Normally one doesn't publicize the effort of vandals for fear of encouraging them, but this time for the people of Warburton enough is enough.

There used to be a rather nice stone and timber building used by rangers and parking attendants on the road up to the summit, but it was burned down by vandals. The department had to bulldoze it in the end, there was no point in rebuilding.

A caravan is towed up each day now - not so comfortable, not so picturesque, but there is no choice. They can't even leave the van there overnight!

Barriers used to be made of pine logs, but these days they are local saplings because people would steal the pine. Three tons of firewood was left for one of the shelters one morning, but was gone by the afternoon. Someone with a trailer had taken the lot.

Frank Wood showed us seats in the summit shelter house which had been sawn off for firewood. The shelter itself has been redecorated by graffitist.

The children's toboggan run has been cut up by tyre marks, and a doctor was caught driving up the side of the road in his four wheel drive knocking over marker posts.

The Commission had plans to build a permanent ranger's house on the summit. Timber would have been aesthetically pleasing but they can't take the risk - either of putting up the building for fear it would be immediately burnt down, or of leaving an officer there at the mercy of gangs of yahoos.

As Peg Dulvey said, one small element of society is ruining it for the rest. Frank Wood said they will soon have to install a gate across the road as there is at Lake Mountain to stop people going in after hours.

1987

### In Search of the Yarra River

We take it for granted. We dam it, throw rubbish in it, fish in it, tip out industrial waste in it, turn it yellow from washing carrots, turn it brown by grazing cattle and farming by it, let our sprays dribble into it, do everything but respect it

It is one of our lifelines, our river, our Yarra. It winds and bubbles its way from our mountains through our valleys to the sea. Most of us cross it at least once a day. Do we consider the job it does? Its beauty? This is the first of an occasional series on our River, from its source to the sea.

The Yarra is seen as a bit of a joke by some Australians. It is famous as the river which flows upside down.

Those sort of cracks usually come from people who only know the city section of the river. They don't know the Yarra river we know - we inhabitants of the Yarra Valley - we who farm and graze. But more of that later.

There is a pristine part of the Yarra even fewer of us get to see - the young bride shielded from the gaze of the public by her watchful guardians - the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. This is the source of our river. The precious beginnings which the Board dams to

provide water for the ever thirsty, ever growing population of Melbourne. A population which demonstrates its civilization and prosperity by throwing water around with gay abandon over ourselves, in our pools, on our cars, and in manufacture.

But this is not a lecture on our wasteful - Wally ways with water, it is to celebrate the stream which binds and divides us.

In Legend

Once, according to aboriginal legend, the water of the Yarra Yarra, which means flowing water, was locked in the mountains. This great expanse of water was called Moorool, or Great Water. It was so large that the Wiowurong tribe had little hunting ground in contrast to other tribes who had the lovely flats which white men call Port Phillip.

The head man of the tribe resolved to free the land. He cut a channel up the valley with his stone axe. But he was stopped by Baw Baw, the mountain. He decided to go northwards around it, but was stopped by Donna Buang and his brothers. Then he went through westwards and cut through the hills to War-an-dyte. There he met another head man who was busily cutting a channel to drain the Morang, the place where he lived. So they joined forces and eventually reached the flats. Their country was freed but the flats were inundated...

In one sense this was how the Yarra Valley was formed over the past million years. A large lake did exist upstream from Templestowe and until only 5,200 years ago Port Phillip was a lush open plain. But that's history. What of the river now?

On world standards the Yarra is not a large river, so one does not expect intrepid explorers to have set out in search of its source. In fact there is now record of it. There are lots of words about Batman finding the other end, but did no one wonder how this busy little river began?

We did and one day set out to find it.

Unlike Batman, or those intrepid fellows who went before us, we had excellent maps. Two of our small party of three, were airmen, and skilled in using rivers to find their way. One had an exceptional sense of direction, and was famous for finding his way into New York by car in rain and fog, not even missing a minute on the maze which is the George Washington bridge.

Our voyage took us out of Healesville to Marysville, to the Triangle and along the Noojee Road. From map readings there was only one crossing by the river in territory not locked up by the MMBW.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works proclaimed vast areas as catchment in the early 1920's.

The areas were fenced, gated and locked from the public in order to protect the quality of the water and to increase the water yield.

Recent figures show that it would cost 1,600m to treat Melbourne's water if there was no closed catchment.

There are now many places we cannot go, many places which once were popular tourist resorts - but that's progress.

We drove and we drove. It was one of those "this will only take an hour" type of expeditions. But we drove and we drove and we drove. It was beginning to get dark, still we felt our quest was nigh, we were plunging downwards into what had to be a young river's valley. Just on dusk we came to a bridge - deep in the heart of the bush. Underneath bouncing over boulders, past ferns and mosses flowed a vibrant stream. One of us was ecstatic. We had found the Yarra.

The other two were devastated. They as only airman would know, saw the river was Flowing the Wrong Way! It couldn't be the Yarra could it? Defeated we drove off in the dark, feeling no doubt Burke and Wills as they sat under their fatal tree.

For a while, that was the end of it. No further suggestions were made about finding the source. It was too hard given the imprisonment of the



stream in the official catchment area, with its gates and locks and numbered roads.

But still one dreamed. The source of a river seemed magic. Perhaps it flowed out of a mystical boulder in the side of a mountain, or sprang from the depths of a green cave. Perhaps King Arthur's sword.. no this was getting ridiculous.

Musing about it one day to some mates from the MMBW they too were fired up by the idea, and eventually came the invitation to find the source. It came in an MMBW kind of way - we've got a new four wheel drive, and Stuart is dying to try it out. Would you like to come? Would we!

So the day of the big journey dawned. It was grey and dry after a month of wet weekends. Mother Nature seemed to be smiling on the venture.

The one 4WD had turned into two, it looked as if the outing had turned into a Work's picnic. Everybody wanted to come. Everybody included Barrie Richardson, drainage and diversion engineer, Stuart Ord, a forester involved with land management, Charles Curry, forester, Gojko Rasetta, a planner with Upper Yarra, Roy Speechley, area supervisor with Conservation Forests and Lands, resource officer, Margaret McCarthy and George Self, the Board's photographer.

We set off into the mountains through Warburton up over the range, heading for the country behind the Upper Yarra Dam where it was obvious the Yarra would rise.

As we climbed the clouds swirled and thinned revealing patches of blue. Stuart pointed out old gold mining areas. They had been closed because miners in the early days had no way of pumping water and abandoned their dream of fortune. Naturally the thought has not escaped modern prospectors who hope to reopen some of the most promising.

We are on the Woods Point Road which is narrow, but sealed, and passing through beautiful forest, fern trees of course, but also woolly butts and beeches here and there.

The higher we go, the more blue sky appears, creating the most magical effect of swirling cloud with sun shining through it in silver and grey shafts. It is one of those occasions when the photographers are too stunned to call for a stop.

Out of the cloud and into the sun, we stop at the lookout Big River. In the distance are snow covered mountains. The foresters and CF and L people debate whether it is Mt. Buller, or Terrible, or Stirling we can see. The matter is unresolved, even through field glasses.

We bear south now. The Thompson River catchment is on one side, the Yarra catchment area on the other.

For a symbolic over-view we head up Mt. Gregory, to the summit. Bailing out of the vehicles before us in an incredible view is the whole of the Yarra Valley in the far distance is Donna Buang, Little Joe, Mt. Victoria, old friends normally giants, now looking like a relief map.

We are in the catchment now. This is MMBW country. Gates and gates, tracks and tracks, all numbered, weave through the catchment, kept open for fire fighting. Fires in the catchment area can be disastrous to water quality, and so the Board takes great pains to keep the tracks passable. Following the '83 fires new turning places are being built too. That dreadful experience had trucks unable to retreat or pass each other. The lessons are being acted upon.

The pioneering spirit lies close under the skin of us Australians. In this vast mountain region there is no habitation. We are bouncing through bush not many people have seen before us - even though there are trails obviously man made, and well traveled by fire fighters, foresters, scientists, it still has the feeling of originality.

In its depths it is perhaps not so beautiful - bush has a raggle-taggle look sometimes, but there are pockets where the streams flow which are lush and mossy. Mount Gregory brought this home particularly. The depth

of mosses there reminded of our proximity to real Alps, there was the richness of alpine plants, ground huggers, and branch grippers.

We are careering down the side of a gorge in the 4WD, its comfort a far cry from the painful progress of true pioneers, but it feels as if we are getting somewhere. We stop on a rude little bridge and underneath, through fronds of ferns, gallops a stream, a tributary which feeds the Yarra and must be one of its beginnings. It is beautiful, but a little disappointing. It is too big to be a beginning. This stream already has purpose and direction.

We plunge on into the bush, up and over another range, and find another, there is debate over its name, perhaps it is 18 mile creek. Also young and beautiful, obviously cascading from some marvellous inaccessible place, but this is not the source of the Yarra. We dally in the grotto formed by old trunks and boughs. It has mysterious green mossy caverns - something out of Lord of the Rings. Wombat paradise perhaps.

We emerge from the hallowed catchment onto the Noojee road. So far our journey has been easy, the vehicles coping well with what normally at this time of year would be very slippery stuff indeed. The scout party which went through the area a few days earlier has made our passage clear. The chain saws at the ready in the back are not yet needed. Pioneering in modern Pathfinders is a peach. We turn off Noojee onto one of the numbered roads. This, says navigator, Charles Curry, will be the real thing. What has been going on until now? One wonders. Was that all testing our mettle, our endurance, our pure desire to find the source?

This is put-your-wellington-boots-on time. The men scramble into thick bush and disappear, it is so thick. It is also very wet. While squelching through marvellous ferns, and undergrowth, we keep in touch only by voice. It is hard work. Those of us with cameras go carefully, keeping our "powder" dry. George disappears down a bank and into a copse. He calls. He feels he has found the source of the Yarra. There is a big bank of ferns, a sort of amphitheatre, an enchanting grove. Could this be it? There is no excalibar, no sign saying "Source of the Yarra - Coke is it!"

We take pictures of the squelch - or soak as the technicians prefer to call it. "I always thought it would begin in a soak, says George who covered many miles for the MMBW in film and on foot.

Well, we didn't, we say, crossly, up to our ankles in squelsh. We still wanted a spring, a dramatic beginning, crystal pure water emerging from a romantic bath - like Seetanarni in India, which has warm water on one side, and cool the other, coming from the arrow strike in the rock crated by Lord Rama.

This puddle couldn't be the source.

The foresters however have other ideas. They are calling from another side. A more impressive puddle. We clamber out of our copse to another soak which has movement, the beginning of a stream. A moving swamp along the ti-tree. The others feel this has more potential.

Doubt fills the would-be pioneer's ambitions. Can this be it? Are they having us on? This is their patch, but are they giving us the Cook's tour of MMBW swamps? We take more pictures of the author's boot in the squelch and decide to head out. The men are hungry.

The route out is suspiciously easier than the route in. Brush cutters have preceded us. Could it be that pirate brush cutters have been stomping around our source of the mighty Yarra creating that youthful movement?

Lunch is held on the roadside at Toroongo. We feel pooped and not at all like a true pioneer, swigging black coffee from a thermos, and munching dried fruit. Still, where would we be without the Suburu, one wonders. Hardly ever at Warburton, reply the feet.

The water experts have one more thought on the source. This according to Charles Curry is the genuine article. We try to head up the track off the Noojee Road, to his spot, but for the first time the vehicles refuse.

The track has been too badly chopped up by weekend joy riders. Looks like another area about to be gated off from the public. Sad how we soil our own nests.

We park and hoof it in. Unlike the heavy treed areas we have been in, this is a grassy plain, a pampus, a huge warm bowl.

Joe Blake paradise, comments someone, and we are glad to be here in winter when joe and his mates are hopefully sleeping. We head into the centre of the bowl. It is surprisingly warm, a natural sun trap, but it is also deceptively boggy, another natural collection area of run-off. A natural beginning for a river, says Charles who is convinced. Still no excalibar, no spring. We photograph each other trying not to fall out of our wellingtons, examining the geology of it all.

We feel moved by the magnificence of this place. It is a fitting kinder for our Yarra. The sun is beginning to lower. We are still a long way from home, and it is George's wedding anniversary. He wants to be home, but he also wants to find the Yarra's source.

We have been promised the Upper Yarra Dam, but on the way in we detour to the Yarra Portal, the site of the amazing end of the engineering which brought the Thompson River through the mountains to join the Yarra. It does not look much on the face of it, but it represents an enormous human achievement, even if one does not agree with the ecology.

We have already argued during the journey about cloud seeding. The MMBW has been experimenting with seeding clouds in order to make it rain on the west side of the range, to help fill the Thompson and the O'Shannassy. They worked out the effect of seeding on Gippsland and concluded there would be no detriment, but still one doubts the wisdom of playing God like that. He and the Mother know what needs rain where, when, not us. So we admire the Portal, and proceed back towards the Dam. On the way we cross the Yarra, a sheet of silver in the late afternoon light. She is very powerful already at this stage, a strong adolescent, powering over her boulder path cutting through valleys, confident, curious, little knowing her fate at the next bend.

Through more locked gates we pass, travelling quickly before the light goes. The men talk about deer hunters. How they are illegally entering the catchment with their guns and dogs. How deer are left wounded. How recently one of the catchment caretakers called out an officer to deal with a shooter. How a deer had been found dying by the side of the dam and had to be put down. Why can't they shoot with cameras one thinks? Barbaric stuff.

Then we emerge into the soft evening light at McVeighs lookout. The Upper Yarra Dam which has swallowed our proud adolescent for the present, lies before us, pale blue in the pale pink airs. It is quite a sight. You can't say it is beautiful because it is obviously man made, an intrusion with none of the creative magic of the Master hand, but it is well, impressive.

The lookout named in honour of the old pub, where Sam allus had one at eleven. Now there is a fire tower and a spectacular view.

It is getting quiet cool now. The mists are rolling in. The mountains are silhouetted by cotton wools, reminding us of those classic Japanese paintings. Very Zen. Outlines only, mists removing the detail which only clog the mind.

It is a perfect end to the journey which began in the mists.

Somewhere below us, the Young Yarra was regrouping, pouring out the sheet of concrete to start her journey again. The wall lies close to her original path, so, the interruption, while huge, did not involve much deviation. The next section of her story is another story.

But did we find her beginnings? Instinct tells us no. That the very first voyage with the airmen was the nearer thing and could be reinvestigated before long. It is a quest to be satisfied. Watch for further installments.

1988

#### Maroondah Dam could resist even Noah's flood

It would take a flood the size of one which prompted Noah to build his ark before the Maroondah Dam would be even likely to collapse.

That's the verdict of MMBWS site manager at Maroondah Dam, Phil Stevens.

Phil is in charge of an \$8 - \$ 10 million project to upgrade the dam.

The first stage of the project, completed last year, saw 85,000 cubic metres of rock and soil removed, doubling the width of the dam's spillway and increasing its capacity 10 fold.

Later, a new footbridge will enable visitors to the dam to walk along the dam wall, across the widened spillway and on to a new lookout offering unparalleled views of the dam and beyond.

Currently contractors are working on the dam wall.

It is this work which has concerned many residents who think : 'If they're working on the dam then it must be unsafe ..."

But that's not the case Phil said.

Every dam has a safety factor which must remain above a minimum level. That is, the dam wall must be able to cope with a maximum flood.

Even if Noah's flood hit Healesville next week, Phill is not convinced the Maroondah Dam wall would collapse.

But as the wall has a safety factor "marginally below" the acceptable level, it is theoretically unacceptable, prompting the MMBW to carry out strengthening works on the dam wall.

A huge rotary drill, not unlike an apple corer, is at work drilling a series of 78 pits into the dam wall, each 2m deep and 1.5m in diameter. These holes will then be filled with reinforced concrete headblocks.

The next stage of the project will see post-tensioning cables comprising 44 strands of 15mm cable in a grease filled polyethylene sleeve inserted through the headblocks and the 45m deep dam wall and almost as far again into the ground below the wall.

Once anchored, the cables will be tensioned using a 1000-ton jack.

In the meantime, the public is still able to visit one of Healesville's most popular tourist attractions, although they can't walk across the dam wall for safety reasons.

Careful planning by the MMBW has meant the multi-million dollar project has had only minimal affect on the amenity of the area.

And as if in evidence of this, a wallaby bounded across an access road as Phil was taking me on a tour of the construction areas.

Any areas which have been affected by the construction works will be replanted once the project is completed.

1988

#### Fatal Smash

A Two-yearold Millgrove boy was killed when the small Toyota sedan he was travelling in went out of control and hit a tree stump on Woods Point Rd, 50 km east of Melbourne early on Saturday morning.

Sgt. Ray Mathieson, of Warburton police, said five people, who were also in the car at the time of the accident, received serious injuries.

Two passengers were transferred to the Alfred Hospital by helicopter, while the other two were taken to Box Hill Hospital and one person was treated at Healesville Hospital.

Sgt. Mathieson said due to the remoteness of the area; it took more than two hours before the emergency services arrived.

"A number of hunters who were in the area at the time, used CB radios to communicate to the police station,' he said.

"They also assisted the injured party by keeping them warm with blankets."

1989

Fire tower stands silent sentinel over bushland

The fire tower on Mt St Leonard stands sentinel over 12,000 Ha of forest near Healesville, helping to protect Melbourne's water supplies and the Yarra Valley from bushfires.

Mt St Leonard is one of four Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works fire towers which guard 100,000 ha of forests in the central highlands of the Great Dividing Range.

Located 15 kilometres from Healesville, it is the MMBW's main fire tower and stands in the Maroondah catchment, which feeds Maroondah Reservoir.

The 20 metre Mt St Leonard tower, which was built in 1949, will soon be replaced by a 35 metre Telecom tower, which should be fully operational by next summer. The MMBW will still man this tower for fire spotting. The tower can spot fires within a 145 ha radius in most directions - as far away as Geelong, Westernport, Mt Donna Buang, the city, Yan Yean and Mt Disappointment.

The Maroondah catchment is still recovering from the devastating 1939 bushfires and will need another 150 years to yield the same amount of water as 50 years ago.

By then - barring any more fires - the mountain ash will be mature and drinking less water than the younger trees. This means more water for the reservoir and ultimately, for the residents of Melbourne.

Because fire can dramatically change the forest ecology and therefore the water storage levels, fire detection is a vital responsibility of the MMBW.

Apart from detecting and preventing fires in its on areas, the MMBW works with the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands and the Country Fire Authority, which can both be contacted by radio from the tower.

The tower is manned 24 hours a day during severe fires, such as the Ash Wednesday bushfires in 1983. During normal summers, it is manned on average 10 hours a day.

Providing vital overseas links

The Mt St Leonard fire tower is not only vital for fire protection; it is also an important communication link.

Telephone calls to America, Japan and New Zealand, and television programs such as the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and the recent Australian Tennis Open, were relayed through microwave dishes at Mt St Leonard.

Telecom has built a taller tower to replace the 40-year-old Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works tower, which will be demolished.

The MMBW will continue to spot fires next summer from the new tower, which commands 145-km views in most directions.

The new tower provides the latest digital communication links to Marysville, Narbethong and Toolangi and also extra circuits from Healesville to Melbourne.

International telephone calls and TV and data link transmissions to the Pacific region are connected via the Scoresby overseas gateway exchange and repeated through Dunn's Hill in the Dandenongs, Mt St Leonard, and

onto the OTC earth station at Healesville, from where they are transmitted to a satellite above the Pacific.

The OTC earth station and microwave dish at Mt St Leonard were built for the 1984 Olympics.

Mt St Leonard handles traffic from Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania to the Pacific Basin, and 007 calls from mobile telephones.

1989

#### Track Opens

A new walking track and lookout was opened at the Maroondah Reservoir Park last week especially for park visitors in the coming school holidays.

The Board of Works Upper Yarra regional manager, Mr Alistair Munro, opened the new 800 metre long walking track and lookout.

Board of Works forester Mr Stuart Ord, said the board had hurried the opening so holiday makers could enjoy the place.

Mr Ord said the new lookout provided a superb 180 degree view over both the reservoir and the surrounding terrain from Mt Donna Buang to Dom Dom Saddle in the east.

The board spent \$50,000 on the track and lookout.

1989

#### Body in burning car identified

Police have identified a body that was found in a burning car in Healesville recently. The man 28, who police believe committed suicide, was from South Yarra. Healesville's Sen-Constable Glenn Piper said the body was identified by a Sydney dentist. The car was found on October 19 on the Maroondah Highway, 15 km east of Healesville at 8.10 pm.

1990

#### Dam upgrade near end

For many years the Maroondah Dam has been a visiting spot for many families.

During the past two years the face of the dam has been changing because of a Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works project to update the dam.

The MMBW is looking at all its dams to see if they are deemed safe by current standards.

The spillway of the Maroondah dam is being increased from 17 to 38 metres and will provide greater safety from flooding. The construction project leader for upgrading the Maroondah Dam, Mr Phil Stevens, said the dam had not met safety standards, but when they drilled into the concrete they found the foundations were better than expected.

He said that when the dam was built in the 1920s, it was the first dam to be built from concrete.

"At the time, dams were normally built from local clays but this area didn't have any and as concrete was just starting to come into its own, they decided to go for it," Mr Stevens said.

Instead of clay, the board used the local rock (Rhyodacite) through the concrete structure to take up a degree of the bulk.

Mr Stevens said the dam, was a cyclopean dam that it holds back the water under its own weight.

The upgrading is at its final stage - the fabrication and installation of steel cables to reinforce the wall.

The cables are extra high tensile strength cable made by BHP and are exclusively Australian made.

Each strand of cable is individually pushed through a grease bath to allow the cables to move and to prevent corrosion, however the first 10 metres do not get greased so as to grip with concrete grouting.

The time it takes the complete a whole cable assembly is one day, and there are 78 to make, taking 174.5 kilometres of steel cable.

Mr Stevens said that when the work was completed people would be able to walk on the bridge over the top of the dam and a new lookout has been constructed.

An area surrounding the dam that now has the equipment on it will be sealed, landscaped and made especially accessible for elderly people.

Mr Stevens said that if everything went as planned, the work should be finished by October this year.

1990

Tables and seats valued at \$4,500 have been stolen from the MMBW's Fernshaw Reserve. Healesville Police said three sets of oregon tables and seats were stolen between 5 pm on Friday, January 12 and 9am on Monday January 15.

Healesville Police are looking for the Incredible Hulk.

1991

#### Many Happies Maroondah

Work on the Maroondah Weir began in 1886. The formal opening of the Maroondah system was performed on February 18, 1891, by His Excellency the State Governor, the late Marquis of Linlithgow, then Lord Hopetoun. About 300 people traveled from Melbourne to Healesville for the opening.

Excerpts from newspapers of the time show the event had good coverage.

"At Healesville the whole transport resources of the district had been assembled at the railway station, including 60 saddle horses and 27 conveyances that ranged from the four horse coach to the ordinary coal-box buggy. The cavalcade as it set off from the township 'presented an appearance not unlike that of a travelling circus!

"The weather was excellent, and the only hindrance to the enjoyment of the day was the dust which rose in clouds all along the route to the weir. In a very brief time it utterly spoiled the comfort and the personal appearance of those who had dressed up for the occasion.

"Once the visitors reached the place appointed for the ceremony, an immediate rush was made for the waters of the Maroondah, where Ministers of the crown were to be seen vying with civil servants and the general public in the rush to secure points on the pebbly and treacherous bank, where they could perform a hurried toilette without soap and with no better towel than a pocket handkerchief!

His Excellency himself did not disdain this humble method of ablution, and with hearty goodwill joined the group of legislators busily engaged in knocking the dust out of their coats by the simple process of banging them against trees or anything else that came handy.

1992

#### Lost Youths Found

Two youths lost in the bush near Warburton were found safe and well when they walked into Marysville early on Sunday morning.

The youths, both 17, from Mt Evelyn, became disorientated while searching for fishing holes along Track 15 in the Acheron Gap area about 3.30 pm on Saturday.

The alarm was raised when the youths failed to rejoin companions later that day.

Members of the State Emergency Service, police from Warburton, Yarra Junction, Croydon and the Traffic Operations Group along with volunteers spent the night searching rugged bushland along the Acheron Way. The police helicopter and members of the Search and Rescue Unit were called on Sunday but were diverted when it was reported the youths had been found.

A police spokesman said the youths were not prepared for a night in the bush and had they stopped walking when they realised they were lost would have been located a great deal earlier.

1993

#### National park proposal

The Land Conservation Council (LCCX) has proposed a Central Highlands National Park be established, incorporating Melbourne's major water supply catchments of Maroondah, O'Shannessy and Upper Yarra Reservoirs.

The new 73,000 ha national park is a major feature of the LCC's proposed recommendations for public land use in the Central Highlands and Dandenongs, released late last week.

The LCC report also proposes:

- \*The downgrading of the Dandenong Ranges National Park to a state park and its expansion to include Olinda State Forest and conservation areas in Mt Dandenong and Montrose;

- \*The improved protection of habitat for the endangered Helmeted Honeyeater by expansion of the Yellingbo Reserve 3 km upstream along Worri Yallock Creek;

- \*A call for a compromise between the habitat demands of the endangered leadbeaters' possum and timber production, which will give the industry sustainable yield at the legislated level;

- \*Continued management of water catchment area by Melbourne Water under special legislation;

- \*The identification of 475,000 ha of State Forest for continued timber extraction and recreational activities; and,

- \*Maintaining existing licensed log output in the current license period.

The LCC invites public comment by June 30, Copies of the proposed recommendations are available for \$9 from the Law Printer Sales, P.O. Box 292, South Melbourne 3205.

1993

#### \$12 million Project

Melbourne Water has begun work on a \$12 million project to ensure the security of Melbourne's water supply system from the Thomson and Upper Yarra Reservoirs to Melbourne.

At the same time, Melbourne Water will improve native blackfish habitat in the catchment through first-time environmental flows and by installing fish breeding boxes in the Yarra River below the dam.

Stage one of the outlet project - a 3.2 metre diameter tunnel to carry water from 29 metres below full supply level - is well under way.



The new works, expected to be commissioned in August 1994, will double the capacity of the existing outlet to handle up to 3000 megalitres a day.

The project will also provide a secure solution to the Yarra Valley's natural landslip risk which has the potential to disrupt supply from the existing outlet to the Thomson and Upper Yarra reservoirs.

Melbourne Water's Manager Water Supply Division, Mr Graeme Jackson, said the existing outlet had been in service for 40 years and was approaching the limits of its design capabilities.

"Almost 80% of Melbourne's water needs flow through the outlet."

"The new outlet will double the capacity to meet future demands and is sited in an area unaffected by potentially unstable ground conditions."

Melbourne Water engineers designed the project in conjunction with acknowledged world leaders in reservoir control structures the West Australian University Centre for Water Research.

The new outlet will consist of a single opening, 29 metres below full supply level connected to the existing Upper Yarra Transfer Pipeline by a 3.2 metre diameter steel-lined tunnel and a 2.4 metre diameter steel pipeline.

Mr Jackson said the Upper Yarra reservoir would be held at a low level for the final stages of construction.

1993

The skies above Upper Yarra have some added interest with the opening of a Hang Glider launching ramp in the area.

The ramp is located on the South side ( facing Yarra Junction ) of the main ridge between Mt Ben Cairn and Mt Donna Buang. It is operated by the Eastern Hang Gliding Club under the direction of the Victorian Hang Gliding Association and enthusiasts, many of them local, are already giving it the thumbs up.

Following a series of test glides, short launch to ground flights to test conditions, favourable weather over the last couple of weeks have prompted several pilots to take the plunge and launch full flights over the valley much to the astonishment and delight of many locals watching from below.

Watching these graceful craft soar the skies is a breathtaking sight and we are assured by local enthusiast, Kirk Syme, that it's even more spectacular from 3,000 feet up. (We will take his word for it).

Kirk explained that all hang gliding sites carry a rating and ours is rated for advanced pilots, or intermediate pilots in the presence of an advanced pilot. All flying, including hang gliding, is regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority and Kirk says that the clubs insist on strict adherence to the regulations.

Flights are restricted to below 1,000 feet above the mountain and out over the valley due to commercial flight paths in the area. Hang gliders carry instruments and pilots are trained in navigation, meteorology and aeronautics as well as being assessed for flying skills.

Kirk said the club is extremely grateful to the property owners who have given the club permission to use their paddocks as landing sites, but the club is also aware that there are a few people in the community who have valid concerns regarding hang gliders operating in the valley.

1993

Melbourne Water Tower is not so shaky  
(There'll be less sway in Pat's day!)

Melbourne Water Firewatcher, Pat Ward, and the new 33 metre fire tower on top of Cold Water Hill in O'Shannassy Reservoir Catchment form the first line of defence against the dangers of bushfire.

Fire prevention is essential to protect the quality and quantity of Melbourne's world standard drinking water supply.

Melbourne Water's remedy - a new, 33 metre observation tower at Cold Water Hill with a sway of only 10 mm compared to 400mm - will guarantee Pat the feel of dry land and better views of important catchments.

Located 50 metres higher than the original, 1450 metres above sea level, the \$130,000 tower will give clear views of more than 50 per cent of the O'Shannassy catchment and adjacent Maroondah and Upper Yarra catchments.

Melbourne Water's Manager, Water Supply Division Mr Graeme Jackson, said tree growth in the 17ha zone around the existing tower, a short distance from the new Cold Water Hill observation point had obscured all but 20 percent of the catchment.

"Better views from the new Melbourne Water firewatch tower will mean savings of up to \$80,000 a year through quicker response times and lower fire damage," he said.

"This is because unburnt mature forest trees use less water than young trees and yield more water for storage and public use."

Mr Jackson said designers and contractors EPT Ltd had fast-tracked the project in readiness for the fire season.

1994

Sitting on top of a swaying 33 metre tower in a howling gale is all in a day's work for Pat Ward.

Mr Ward is a firewatcher for Melbourne Water and his patch is Cold Water Hill over the O'Shannassy Reservoir in Warburton.

For the past 16 seasons, his "home" was on top of an SEC pylon with an extension to give more height.

This year, he was given a new 33 metre observation tower further up the hill. The Poley Tower is 50 metres higher than the original at 1450 metres above sea level, giving Mr Ward a clear view of the O'Shannassy catchments and the adjacent Maroondah and Upper Yarra catchments.

Apart from the obvious advantages of a better view, the new tower only sways 10mm, compared with the 400mm sway on the old tower.

"During last week's high winds, there was only a quiver from the new tower, while the old one would have swayed so much I would have been seasick," Mr Ward said.

While he said firewatching was one of the loneliest and most boring jobs, he was not about to swap it.

"I do have one of the best views in Victoria," he said.

His eyes never stop scanning his territory and he misses nothing.

"It becomes automatic after a while, your eyes are always looking for something no matter what else you are doing," he said.

"What you are looking for is what shouldn't be there - smoke."

Mr Ward said about 95 per cent of the fires in his area were caused by lightning strikes.

"After a lightning strike, I always keep my eye on the area for days afterwards as it can take that long for the fire to erupt," he said.

When he sights smoke, he pinpoints the location through a special telescope and notifies the CFA.

Responsibility

That's the end of my responsibility and I never get to see the result of my work, the actual control of the fire," Mr Ward said.

Mr Ward was on top of the tower when the Ash Wednesday fires swept past Warburton. "When the fire hit the top of Mount Little Joe, it was just

rolling in waves," he said. "It was terrifying and beautiful at the same time."

The newer tower will mean a saving to Melbourne Water of up to \$80,000 a year through quicker response times and lower damage.

1994

Nabbed by 'Hills Car'

At 3am on Tuesday, November 22 the Hills Car pulled over a rental truck on Mt Donna Buang Road for a routine check. Two of the occupants of the truck, which was filled with fertilizer, ran off into the bush. The other two, a 43 year old man from Preston and a 19 year old Greek national who is on holiday and staying in Preston, were detained by police.

Further investigation led to the identification and location of over 2,000 cannabis plants in the forest.

Detectives from Lilydale CIB and members of Knox DSG raided two houses in Preston later in the day and found more cannabis.

The two men were charged with conspiracy to traffic and cultivate a drug of dependence and were remanded in custody.

They appeared before the Box Hill Magistrate's Court and were bailed with strict conditions to appear before the Melbourne Magistrate's Court on December 13. Bail conditions are : both men must report daily to the Preston police, surrender their passports, not to attend a place of international departure and reside at their home addresses.

Enquiries are continuing to locate and identify the other two people in the truck.

The police helicopter took the plants and personal belongings that were at the cleared site in the bush.

This was a very good catch by the Hills Car and it indicates that the police are out there.

1994

From a Biography of Dr Alfred John Trinca

The Black Spur road skirted the Maroondah Reservoir and soon A. J. Trinca's nimble brain had conceived the notion that the Reservoir was likely to be a veritable haven for trout. It was not long before he discovered a way into its precincts, which were of course strictly out of bounds to the general public. To poach fish from the waters of a forbidden sanctuary was a thrilling challenge and a test of his ingenuity and nerve. The boundary fence of barbed wire was no obstacle to one who had seen masses of entanglements in the battlefields of France. Using his natural agility, a convenient log and some hessian sacks he would clamber rapidly into the forbidden territory.

Leaving home shortly before midnight, Alf Trinca with one or two friends used to travel the 45 miles to Maroondah, park his car off the main highway, enter the catchment area at his selected point and fish happily and productively for a couple of hours. The fishing invariably came up to expectations and the truants would return home between four and five a.m. in the morning with a large bag of trout of varying sizes. The fish were proudly displayed on the sloping lawn near the front door of Trinca's home. One of those whom he persuaded to accompany him on these illicit nocturnal expeditions was Peter MacCallum, the Professor of Pathology at the University of Melbourne.

1995

Donna Buang's Tower will be up again soon

The 14 metre tower on Mt. Donna Buang came down last week (May).

Mr. Jon Gwilt, Ranger in Charge of the Department of the Department of Conservation and Environment at Yarra Junction advised that contractors removed the tower in two sections.

The tower has been taken down to have a seven metre extension added to raise it to 21 metres.

Some ten years ago the view from the top of the tower covered a 360 degree area, however, the growth of the trees eventually blocked most of the view.

Once extended and re-erected the panoramic view will again be visible from the top of the 21 metre tower.

It is anticipated that the tower will be back on Mt. Donna Buang within the next three or four weeks.

1995

#### Timber workers protest at Yarra Ranges Park

TIMBER workers and their families, with signs and banners, were at the Dom Dom Saddle on Friday to demonstrate their concerns over the Federal Government's latest forest strategy to Mark Birrell the Victorian Minister for Conservation and Environment.

The demonstration was, we are happy to report, uneventful and good humoured (The large police contingent stayed well in the background.)

Protestors were taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the opening of Victoria's newest park, the Yarra Ranges National Park, by Mr Birrell.

The Minister told the timber workers he was happy to take up their concerns with the Keating Government in the hope of "locking in jobs" in the forest industry for the long term to "get the security you deserve."

Mr Birrell then went on to open the Park with a speech which emphasised the importance of the water catchments in the area. The catchments make up 84% of the 76,000 hectare park.

The catchments are closed to the public as they have been for almost 100 years, in order to protect Melbourne's water supply. The new park (that is, the additional 16%) is being managed under an agreement between the National Park Service and Melbourne Water.

Members of the Victorian National Parks Association, the oldest conservation group in Victoria, later expressed their disappointment at the size of the park. They believe the park should have included many areas containing endangered flora and fauna which need protection well into the future.

#### Comment:

\*This "front gate" into the new park is a great improvement and, when completed, should look much more inviting to those travelling on the Black Spur Road between Narbethong and Buxton/Marysville).

Motorists, in the old days, were tempted to stop only if the need for a toilet was urgent! The new toilets look more ferny than functional - but still, an improvement.

The afternoon was a real "Who's Who" of timber personalities. I saw, among others, three generations of Dembys and three of McKinnells. I spotted Alex and Gary Demby, Ron Reid, Ron Furmston, Sue and Rob McKinnell, Lloyd Gould, Jan Coulton, Harry Whiteley, Dick Dent, Ray Donkin, Chris Peak and many more.

Rob McKinnell of McKinnell and Gross and the CNR Senior Ranger, Mark Woodman, took me across to the big logs which had been felled to extend the size of the picnic and parking area.

Rob pointed out that the big logs (perhaps 800 to 1000 mm across) were 'C' and 'D' grade saw logs. But the 200 to 300 mm logs which, to my untrained eye, looked like good sawlogs, were pulp logs and should be made into woodchip or burnt.

Rob and Mark said that mills like Midway, in Geelong could not take these pulp logs because their woodchip quota had been cut by up to 20 per cent. APM could not take them for similar reasons.

Must say there was a certain irony in the felling of so many trees to make the new park "more attractive".

It was not Rob McKinnell's idea to fell them. He had been asked to do the work and he did it. But I would like to think in other instances, that the solution is - if you are not permitted to make woodchip or paper pulp from these poor quality trees - don't cut them down at all!

The timber industry would say, however, that this is the crux of their complaint. (It was explained to me later that the best of the sawlogs come from the base of the tree and the higher you go up the tree the poorer the quality timber - and the more likely you are to find only pulp wood. If I understand this correctly, It means that when big trees are felled for the saw logs lower down, you may be left with timber that can ONLY be turned into woodchip, or burnt.)

1995

'New' Yarra Ranges Park ... "it's a Claytons"

VICTORIAN conservation groups (Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA), Environment Victoria and the Australian Conservation Foundation) described the Federal Government's ( it was actually the State Government ) declaration of the 75,000 ha Yarra Ranges National Park as a "lost opportunity" for conservation in Victoria. The groups claimed that the "very limited park" would not protect the State's faunal emblem, Leadbeaters Possum, and other high conservation values of the Central Highlands in the longer term.

The group's spokesperson, VNPA President, Anne Casey, said that the 'new' park based principally on Melbourne's existing protected closed water catchments "was inadequate in size, lacked vision and pandered to the narrow, short term demands of the timber industry."

"It leaves many areas of high conservation value vulnerable to unsustainable logging practices," she said. "Rare flora and fauna will continue to remain threatened by the inadequacy of this park."

"While we support the creation of a park with the catchments at its core, the extent of this park is extremely disappointing. Viewed in perspective, only 20%, of 14,800 ha of the 75,900 ha park, consists of actual newly protected areas, given the century long protected status of the water catchments. Meanwhile the timber industry would retain access to 465,000 ha of the forest for logging and woodchipping in the area," Ms Casey said. "And only 20% of the 'new' park will be accessible to visitors. It is a 'Claytons' national park." she said.

Ms Casey added, "It was lamentable that the State Government has not even seen the sense in making small additions to the park proposed by conservation groups (10 proposed areas, 25,000 ha in all, including Cement Creek, Mt Bullfight and a link with Baw Baw National Park) that would have at least given the new park baseline integrity."

1996

Holiday Getaways

Introducing the new Yarra Ranges National Park

Victoria's newest national park extends east from Healesville, past Warburton to the headwaters of the Yarra and north beyond Marysville.

The gateway to the park is the Black Spur, east of Healesville which will take you to Marysville and beyond. This is a spectacular drive through one of the prettiest parts of Victoria enhanced by majestic eucalypts, mountain ash and rich treeferns.

Within the park you will discover magnificent forests, treefern glades, stunning scenery, spectacular waterfalls and major water catchments. There are good tourist roads, walking tracks and picnic facilities. At Mt. Donna Buang and Lake Mountain lookout towers provide breathtaking views across the national park and distant areas.

Hollow trees in the park provide homes to possums, gliders, owls, and other fauna, as well as nesting sites for the many colourful birds that dwell in the park area, including cockatoos and parrots.

On the summit of Mt. Donna Buang, 24 kms from Warburton, a 21 metre lookout tower provides sensational panoramic views all across the Victorian alps, valleys and, on a clear day, even to Port Phillip Bay and Melbourne. At the top of the tower are display boards with photographs of the areas on view, identifying the different mountain sites.

Mt Donna Buang is 1260 metres high and was named by the Wurundjeri people as Dthonn-e-youang or "body of the mountain" because they thought it was shaped like a sleeping body. The name was simplified by Europeans to Donna Buang.

The summit at Mt. Donna Buang has recently been transformed to accommodate visitors all year round.

It is worth the drive just to see the views from the tower, but there are also interesting new visitor information boards with details and photographs about the mountain's history, original lookout tower of 1912, snowfields, trees and fires.

The Yarra Ranges National Park is not just a winter playground in the snow season.

It is a beautiful area offering something different all year round and is certainly the place to visit for day or weekend trips.

A brochure on the Yarra Ranges National Park is available from the National Parks Service at the Department of Conservation and Environment.

1997

Yarra Falls

By Ben Kreunen

The Walk to Falls Creek

Easter '97. With a few days off work I decided to rediscover Yarra Falls. This waterfall is on Falls Creek, a small tributary high on the Yarra River, with another five waterfalls upstream. It used to be a popular stop along the track from McVeigh's Hotel to Mt Baw Baw but all that changed. McVeigh's Hotel is now somewhere at the bottom of Upper Yarra Reservoir and Falls Creek is in the Melbourne Water Catchment of the Upper Yarra Reservoir. There would be no tracks so I kept my compass handy, not that it was really necessary but I wanted to avoid entering Falls Creek valley too soon as it was pretty steep.

I drove along the dirt track to the south of the river and slowed down to look for the thinnest section of undergrowth to start my walk. There wasn't one really, so I reversed up and picked the "thinnest" undergrowth to walk through. After a short distance the undergrowth became much clearer and the going was much easier. Another 100m or so and I found a piece of yellow electrical tape hanging from a twig. I guessed that someone else had marked a track to the first waterfall at the top of the

Falls Creek valley (since there was really nowhere else to go) and sure enough I found another piece on the same bearing that I was walking. Enough people had walked this "track" that you could just make out a trail on the ground. The trail continued along tree trunks wherever possible to avoid walking through the bush.

In no time at all I reached the top of the first waterfall. There used to be a track cut down the north side of the valley that went down the north side of the valley that went down to the other 4 waterfalls just below and then on to Yarra Falls further down the valley. From the gradient and thickness of the bush I decided that I was not going to try to find any trace of it and would instead aim for the next ridge and follow that down to the Yarra River. I stopped here for lunch and to take a few photographs of the first fall.

The forest had been reasonably open until this point. It then changed and became hopelessly tangled. The steep slope combined with the almost impenetrable undergrowth and countless slippery branches lying on the ground made the going very hard. I eventually reached the top of the ridge and was disheartened to find that it didn't get any clearer. After struggling through another 100m or so of thick undergrowth it all suddenly disappeared.

The forest opened up completely with only leaves and logs on the ground. And what logs they were. It's not often that I have to climb over a log but the trees here had been saved from logging and the fallen trees were huge. I found no sign of any blazed trees marking the old trail but occasionally I thought I could see a leveled overgrown track about 1.5m wide.

I made fairly quick time down the ridge which became steeper and steeper towards the end and suddenly as the forest had opened up it became a dense tangle once more. The last 100m down the ridge was soul destroying. It required so much effort just to take one step that at one stage I just turned around and pushed through the undergrowth with my back pack. The undergrowth was so thick I ended up walking on bent, intertwined branches and would occasionally find myself about a metre above ground.

I eventually made it down to the beautiful junction of Falls Creek and the Yarra River, a broad fern gully, at sunset. I set up camp on a sand bank at the junction of the two streams and hoped that it wouldn't rain too much that night.

The next day I planned to walk up Falls Creek to Yarra Falls and back.

Yarra Falls.

The walk up Falls Creek turned out to be a relatively simple one. The entire walk was in amongst a wonderful fern gully. I had to keep swapping from one side to the other as the bank became too steep but there was always somewhere to walk, even if it was on top of a 1.5m wide tree trunk. The only really annoying part was the leeches but considering the length of the walk I didn't fair that badly.

Eventually I reached it, 'the black hole' as it was sometimes known. The sides of the valley are so steep that from above you could hear the waterfall but not see it. The falls were a little shorter than I expected and the gorge into which it fell a little wider. This was certainly not, though, a black hole. After emerging from the darkness of the tree ferns this was quite the opposite and I spent most of my time waiting for the sun to go behind a cloud.

The original photograph I had seen of these falls was taken from a small ledge about 5m higher than the view from this ledge so I didn't bother attempting the tricky climb to it.

I stayed there for lunch before heading back down along the creek. While I made 'good' progress it must have been slower than I thought, as

I returned to the tent in fading light. After evicting the leeches from my tent I settled down to a good nights sleep in preparation for the walk back through those two stretches of thick undergrowth and a few unexpected finds.

#### Yarra Falls

A few surprises on the way out.

A few light showers overnight had made everything dripping with water but it wasn't really very cold. I decided against putting my waterproof pants on as they would probably make me too hot. This turned out to be a good move. After packing up my campsite I tried to find a break through the undergrowth for my return journey. There were none. It was going to be a couple of hours of take one step, part the branches, put the camera bag on the ground ahead, part more branches .... over and over.

When I reached the clearer forest again I found a piece of green electrical tape on a small tree. It was on what appeared to be another remnant of the old track, a level section cut across the slope about 1.5m wide. The track went left across the ridge and another piece of tape made me guess that someone had tried to retrace the old track. That's all very nice but I just wanted to go home and I headed straight up the ridge.

The old tourist map of Yarra Falls marks a lookout where you can see the upper five falls. I had looked for it briefly on the way down without success but found it on the way up. I could only hear them at first but found the spot after wandering down the side of the ridge a little. And then it was back into the thick undergrowth. By now I had developed a technique for getting through the bushes, and knew which tree to avoid. It was still tough going and I reached Falls Creek again slightly above the first fall.

This part of the creek was typical of the difference between the forest and any other that I had walked through. Normal fire prevention management reduces the amount of dead timber and leaf litter on the ground ... not just across the creek but everywhere down the slope. This made walking quite tricky with the occasional slide down a slippery log to get the adrenaline going.

While heading back towards the first fall I came across a beautiful patch of forest. Three giant tree trunks crossed a small creek at different angles, providing a perfect bridge and an excellent 'aerial' view of the forest floor. From here I followed the yellow tape back to the road and emerged from the forest a short distance from my car. What else lies hidden in these Yarra Ranges.

1998

#### Monda Monarch falls

THE Furmston Tree on Mt Monda east of Healesville has fallen.

The tree, thought to be anywhere between 300 and 500 years old is believed to be the 'Von Mueller' Tree discovered by the famous botanist, Baron Ferdinand Von Mueller during the mid nineteenth century and rediscovered during the 1930s by Mr Harold Furmston.

Harold's brother, Mr Ron Furmston of Healesville, told Mountain Views the tree collapsed in January after an extremely dry period followed by heavy rain. On impact the tree, being hollow and rotten shattered into thousands of pieces across the Maroondah Catchment track.

Healesville Historical Society members were among the thousands of people who had made the trek to stand in awe of 'the monarch of Mount Monda'. Over the years the Furmston Tree has been a mecca for bushwalkers, horticulturists and botanists, students, and of course,



local residents who felt it a special privilege to have this towering giant on their doorstep.

"The Furmston Tree often captured our imagination of what the forest must have looked like before European settlement," wrote Historical Society President, Alma Mitchell in the Society's newsletter. "According to various reports of the early days, similar giants were fairly common although this particular tree was probably a bit larger than most."

The Furmston brothers worked for the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (The Board) in the catchment around Healesville for decades.

Ron is held in high regard by 'Board' employees who called to let him know of the demise of his brother's tree and to give him some photographs of the historic event.

1998

#### Nearly there

TWO Brisbane men who have undertaken to cycle the Bicentennial Trail from top to bottom of Australia reached Healesville on February 27.

Alex McConnell and Dave Wright, the first to cycle the entire trail, left Bamaga. on the tip of Cape York on October 3 last year and have ridden 6,900km so far. The ride is to promote the national telephone counseling service Kids Help Line to children and young people in rural and remote areas.

Kids Help Line is a free confidential service available 24 hours a day to all young Australian aged between five and 18. The toll free number is 1800 55 1800.

1998

#### Praise for Beeches Walk

THE Beeches Walk in the Yarra Ranges National Park has won acclaim as one of the country's most outstanding scenic tracks.

It has been selected by the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) as one of 23 sites for its statewide national parks centenary walk program.

Located just off Lady Talbot Forest Drive, near Marysville, the one-hour circuit track explores tall mountain ash forest, rainforest scenery, a raging creek and several waterfalls.

Ever-increasing number of visitors are praising the beauty of this exceptional fern gully, comparing the track to the best rainforest walk anywhere in Australia.

New information is soon to be available at the Parks Victoria Information Centre in Main St. Marysville, to help visitors discover park features such as the diverse range of ferns and rainforest trees such as beech and sassafras.

The first VNPA escorted walk along the short but stimulating track was fully booked.

A second walk is scheduled for this Wednesday (March 18). Bookings can be made by calling 94398351.

If you miss out on a VNPA walk. Parks Victoria rangers say the Beeches Walk can be enjoyed any time by groups, families or solo walkers.

The VNPA'S 23 guided walks are linked with Parks Victoria's celebrations of the 100th anniversary of national parks in Victoria.

1998

#### Yarra Ranges draft park plan

YARRA Ranges National Park will continue to help protect Melbourne's water supply while providing additional protection to nationally significant forests and endangered species according to a recently released draft management plan.

Parks Victoria chief executive Jeff Floyd said the plan, prepared jointly by Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water, includes measures to protect the park's pristine water catchments.

"Under the plan, access will continue to be restricted in and around the catchment system to allow Melbourne Water to protect the city's water supply," Mr Floyd said.

He said the draft plan proposes a range of nature based activities with recreation and interpretation facilities, upgraded and new short walking tracks away from the catchment areas, will be enhanced.

"I invite interested individuals and organisations to consider and comment on the proposals in this draft plan," Mr Floyd said.

Melbourne water chief executive officer Brian Bayley said the primacy of protecting the quality of Melbourne's water supply was a principal consideration in the development of the plan.

"Around half of Melbourne's water comes from these protected wilderness areas which have been preserved for the sole purpose of providing pure water to Melbourne for the past 100 years," Mr Bayley said.

Yarra Ranges National Park, one of Victoria's newest parks, encompasses 75,000 hectares of largely pristine, old growth ash forests and rainforests of natural significance.

It is a sanctuary for rare and endangered species including the Leadbeaters possum, Victoria's faunal emblem, which was considered extinct until it was rediscovered in an area now included in the park.

The Yarra Ranges remains a very popular location for day visits to Lake Mountain and Mount Donna Buang, the tall lush mountain forests by the Yarra River providing ideal settings for bushwalking, picnicking and sightseeing.

Copies of the plan are available for \$8 from the Parks Victoria offices at Worri Yallock and Healesville or head office, 378 Cotham Rd, Kew, and from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Information Centre, 8 Nicholson St, East Melbourne.

Submissions close on May 14. For further information phone Parks Victoria on 131963.

1998

## Warburton's Skyway to Heaven

By Kath Gannaway

INCLEMENT weather was not going to stop Parks Victoria's 'walkway to heaven' being lifted into place at Cement Creek, past Warburton last Tuesday (September 15th)

A super crane was on site, 15 kilometres out of Warburton on the Mt Donna Buang Rd, to lift the nine tonne canopy walk into place.

But, as a growing contingent of crane, engineering, Parks Victoria and media crews waited for the right moment, the skies opened, rain turned to sleet (with snow reported only metres further up) and the task grew into what could only be described as an awesome challenged.

The crane needed to be able to place the towerlike end support onto the prepared footings in the deep gully and then swing the 30 metre long walk out over the gully and set it in place.

Central Highlands District chief ranger, Rocky Barca said the crucial thing was to have a crane with the capacity to do the job without disturbing the vegetation.

The skywalk stretches out into the canopy overlooking pockets of 250 to 400 year old wet mountain ash forest interspersed with smaller patches of Myrtle Beech rainforest.

"These forests predate white settlement and are magnificent examples of ancient tree communities," Mr Barca said.

The skywalk will enable older people, children and people with a disability, to experience the majesty of the unique environment.

In addition, the new boardwalk will provide all weather access at ground level to the gullies and creeks taking visitors deep into the heart of the mossladen forest.

The skywalk is part of a project funded by the Commonwealth Tourism's, National Ecotourism Department program to provide special visitor access and facilities to the old growth forest at Cement Creek.

"The theme for the project which will include a new composting toilet facility, upgraded carparking, interpretive and information signage and improvements to the existing pedestrian access path, is to provide visitors with an understanding, appreciation and sense of wonder about the age, origin and diversity of old growth rainforests," Mr Barca said.

He said the current development of the new visitor information centre in Warburton provides a quality visitor service at a major gateway to the Yarra Ranges National Park and with visitor nodes of Mt Donna Buang, Cement Creek and Warburton, provides an extremely strong tourist precinct with potential to not only benefit the Park but private sector tourist operators in the Upper Yarra Valley.

The Cement Creek project is scheduled to be officially opened to the public early next year.

1998

#### A decade of bicentennial trail

THE 10th anniversary of the Bicentennial National Trail was celebrated during the Gateway Festival in Healesville yesterday.

The trail's board of directors returned to the town as part of the commemorative activities to mark the opening of the trail by legendary bushman R.M. Williams on October 17, 1988.

The bicentennial trail is the longest marked route in the world, stretching 5330km from Cooktown in far north Queensland to Healesville.

The trail, intended mainly for walking and horse riding, links 20 national parks and passes through several huge wilderness and world heritage areas with widely differing terrain and vegetation. To mark the anniversary, the board of directors announced they would be providing 12 grants to community organisations prepared to make "tangible improvements" to the trail.

The board also plans to identify a series of small settlements along the route as "BNT supply towns" where trail users can rest and replenish their supplies.

1998

#### Walkway into beauty spot

By Juli Tullberg

WARBURTON'S Michael Aulerich loves to visit the tranquil environment of Cement Creek near the foot of Mt Donna Buang.

With the crystal clear waters trickling through lush forest.

Cement Creek is an ideal picnic spot that is quite protected and isolated.

But when Mr Aulerich found new metal walkways installed by Parks Victoria at the site, he was not impressed.

"I am surprised the walkways don't follow a path close to the best parts of the creek," he said. "I was also concerned that it was a mess when I first went up there, but now they've cleaned it up really well. I just don't want Cement Creek to be spoilt by major development."

Parks Victoria's Central Highlands chief ranger, Rocky Barca, said the installation of metal walkways was a carefully planned project which took account of many environmental and safety considerations.

"We wanted to provide an experience for visitors in the rainforest area so they could enjoy the natural environment." Mr Barca said.

"No machinery was brought into the area and no top soil was exposed at all. The project had minimal impact on the environment.

"We wanted to enhance the visitor experience and found that the forest floor was affected by people walking through. We received sound environmental advice to install the walkways."

Mr Barca said some tree trimming was done to maximise the safety of visitors who could walk through the forest without trees interfering with the path.

1999

A BIG black animal resembling a panther is reported to have been seen in the Ben Cairn Mountain Ranges, near Mt Donna Buang.

Police have had two separate reports of the animal about the size of a labrador, wandering in the area. They say there have been similar sightings there over the years.

1999

#### Site for suicides

YARRA Ranges National Park is one of Victoria's most popular places for men to commit suicide, says a Melbourne social worker.

Andre Humphreys has just released the findings of a report into the locations of suicides throughout local government areas.

Mr Humphreys found that 79 people from the Yarra Ranges killed themselves between 1990 and 1995.

Those deaths were mainly by hanging, carbon monoxide poisoning from car fumes, or gunshots.

The data was based on information contained in The Report into Unnatural Deaths by the Coroner, 1990 to 1995.

Mr Humphreys found that a "disproportionate" number of young and older men had sought the solitude of the Yarra Ranges National Park to kill themselves.

"The Yarra Ranges Park has certainly had too many suicides in it and is one of the state's focal points for people, particularly men who want to commit suicide," he said.

Between 1990 and 1995, 18 young men aged under 25 from the Yarra Ranges killed themselves, compared to two females.

Thirty-three men aged between 26 and 50 killed themselves compared to 11 females in the area and 10 males and five females aged over 51 committed suicide in the Yarra Ranges.

The suicide rate for young men seemed to take off after leaving school and the support networks available for them to deal with problems were scarce, Mr Humphreys said.

"Most young men who suicide feel there is a real or perceived injustice and a failure to recognise the problem they are facing by the support networks currently available," he said.

Males were more likely to face extreme violence within their lives, including bullying and assaults in and out of school.

"We are not doing enough to protect young men. There are plenty of services available for women, but young men have been forgotten," he said.

Men kill themselves because they are told they must be strong, powerful and decisive and not show fear. They are at far more risk than females in society today."

Mr Humphreys counsels males aged 10 years and older who have suicidal tendencies.

For suicide prevention advice, call Lifeline on 13 11 44 or Here for Life on 9329 1611.

1999

Bushwalkers blame poor trail signage

By Brett Foley

A family of experienced bushwalkers who spent a wet and windy night in the Yarra Ranges have blamed the lack of signs on bushwalking tracks for causing them to become lost.

The Reynolds family, from Swanpool near Benalla, huddled together under a fern near Mount St Leonard after taking a wrong turn on a track they say had no signposts.

Police held fears for Mr Eric Reynolds, 70, Mrs Joan Reynolds 56, and their 22-year-old daughter Selena after they became lost on Sunday afternoon while walking from the top of Mount St Leonard to Donnellys Weir Park, near Healesville.

Wet, foggy weather prevented the police air wing from joining the search.

At daybreak the trio walked out of the bush to a house where they rang relatives and police.

Mrs Reynolds said a section of the walk was well-marked, but sign suddenly stopped, causing them to take a wrong turn.

"If the funds are not available to mark tracks properly then they should be closed to all bushwalkers," she said. "The people before us on the very same day got into trouble and the police have said that many other have not been able to find their way out."

Police said the trio were experienced bushwalkers who were well prepared with coats, matches, food and water. They had walked in the area before.

Mr Reynolds said they left Mount St. Leonard about 1.30pm for a three-hour walk. Family members became concerned when they didn't arrive to be picked up at 5.30pm.

Mrs Reynolds said they followed a bush-walk book and turned off the Mount Monda track on to Condons track. After one kilometre they got into trouble as the signs stopped.

Mr Reynolds said more than 20 millimetres of rain fell overnight and they were drenched. They were unable to light a fire and were prey to leeches.

"We had about two or three hours hard rain but we were lucky the temperature didn't get down to freezing," he said.

They didn't get much sleep and, after a hot bath and cup of tea at a relatives house in nearby Toolangi yesterday, were ready for a long sleep last night.

Mrs Reynolds thanked the emergency services for searching but feared that less-experienced walkers who got lost in the area may not be so lucky.

1999

#### Bird's-eye view of forest

Ever wondered what it was like to be a bird fluttering around a forest canopy?

Victorians can now find out in a 500-year-old forest.

Victoria's first skywalk is a 15m high, 2m wide walkway and platform through the peaks of old growth mountain ash forest in the Yarra Ranges National Park.

Visitors can find out what really goes on at the top of trees.

Below the skywalk is a 300m raised walking track through a forest undergoing a metamorphosis.

Traditionally old-growth mountain ash, the forest is slowly transforming into a cool temperate rainforest because fire has not touched the secluded gully.

Mountain ash, which can grow to 65m, needs fire to germinate, but because the area has remained fire-free, moss, lichen, ferns and myrtle beech are taking over.

"It is old-age forest primarily dominated by mountain ash, which is drying off. What takes its place is rainforest," said Parks Victoria central highlands chief ranger Rocky Barca.

"If forests are allowed to grow up without being damaged or burned, all of the lichen and moss would be burned out, destroyed and the mountain ash would regenerate."

Hundreds of holes for the skywalk and raised walkway were dug manually over the three painstaking years of the \$750,000 project. Thin poles have been used to minimise environmental impact.

The 40m skywalk was lifted in by crane and is supported by one pylon. During construction every tree in the area was analysed for its possible risk to the public.

Alongside part of the walkway runs Cement Creek. It is fed with snowmelt from the slopes of Mt Donna Buang and eventually joins the Yarra River.

At yesterday's official opening the area was renamed Donna Buang Forest Gallery, as it sits on the slopes of Mt Donna Buang.

The skywalk, the third of its kind in Australia, and walkway are at Cement Creek on the Warburton-Donna Buang Rd.

1999

#### Take care on slippery roads

A LETHAL combination of hot weather followed by a sudden downpour is suspected to have contributed to a mishap on the Black Spur last week. Healesville relieving police sergeant, Doug Brown, said road conditions were slippery when the car, travelling towards Healesville, rounded a bend on the highway and slid off the road. Sgt Brown said the driver of the car, an Eildon woman, was not injured in the accident.

He said does, however, serve as a warning to other drivers to take particular care when road conditions change.

2000

#### Crashes after oil spill on Black Spur

THE Black Spur between Healesville and Narbethong is a stretch of road that tests drivers at any time, but last week conditions on the road were

even more dangerous than usual. It's believed one of the many trucks which use the road left a trail of oil along the road.

Police and local authorities did not become aware of the problem until the accidents began to happen - with frightening regularity.

A number of drivers managed to regain control of their vehicles after skidding on the oil, but several were not so lucky.

One of the more spectacular of the subsequent accidents occurred when a bulk carrier belonging to the Supersoils group skidded on a patch of the oil near Fernshaw Reserve on the spur, jack-knifing and going off the road.

The big articulated vehicle plunged down the embankment towards the Fernshaw Reserve picnic area, but fortunately came to rest against a tree below the lip of the road.

The driver, badly shaken but unhurt, remained at the scene while police and other emergency services controlled traffic and sealed off the accident scene.

The road remained closed to general traffic for some hours while heavy haulage vehicles cleared the scene.

Police said it was not believed the oil spill came from any of the regular heavy trucks traffic which uses the road.

VicRoads workers put in a hard day's work spreading sand and other absorbent materials on the spill, and erected warning signs at various points along the dangerous stretch of highway.

Unfortunately, it was not enough to prevent a young British woman tourist from crashing her hire car after she apparently hit a patch of the oil.

The woman, 31, eventually emerged from the bush on foot and hailed a passing motorist, who contacted police and stayed with her until an ambulance arrived shortly after.

The woman, who suffered a shoulder injury, had apparently walked for some distance through the bush before climbing back up to the road.

She was so shocked she was initially unable to direct police to the spot where the crashed hire car had come to rest.

Police found the car later in the day.

2000

Woman's arm is almost severed

One of the nastier road accidents last week in what was a busy week on the notorious Black Spur, occurred when an elderly woman driver almost had her arm severed in a crash at Dom Dom Saddle.

The woman and two friends from Taggerty were travelling along the Black Spur in a utility when the driver lost control about 100 metres on the Healesville side of the saddle.

The car plunged off the road and came to rest on its side, some distance into the bush.

When emergency services arrived at the scene the three were still trapped in the vehicle, and cutting equipment had to be used to remove the utility's roof, and free the occupants.

Intensive Care Ambulance paramedic Malcolm McLeod said the driver was the only one of the three seriously injured. She suffered what was described as "an incomplete amputation" of one arm.

She was quickly transferred to the waiting helicopter air ambulance, which had landed at the nearby picnic ground, and flown to the Alfred Hospital Trauma Centre.

Mr McLeod said the badly injured woman remained conscious throughout her ordeal.

The two passengers in the utility suffered minor injuries and were taken by Alexandra Central Ambulance to the Alexandra Base Hospital.

2002

#### Seven fined for trespassing

Melbourne Water has fine seven Yarra Ranges youths for trespassing on protected land in the O'Shannassy catchment east of Warburton.

The seven, caught last Monday ( 18th March ), were each fined \$150. It's believed the group broke into the area to go fishing.

The catchment area, part of the Yarra Ranges National Park, is closed to the public to protect the water supply.

Signs banning entry have been placed around the perimeter and the area is patrolled several times a day, during the day and night, by Melbourne Water staff and Parks Victoria rangers.

"These water supply catchments are closed to the public to minimise the risk of human-borne disease entering the water supply system and to guard against interference and vandalism to our assets," Melbourne Water managing director Brian Bayley said.

"In Melbourne more than 140,000ha of natural forest has been allocated for the harvesting of water, with about 90 per cent of our supply coming from uninhabited catchment areas. As a result Melbourne has a predominantly unfiltered water supply."

Each of the seven was fined \$150, but could have faced a \$2000 fine.

2002

#### Missing Armadale pair found in shallow grave

Two bodies found buried in a shallow bush grave north-east of Melbourne have been identified as those of a wealthy Armadale couple who disappeared mysteriously almost a month ago.

Police sources last night confirmed that Paul King 70, and his wife Margaret Wales King, 68, appeared to have been murdered. Their partly decomposed bodies were found in a forest clearing near Marysville on Monday.

The chance discovery by a pair of park rangers ended four weeks of fruitless police investigations and intense public speculation about the couple's fate.

Homicide detectives last night were waiting on post mortem examination results to determine how the couple were killed.

Two Parks Victoria officers on routine patrol discovered the bodies off a dirt track 25 kilometres east of Marysville soon after midday on Monday. The bodies were clothed and placed on top of each other in a grave about 70 centimetres deep.

Mrs Wales-King's five adult children were told of the discovery on Monday night, and yesterday were being comforted by relatives.

Detective Senior Sergeant Charlie Bezzina of the homicide squad said the rangers' attention was caught by a mound of disturbed soil.

"(The rangers) initially believed it to be a lyre-bird's nest. They returned and dug down a short distance and they saw part of a body. They then contacted police," Senior Sergeant Bezzina said.

Senior Sergeant Bezzina would not confirm the bodies were those of the missing Armadale couple.

However, the detective in charge of investigating their disappearance, Senior Sergeant Steve Waddell, was examining the scene yesterday. Police sources confirmed later that Mrs Wales-King's children had been told the bodies were those of their mother and her husband.

Detectives said they would interview family members to determine if the couple had any connection with the Marysville area.



The couple, who had been married about 25 years, were last seen leaving the Glen Iris home of one of Mrs Wales-King's children about 9.45pm on Thursday April 4. Their car was discovered in bayside Middle Park six days later.

Forensic tests on the couples Mercedes Benz revealed no suspicious signs. Their bank accounts had not been used since that disappearance.

Senior Sergeant Bezzina said it appeared the bodies had been in the grave for two or three weeks. The grave was in a small clearing about 15 metres from a dirt track in the Yarra Ranges National Park that is popular with deer hunters and bush walkers.

Senior Sergeant Bezzina said it appeared that whoever buried the bodies was not familiar with the track. "They were found off the track it was clearly distinguishable," he said.

"That may indicate the person or persons that buried the bodies may well be not familiar with the area... you'd think if the person was aware they would make a lot more effort to get away from the bush or go further away from the track."

The bodies were removed from the site on Monday, and a post mortem examination to determine a cause of death was being conducted late yesterday.

State Emergency Service volunteers conducted a line search around the grave yesterday, and police appealed for anyone who had been in the area to contact them.

Anyone with information is asked to call Crimestoppers on 1800333000.

Search for motive may provide clues to couple's death

By John Silvester, Ian Munro

From the time Paul King and his wife Margaret Wales-King disappeared, it has seemed inevitable the saga of the Armadale couple would end something like this.

In the beginning, when it was officially a missing persons case, police nonetheless treated their disappearance as a likely double murder. On Monday, the curiosity of two Parks Victoria rangers shifted the case formally to a homicide.

In the forest east of Marysville, the rangers noticed a mound they took at first to be a lyrebird's nest. But it seemed too big, and the wrong shape, so on Monday afternoon they returned for a second look, and discovered Mr King's body.

Police suspected murder when the couple's car was found parked and locked in Middle Park six days after they were last seen on April 4. And two of Mrs Wales-King's children, Prue Reed and Damian Wales, said almost two weeks ago they had accepted that their mother and her husband were dead.

Police gave little credence to suggestions of a murder-suicide or of a double suicide. The presence of unwashed glasses, dishes and snack food at the couple's Mercer Road home was atypical both of Mrs Wales-King's house-proud ways and of the pattern of people preparing to take their own lives.

That the bodies were found where they were, the fact the couple's car was clean, locked and parked so as not to attract attention, suggests the killer or killers had a plan.

There was no forensic evidence to suggest a robbery gone awry and no ransom instructions, nothing to support the suggestion of a kidnapping.

Police were left with two options. They were faced either with a carefully planned abduction and murder, or the much less likely scenario of a totally random crime.

All homicide investigations follow a similar route - checks into the backgrounds of victims, checks of those closest to them, and in a widening circle of those who knew them.

Of Paul King and Margaret Wales-King, police have found nothing but hard-working, successful, respectable people who had no obvious enemies.

In a seemingly motiveless murder, attention moves to those around the victims. In this case, checks into family backgrounds have revealed no obvious reasons for involvement in the crime. Theirs was evidently a stable, financially secure family.

Late yesterday, police were anxiously waiting on the cause of the couple's death being revealed through post mortem examinations.

The area in which they were found is frequented by deer hunters and campers, so much so that it is prone to environmental degradation. The two rangers who found the burial site were identifying areas for protection.

It also appeared to be off a dead-end track, but locals and regular visitors would be aware of the regular traffic through the area and would know that just metres off the beaten path was not a good hiding place.

The depth of the grave and the state of the soil led police to estimate that the killer or killers had spent at least two hours digging the single grave at the site.

Today, extra homicide detectives will be drafted into the case as they begin again the search for a motive and a killer.

#### A Trail of Mystery

April 4 : Margaret Wales-King and her invalid husband Paul King disappear after a family dinner at her son Mathew's home in Glen Iris.

April 7 : Mrs Wales-King fails to keep a breakfast appointment and a check of the couple's home in Mercer Road, Armadale reveals lights left on, wine glasses unwashed and pretzels left out on a bench.

April 10 : The couple's silver Mercedes-Benz is discovered parked and locked in a street in Middle Park.

April 15 : Mrs Wales King's children Damien Wales and Prue Reed say they accept the couple are dead but reject suggestions of suicide.

April 29 : The couple's bodies are found by Parks Victoria officers in a shallow grave 25 kilometres east of Marysville.

#### The Society Killings

Missing pair discovered in bush grave

#### MURDER

TWO bodies found buried on top of each other in a shallow grave outside Marysville are those of missing millionaire couple Margaret Wales-King and Paul King.

Autopsies were being done late last night to establish how the devoted husband and wife were killed.

Their grave, dug to just knee-deep and ringed by bush about 10m off a gravel track, was discovered by chance by two curious park rangers, who thought it was a lyrebird nest.

They dug into the mound of dirt and were shocked to find a decomposed body.

The Herald Sun has been told expensive jewelry was found on the clothed bodies.

Police are expected today to publicly confirm the bodies are those of Mrs Wales-King, 68, and her husband Paul, 70.

Police believe the missing Armadale husband and wife had been buried for up to three weeks.

The couple were reported missing about 9.45pm on April 4 after leaving a family dinner.

The shallow grave, which police believe took hours to dig because of the hard soil, was in the Yarra Ranges National Park, about 95km north-east of Melbourne.

The missing couple's family were told soon after the grisly find, made by two Parks Victoria rangers about noon on Monday.

In other developments, the Herald Sun has learned:

THERE is speculation that the bodies may have been bound and gagged.

POLICE recently did a routine search in the back yard of the couple's Glen Iris home.

MARYSVILLE man Rod Greenway reported seeing the couple in town nearly three weeks ago.

MRS Wales-King was due to start a new bridge class in South Yarra last night.

The double grave was found near a bush track used by logging trucks and day-trippers, 21 km south-east of Marysville.

Police say those who buried the bodies may not have great knowledge of the area, otherwise they might have buried them elsewhere.

"Given the popularity of the area, you would think that if a person is aware of the area, they would have made a lot more effort to get further into the bush or certainly get away from the track," homicide squad Det Sen-Sgt Charlie Bezzina said yesterday.

The rangers found the bodies in a small clearing under a canopy of stringy bark and mountain gums while on routine patrol.

They noticed an unusual amount of dirt that they first dismissed as a lyrebird's nest.

"Their curiosity got the better of them because it was something that wasn't unique to the bushland given their experience," Det Sen-Sgt Bezzina said.

"They have gone back there just to satisfy their curiosity, which has paid dividends."

After uncovering one body, the shocked rangers called in local police.

Homicide detectives and forensic examiners descended on the area and the bodies were dug up and taken to the Coroners' Court in South Melbourne.

Det Sen-Sgt Steve Waddell, of the homicide squad's missing persons unit, is in charge of the Armadale couple case and yesterday investigated the grave scene.

In another twist yesterday, local bed and breakfast accommodation manager Rod Greenaway told the Herald Sun he had spoken to the couple almost three weeks ago.

Mr Greenaway, a volunteer at the tourist information bureau, said the couple came in asking about places to stay in the area.

"They wanted to be on their own in private," he said.

News of the discovery has saddened friends and neighbours.

One local community group worker who looked after Mr King on Tuesday mornings said she was horrified to learn of the Marysville discovery.

"The other men will be devastated. We liked him so much," she said.

"I don't feel well having heard about this. As the days have gone on, it has become worse. He was such a beautiful man."

Glen Iris neighbours of Matthew Wales, Mrs Wales-King's Melbourne based son, said yesterday police had examined soil at his property about a fortnight ago.

The neighbours said a handful of officers wearing overalls, and supervised by detectives, plunged crowbars into the earth looking for any irregularities.

This was understood to have been a routine element of the investigation, which turned up nothing.

The Armadale couple were last seen leaving Mr Wales' home about 9.45pm on Thursday, April 4.

Police will be asking questions of anyone identified as recently being in the Marysville grave-site area.

We'll be looking at anyone who has been in the area over the past month that may have seen something that we may be interested in," Det Sen=Sgt Bezzina said.

Rangers stumble on shallow grave

the grave

Mound sparks curiosity

By Philip Cullen and Tanya Giles

A Shallow grave hiding two bodies might have kept its shocking secret, if not for the curiosity of two Parks Victoria officers.

A mound of dirt covering the grave, which lay undisturbed for about three weeks, was initially mistaken for a lyrebird's nest.

The rangers were on routine patrol on Monday morning and were choosing a track they would close to block access to dozens of deer hunters who visit the Yarra Ranges National Park.

They then noticed a mound of freshly dug soil, 10m from Track 3, off the Warburton-Marysville Rd.

The Homicide Squad said the pair did not immediately investigate, but returned later to the small clearing to satisfy their curiosity.

Their return, according to Snr-Sgt Charlie Bezzina, "paid dividends."

"They initially believed it to be a lyrebird's nest or something of the sort, which in turn prompted their curiosity," Sen-Sgt Bezzina said.

"And then they dug down a short distance and saw a part of a body and contacted police."

The rocky, undulating dirt track sweeps off a sharp bend from a remote road in the foothills of Lake Mountain.

An easily missed small white sign with the number 3 printed on it was the track's only marker.

Campers looking for a secluded getaway, deer hunters stalking their prey and park rangers are among those who know the track's location.

Cold remnants of a campfire were only 5m from the shallow grave.

SES volunteers yesterday scoured bush surrounding the horseshoe shaped track looking for clues. Crime scene identification markers were wrapped around snapped twigs, broken ferns and any object alien to the environment, including an old beer bottle.

Nestled between ancient stringybark trees in a small man-made clearing lay the two bodies.

The grave was clearly visible from the track, indicating to police that whoever buried the pair was not familiar with the popularity of the area.

"It was in a clearing, a mound of fresh dirt. It was quite obvious," Sen-Sgt Bezzina said.

"You do get quite a lot of vehicle traffic through there, hunters, campers, walkers and the like."

Last night the grave had been filled with dirt in a small symbol of respect for the two people who had lost their lives.

Parks Victoria declined to comment on any of the circumstances surrounding the discovery, saying it was a criminal matter.

## Death's lonely trail

By John Hamilton

This is the Mystery of the Mystic Mountains - a knee-deep grave surrounded by stringybark saplings and towering mountain gums deep within the Yarra Ranges National Park.

A sign tells you that you are on your way to the Mystic Mountains as you drive through the Black Spur on the road to Marysville.

The road zigs and Zags through thickets of ancient ferns and the tall timbers of the forest.

You hug the edge of the narrow road as logging trucks thunder towards the city and vivid blue and red mountain parrots screech upwards in alarm.

The grave is beyond sleepy Marysville, which calls itself the Mist of the Mountains.

Another 21km beyond. Past the turn-offs to Warburton and Big River Rd, past the signs alerting drivers to the presence of lyrebirds.

It was a pair of alert forest rangers who thought they had found a new lyrebird nest on Monday that led to the discovery of this grave.

A mound of freshly dug light brown dirt in the shadow of a gnarled mountain gum, surrounded by charred tree stumps left by past bushfires.

Except the mound seemed too big, too rounded, to be a lyrebird's. That's when the rangers decided to explore further, to dig...

THERE was no mist in the mountains yesterday. Only warm autumn sunshine and the distant sound of bellbirds in the bush.

I reached the grave in the Mystic Mountains by walking along a bush track where long strips of bark peeled from the towering gums overhead to crackle underfoot.

The track is marked with a small white post by the side of the gravel road that winds on towards Woods Point.

The post had the number 3 written on it. And yesterday it was tagged with a strip of blue and white police tape, signpost to a murder.

About 200m in, a group of SES volunteers in orange overalls were being fed by Red Cross volunteers.

There were chops sizzling on a barbecue, cups of tea and fresh bread and butter on the tables.

The volunteers were resting after a line search through the bush.

One cheerfully volunteered to take me further, past the police tape now threaded through the trees, marking off a major crime scene.

Another 100m on and a large white van, marked Mountain District Mobile Police Facility, was parked on the track.

Det Sen-Sgt Charlie Bezzina, of the homicide squad, nodded a greeting. So did Det. Sen-Sgt Steve Waddell, whose job includes missing people.

There were seven detectives in suits gathered by a small table, also supplied by the Red Cross, with plates of bananas and apples for the police.

The embers of a campfire smouldered close by. No one said a thing.

There was silence except for the buzzing of bushflies and the distant sound of bellbirds.

About 100m from the van and just 10m off the track was the grave.

Two forensic specialists with rubber gloves were closely examining the piles of earth beside the hole. They took pictures, close up.

One of the men climbed into the hole in his rubber boots. The depth hardly reached his knees.

It seemed incredibly small and shallow to have held two adult bodies.

Two adult bodies.

That's all the police were saying in a brief news conference they held down the track.

They were being very careful and not saying much at all.

Back down the track, away from the grave and its mystery, the bark crackled underfoot and the leaves rustled overhead and the bellbirds kept ping...ping...ping in the distance.

Another man with close-cropped hair was coming up the track, hurrying along, preoccupied, twigs snapping underfoot.

It was Det. Inspector Brian Rix, head of the homicide squad. He had been recalled from leave.

That's when you knew the mystery of the Mystic Mountains was big.

The bodies buried in a shallow grave in the Australian bush, in a place where the lyrebirds prance and sing and are the only silent witnesses of the night.

### How police are sifting through a family's secrets

Rumour, innuendo, speculation, random facts: everything is under scrutiny as detectives investigate the deaths of an Armadale couple. Andrew Rule, John Silvester and Padraic Murphy report.

If there were any dark clouds looming over Margaret Wales-King's life, it didn't show. Four days before she and her husband were murdered, she took delivery of a wrought-iron garden chair, an expensive addition to their luxuriously appointed unit in Mercer Road, Armadale.

Mrs Wales-King had ordered the chair on approval.

It was typically cautious of the canny businesswoman. She could well afford it, but wanted to ensure it suited both the garden and her semi-invalid husband, Paul King, who liked to potter around the back yard.

She chatted happily to the woman who delivered the chair. She confided that she was kept busy looking after her increasingly frail husband, and said it left her little time to invest in the sharemarket.

But there was no sign of anything that threatened to destroy the affluent cocoon of her life. The opposite seemed true in fact.

To outsiders, Margaret Wales-King seemed to be basking in the autumn of a fortunate life. Born beautiful and wealthy, daughter of a road-building tycoon, she had shrugged off the breakdown of her first marriage, to the father of her five children, and shrewdly invested her personal fortune so that she could afford, at retiring age, a million-dollar residence in one of the better streets in one of the best suburbs in Australia.

But every family has its secrets and its flaws, and Margaret Wales-King's was no different.

The only difference is that now, they are being examined in the harsh light of a homicide investigation.

Detectives on the case have to collect and sift through rumour, innuendo, speculation and random facts that, until proven irrelevant, must be treated as rigorously as the most vital evidence. In this, as in any investigation, most "leads" are a waste of time... but no one is sure which ones.

Gossip swirls around the case.

In the leafy private school belt where the five Wales children had grown up, stories have been spread by the well-meaning the misguided and the downright malicious.

From the beginning, to the public, it was a fascinating disappearance. But to police it was already a murder investigation.

Relatives appeared at press conferences as police appealed for public help to find the couple's car, a silver Mercedes-Benz sedan worth more than \$100,000. The original picture released of Mrs Wales-King showed her as a vibrant middle-aged woman, when the reality was that she had aged. This was misleading for the media and the public - but the police knew it would make no difference.

When the car was discovered six days later in Middle Park, the squad effectively pulled down the shutters.

The collateral damage from public appeals is false reports - hundreds of them. The couple were "spotted" by well-meaning builders, shopkeepers and, later, bed-and-breakfast owners. All these sightings were false and, for police, a waste of time.

Investigators knew there would be no happy ending. The couple had not run away or been abducted - no ransom note had appeared and those modern survival tools, their mobilephone and credit card, had not been touched.

Detectives had to start at the beginning: the couple's last known sighting, at an apparently friendly family barbecue on Thursday, April 4, with Mrs Wales-King's youngest son Matthew Wales, and his Spanish-born wife, Maritza.

It was held at the new double-storey townhouse in Burke Road that the couple had moved into two months before.

Police quickly concluded it wasn't a random crime. Either the killers had followed the victims, or knew their movements. As in all such cases, the investigation first concentrates on finding potential enemies, or those who could benefit from the victims' death.

The three main motives for murder are love, hate and greed. Police eliminated the first. More checks showed nothing to indicate the pair had enemies making the second unlikely.

The next step in the homicide manual was to complete financial profiles on family members, to see who might want to benefit from an untimely death. All appeared to be financially sound. Basic forensic tests were done at Matthew Wales' house, where the couple were last seen alive.

Public and media speculation exploded. One television network put an undercover van nearby, trying to secretly film Matthew and his wife. They were forced to move, and their nearby clothing import shop was closed soon after. They left public comments to Matthew's elder brother, Damien.

Police had theories, but little else... until last Monday, when two curious park rangers looked at what they thought was a lyrebird's mound, and found a shallow grave. It was the first real breakthrough.

The victims had been bound and asphyxiated. Material gathered at the site fed speculation that burial was the killer's second option. Police know that the killer(s) went to the grave site well prepared but might have forgotten a vital tool... bolt cutters. A strong theory is that the plan was to drop the bodies in a nearby lake, but that the killer(s) couldn't get in because of a chained gate.

The Marysville area is ideal for burying mistakes: it is close to Melbourne, with bush tracks running off main roads. Which is why it is popular with day trippers, deer hunters and campers - and why some schools have school camps there.

Ironically, Margaret Wales-King might well have traveled down the road to Marysville to visit her children at Xavier College's school camp.

In death, as in life, Mrs Wales-King was an astute woman. In her will, to divide her estimated \$5 million estate, she left an unusual clause. Her beneficiaries would receive their share of the cash only when they reached the age of 40. She didn't want two generations of hard work wasted by a third.

MURDER MYSTERY

Mystic Mountains' gruesome secret

By Paul Heinrichs

As the mystery surrounding the murders of millionaire Armadale couple Margaret Wales-King and Paul King enters its second month, the strain is taking its toll on their family and close friends.

Mrs Wales-King's youngest son, Matthew, declined to comment yesterday at his double-storey brick home in Burke Road, Glen Iris, where the couple spent their final evening at a family dinner.

Matthew told The Sunday Age last week that it was too difficult for him to talk about the matter. Mrs Wales-King's older son, Damian, has since been the spokesman for the family.

Police have been told that Mrs Wales-King and her husband were last seen driving their silver Mercedes E320 at 9.45pm on April 4, after a barbecue with Matthew, 34, his Spanish born wife Maritza, 37, and their children. Maritza Wales' fashion import shop in trendy High Street, Armadale, was closed yesterday.

Police believe the couple were possibly sedated and then smothered within hours of the meal, and then buried together in a bush grave near Marysville.

Since the discovery of the bodies on Monday, police have theorised that the killer or killers may have planned to dump them in a dam or lake, but changed plans when a gate was found to be locked.

Officers have taken the unusual step of obtaining a suppression order from the Victorian Coroner preventing the media publishing details of a number of items found with the bodies. Their car was found on April 10, parked and locked in Page Street, Middle Park. A brown Louis Vuitton handbag, the car keys and a mobile phone are still missing.

Mrs Wales-King, 68, a wealthy bridge-playing Armadale investor, is being mourned by a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

Mrs Wales-King's family, which as well as Matthew and Damian includes daughters Sally, Emma and Prudence, are believed to be planning a funeral for their mother and stepfather, Mrs Wales-King's will reportedly contains the unusual stipulation that no one is to inherit from her estimated \$5 million fortune until they reach 40.

In Marysville, last week's grisly find 21 kilometres down the Woods Point road has created plenty of speculation.

Marysville has a base population of just 700, but this rises to nearly 3000 as couples, old and young, book up the plentiful weekender-style accommodation in the area. It lasts almost until the snow season, then gets another lift up from those going up to Lake Mountain.

For most, it is a pleasure to get out into the Yarra Ranges National Park, a massive wilderness beyond the Black Spur that is now being repackaged as the Mystic Mountains, in which people can hike, picnic and drive among some of the state's magnificent tall timber and lyrebird undergrowth.

But it has been the bizarre disappearance and the finding on Monday by two park rangers of Armadale's missing millionaires that has really jolted the town.

The discovery of the bodies and other matter at the bush grave site almost four weeks' after their disappearance provided police with many new leads and possibilities for their investigations.

Mrs Wales-King, the wealthy daughter of a road construction magnate, was a busy and keen social bridge player who was due to attend another course at Ryal South Yarra Lawn Tennis Club this week. Instead, this fastidious, security-conscious woman was jammed into a lonely grave with her partner. She was still wearing her \$90,000 diamond ring and other jewelry.

Clearly robbery was not the motive, police say.

At night the grave site might have seemed much more like dense bush undergrowth than it was, because the killer or killers dug the grave within easy view of a track that is well-used, including by park rangers.



As one policeman was to put it later, "a bit deeper in the bush and it might have been there for a thousand years".

#### Gruesome find

The tranquility of the bush around Marysville was broken last week. The homicide squad and the State Emergency Service scoured an area 30 km east of the town where the bodies of missing millionaire couple Paul King, 70, and his wife Margaret Wales-King, were found. The discovery has rocked the township and police say they have few leads.

The small mountain community of Marysville was last week reeling at the discovery of the bodies of a missing Armadale couple in a shallow grave outside the town.

The bodies of Margaret Wales-King, 68, and Paul King, 70, were found by Parks Victoria rangers in bush near the Woods Point Rd, 30 km east of Marysville, late last Monday.

The pair went missing soon after a family dinner at Glen Iris on April 4. Their car, a silver Mercedes sedan, was found in Middle Park on April 10.

The bodies were found in a small clearing 10m from a popular walking track, one of two recommended to bushwalkers by locals.

In a new twist, deputy State Coroner Iain West late last week issued a suppression order preventing media outlets from publishing details about items found with the bodies.

The order was issued a day after the Leader approached police to confirm details of items found near the bodies.

Marysville residents contacted by the Leader said they were amazed the bodies were found in such a popular area for walkers and tourists.

Mr King's body was found lying on top of that of his wife, who still wore her jewelry.

Both bodies were bound, but police refused to release details of the restraints used.

An autopsy carried out on Wednesday revealed that they were asphyxiated.

Their identity was confirmed through dental records and DNA tests.

Homicide squad Detective Senior Sergeant Charlie Bezzina said whoever buried the bodies did not know the area well.

"This is a very popular area for deer hunters and it gets lots of vehicle traffic. The area is fairly open," he said.

Sen-Sgt Bezzina said the bodies had been buried for two or three weeks.

He said it would have taken about two hours to dig the shallow grave because the ground was so hard.

The rangers who found the grave initially thought it was a lyrebird's mound.

Parks Victoria regional ranger-in-chief Ian Roche said the rangers were looking for a site to place a boundary gate for the deer hunting season when they found the makeshift grave.

Mr Roche said Parks Victoria had offered the rangers counseling.

Police have appealed to anyone in the area late on Thursday April 4 or early Friday, April 5, to contact them.

They are searching for a missing brown leather handbag and a mobile phone belonging to the dead woman and a set of keys to the couple's car.

Healesville, Upper Yarra and Nunawading SES assisted at the scene.

Local businessman Rod Greenaway said residents were not fearful, but felt sad and confused.

"People in the town are amazed that the bodies have been found in that area," he said. "There would have been heaps of people walking up and down that track over the past couple of weeks."

## Police seize rented trailer over Armadale couple's Murder

by John Silvester

Police have seized a rented trailer they believe may have been used to transport the bodies of Armadale couple Margaret Wales-King and Paul King hours after they were murdered.

The trailer was rented from a Glen Iris service station, less than a kilometre from where the couple were last seen at the Burke road home of Mrs Wales-King's son, Matthew.

Mrs Wales-King, 68, and her frail husband Paul King, 70, visited Matthew and his wife Maritza for dinner on April 4.

Service station attendant Scott Turley told Channel Seven News last night he believed the trailer was hired the following morning.

"The purchase amount was just under \$30. We assumed it was just a fuel sale, but when we looked into our records it was a trailer hire. And then on Friday they (the police) confiscated the trailer."

Mr Turley said: "It was a month ago but I have a vague memory that there was two males at the time. They seemed to be on a mission, they knew what they were doing, they weren't mucking around."

Scientific tests will be conducted to establish if there is any evidence linking the trailer to the crime.

The examination will include DNA tests to the victims and suspects. Further tests will be conducted to see if there is soil or foliage on the trailer linking it to the scene where the bodies were buried.

The couple were found nine days ago near Marysville, north-east of Melbourne.

Police suspect the killers intended to dump the weighted and wrapped bodies in a country dam but were forced to bury the couple when they found a track blocked by a chained gate.

Mrs Wales-King was found wearing the \$100,000 in jewelry she had on when she went missing. Police seized the trailer last Friday. Tests could take weeks to complete. Tests are also continuing on several items found near the burial site.

The couple's \$100,000 Mercedes-Benz was found locked in Middle Park six days after they disappeared.

Mrs Wales-King's leather Louis Vuitton handbag, mobile phone and car keys have not been recovered. Police believe those items could help lead them to the killer.

A private funeral service for the murdered couple is scheduled for today.

## The Society Murders

### CHARGED

Matthew Robert Wales was charged with the murder of his mother, Margaret Wales-King, and stepfather, Paul King, at an out-of-sessions hearing at Melbourne Custody Centre yesterday ( Saturday 11 th May ). Wales, 34, was charged just before 5pm. Police said in court he had made "full admissions". He appears in court tomorrow. Later, his wife Maritza, 38, was charged with being an accessory after the fact relating to the murder.

### Mathew Wales on two murder counts

A STONY-FACED Matthew Robert Wales, 34, was formally charged with the murders of his millionaire mother, Margaret Wales-King, and her invalid husband, Paul King, last night.

An out-of-sessions court was told the youngest son of the society figure had made "full admissions" to police.

Wales was not required to enter a plea and was remanded in custody to appear in Melbourne Magistrates' Court tomorrow.

Later, his wife Maritza Wales, 38 was charged with being an accessory after the fact and was bailed to appear in the same court tomorrow.

In a seven-minute hearing at the construction, including tunnels, aqueducts, syphons, weirs, etc., will also be required.

Gaugings are regularly taken of the Upper Yarra and Armstrong's Creek (the latter is the principal tributary next to the O'Shannassy River), as they form the chief future sources of supply upon which the city must depend.

The O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Aqueduct follows the slopes of the main Yarra Valley to a point near Launching Place, whence it passes through Wandin to Olinda, near Lilydale, at 671 feet above sea level.

Here a pipe-head reservoir of 11,000,000 gallons capacity and screening chambers have been completed, the aqueduct being also carried around this reservoir by a by-pass. The cost was 21,016 pounds.

From Olinda the aqueduct passes to Surrey Hills, via Mitcham 9510 feet above sea level). At the latter site 34 acres have been purchased for the construction of service reservoirs. The first of these has been built, having a capacity of 43,000,000 gallons.

The total cost of the works, hereinbefore described, for the O'Shannassy System was 436,890 pounds up to the 30th April 1915.

The water from the new scheme was turned on in October 1914.

The beginning of that summer marked the culmination of a period of more or less declining rainfall.

The new scheme was available only just in time to avert a shortage of water supply in Melbourne, such as was experienced more or less in every important City in the Australian Commonwealth during this period of exceptional drought.

Gaugings of the O'Shannassy and Upper Yarra Rivers during the 1914 drought showed that the lowest recorded stream flows in the O'Shannassy River was about 12,000,000 gallons per day, and in the Upper Yarra River near Walsh's Creek 5,426,000 gallons per day.

It then became brother, Damian, and sisters, Emma, Prudence and Sally, were not in court and were not in court and are believed to have met elsewhere.

The dead couple's funeral was held on Wednesday and a memorial service, at St Peter's Catholic church, in Toorak, was conducted on Thursday.

Mrs Wales-King's lawyers applied to the Supreme Court on Thursday and gained control of her multi-million dollar assets.

All the family of Mrs Wales-King, 68, and Mr King, 70, had gathered at Matthew Wales's house on Friday.

Yesterday, Wales, was seen wearing a blue, long-sleeved shirt with red stripes on the sleeves when he left his rented townhouse at 9.50am.

He drove his maroon four-wheel-drive out of his home with the rear windows covered by blankets. It was not clear if his wife was in the back seat.

He stared at a media contingent as he drove away at normal speed.

Earlier, he had emerged from his townhouse about 9am and smoked a cigarette. The blinds remained drawn on the house where Mrs Wales-King and her frail husband were last seen alive.

The homes of Wales's relatives were deserted late yesterday. At the two-storey Toorak home of Wales's sister, Prudence Reed, a card in the open letterbox indicated flowers had been left at a neighbour's two days ago.

A couple of streets away at sister Emma Connell's Toorak home, the intercom in the wall beside the footpath was unanswered.

Mail was uncollected in the letterbox.

Maritza Wales's clothing shop in High St, Armadale - Maritza Imports - was open yesterday with items being sold for 50 per cent off.

2002

## Search

### Fears for man lost in cold of the alps

Police fear a 40 year old Melbourne man missing in snow in the Victorian alps may not survive a second night in the mountains. Searchers yesterday found a boot, believed to belong to missing North Balwyn engineer Sundar Bharadwaj, on Lake Mountain, where he was last seen about 2.30pm on Sunday. But they failed to find him, and Sergeant Andrew Herdman of police search and rescue said Mr Bharadwaj's chances of surviving in the open were decreasing. He may not survive tomorrow," he said. Mr Bharadwaj's wife, who was at the mountain throughout yesterday's search, was distraught, he said. The missing man was lightly dressed. He was last seen walking on a trail on Lake Mountain, near Marysville, about 120 kilometres north-east of Melbourne. It is believed he had separated from his friends to search for his missing gloves. A scaled-down search was to continue overnight, with searchers carrying torches. The search was to resume at full strength from 8 o'clock this morning.

2002

### Phone may save man

Mobile phone technology is being used for the first time in a desperate bid to find a North Balwyn man missing in icy temperatures at Lake Mountain since Sunday.

Optus technicians last night visited the resort, 120 km east of Melbourne, to set up a temporary mobile phone tower to allow searchers to contact Sundar Bharadwaj on his mobile phone.

A cherry picker was expected to be set up in a car park at the foot of the mountain to beam a signal to the valley where Mr Bharadwaj, an Optus subscriber, was last seen.

The plan relies on his phone having some battery power.

Telstra workers are also expected to join the search today with technology that will enable them to pinpoint the location of a mobile phone from a helicopter.

Mr Bharadwaj, 40, was sightseeing on the mountain with a friend when they split up to find a lost glove on the Jubilee Trail about 2.30pm on Sunday.

Police were called in a few hours later when he failed to meet his friend at a rendezvous point.

Wearing only a light spray jacket, shirt and jeans, police said he was inadequately dressed for the conditions and fear he might be injured.

Police said his chances of surviving another night were "deteriorating quite rapidly" and he might not survive another day.

The temperature in the area was about zero on Sunday night and similar conditions were expected last night. Showers and snow are forecast for today.

Footprints and a boot believed to belong to Mr Bharadwaj were found along Koala Creek yesterday several kilometres from where he was last seen.

The police search and rescue squad, air wing, local officers, Lake Mountain Ski Patrol and the Federation of Bushwalkers concentrated their efforts on the area.

Lake Mountain ski patrol director Andrew Paul said searchers hoped the tracks would lead them to the missing man yesterday afternoon.

"They have been following some tracks and really, just from the pattern of what direction he has been following downstream, there is really nowhere else for him to go," Mr Paul told 3AW.

"So the police are quite confident that they have got the area cordoned off where he is likely to be."

Night closed in before rescuers could find Mr Bharadwaj and the search was scaled down.

It was expected to resume about 8am today.

2002

## Search

### Body of missing hiker found in mountains

A Balwyn man was found dead yesterday after a three-day search in rugged alpine terrain. Sundat Bharadwaj, 40, right, was last seen on Sunday when he visited Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, north-east of Melbourne, in a party of 10. He became separated from the group when he went to look for a lost glove. His body was found in shallow water near the Koala Creek walking track about 2pm yesterday. Up to 70 searchers combed the steep incline covered in rugged scrub on either side of Koala Creek on Tuesday but failed to find any trace of him. Mr Bharadwaj's distraught wife, accompanied by family friends, returned to the mountain on Tuesday for a report on the search. Police will prepare a report for the coroner.

2003

### Fears for walker, lost for three days

About 100 police, emergency service members and bushwalkers battled some of Victoria's toughest terrain yesterday to search for a Cheltenham man, 38, who has been missing since the weekend.

Police found Mark Hulme's car at about noon on Saturday in the Yarra Ranges National Park at Cambarville, near Marysville in the state's east.

Mr Hulme's late-model blue Holden sedan, was parked near a walking trail with his keys, clothing and camping equipment - including a tent and a sleeping bag - inside the car.

Police said Mr Hulme appeared to have wandered into nearby bushland.

Mr Hulme's family are "very concerned" for his safety.

Senior Constable Matthew Roberts said : "We are working on the assumption that he hasn't got any gear with him, so he's inappropriately dressed for the conditions.

"It's very inhospitable terrain, some of the worst you will come across in Victoria."

More than 30 volunteers from the Bushwalkers Search and Rescue group were due to continue to search with police and State Emergency Service personnel at first light today (Tuesday 18th March 2003).

Bushwalkers Search and Rescue group spokesman Merv Trease said that the warm weather had been a plus.

But he said: "We have been searching both sides of Armstrong Creek. It's thick and scrubby, and difficult to work through."

Mr Hulme is described as caucasian, 178 centimetres tall, of medium build, with a fair complexion, blue eyes and brown hair.

Anyone with information should contact Lilydale Police Station on 97351066 or Warburton Police Station on 59662006.

2003

#### Hope for missing man

The family of a man missing since Friday were still hoping he would be found yesterday, despite unsuccessful attempts by police and emergency services in the past three days to find him.

Police found Mark Hulme's car about noon on Saturday in the Yarra Ranges National Park at Cambarville, north-east of Melbourne. The late-model blue Holden sedan was parked near a walking trail with Mr Hulme's keys, clothing and camping equipment inside. "Obviously we're all still very concerned but everyone's holding up as well as can be expected," said Mr Hulme's brother Paul Hulme, yesterday.

"Of course, it's getting tougher, you get more concerned as each hour passes by, but again, we are holding out hope."

Senior Constable Matthew Roberts said he was "fairly confident" that Mr Hulme, a mathematics honours student and experienced bushwalker, was still alive, assuming he had plenty of water. The search continues today.

2003

#### Snow rescue anniversary

By Andrew Fenton

A Thanks-Giving service to mark the 50th anniversary of a dramatic snow rescue will be held at St Mary's Anglican Church in Warburton on 31 August.

Jennifer Laycock (20) and Kirk McLeod (22) went missing on 23 August 1953, sparking a massive search and rescue effort.

More than 200 people combed the mountain looking for the pair. The search was front page news the entire week in The Age, The Herald, The Sun and The Argus.

Jennifer Laycock (known by her married name Elford) is now 70 years old and living in Albury/Wodonga.

"It was four days and four nights," she said.

"I was very positive but I was trying to be realistic - I thought we might just go to sleep and that would be it."

She said the pair had driven up to the picnic area at Donna Buang, and then walked to the summit because the road was closed by snow.

On the way back they took a short cut and became lost. As darkness fell they made a humpy from logs and ferns for shelter.

"It's just wild country with the undergrowth and trees - it's very hard to walk through," she said.

"By Wednesday we were well and truly exhausted and were suffering from hypothermia.

"I decided to walk down to the creek but I was pretty fragile so I crawled to get a drink of water.

"I crawled back and sat on a log in the sun.

"I was gazing through the trees and saw two men walking about 50m away."

The two men were members of the search party. Ironically, the men weren't actively searching for the pair, they were simply trying to get better radio reception from higher up the mountain.

Jennifer and Kirk spent the night huddled in tents with the searchers for warmth. The next morning they started on the long journey to the summit.

"It took them seven or eight hours to carry us up to the summit on bush stretchers."

Jennifer and Kirk were taken to Royal Melbourne Hospital suffering hypothermia.

Although Kirk was released two weeks later, Jennifer spent five months in hospital and had both legs amputated below the knee due to frostbite.

While in hospital she came to terms with the massive media interest in the story.

"I could never understand how so many people took so much interest in it. It was overwhelming - I had so many cards, and gifts and flowers.

"People still remember it even now, years later."

Jennifer said her local paper and radio stations had run stories in June about the forthcoming thanksgiving service.

"I've had 80 phone calls from people connected with the search since then," she said.

"People as far away as Rockhampton, Brisbane and Tasmania will be attending the service."

And the reason Jennifer and Kirk want to give thanks?

"We just thought that because Kirk and I have survived for 50 years we have a lot to give thanks for!

2003

Probe re-opened into man's disappearance

By Andy Drewitt

Police have re-opened an investigation into the March disappearance of a bushwalker near Marysville.

Cheltenham man Mark Hulme, 39, set out on a bushwalking adventure near the Reefton Spur on March 12 and hasn't been seen since.

Mr Hulme withdrew money from an automatic teller machine at Healesville before driving to the Marysville-Woods Point Rd.

Passers-by saw his blue Holden Vectra vehicle at several locations along the road between March 13 and 15.

Police found his car on March 15 and launched a massive four-day search.

About 100 members of the police air wing unit, dog squad, search and rescue, SES and bushwalking clubs failed to find any trace of Mr Hulme.

Police found maps, compass, tents and sleeping bags in his vehicle.

Mr Hulme is Caucasian, 178cm tall, with medium build, fair complexion, blue eyes and brown hair.

Sergeant Brett Skurka, of Mooroolbark police, is calling for bushwalkers and campers to the area to look for clues to Mr Hulme's disappearance.

Sgt Skurka said Mr Hulme's family was desperate for information.

His parents, Don and Marjorie Hulme, of Brighton, said they were "mystified" about their son's disappearance.

Mr Hulme said Mark did not inform anyone about his trip, but mentioned it briefly in his diary.

He described his son - a mathematician - as "slightly reckless", but skilled at orienteering and bush survival.

He said Mark was familiar with the Reefton Spur area and that it was possible "he could keep himself going".

"It wasn't unusual for him to set out alone without his maps or compass - he did it once before at Wilson's Promontory," Mr Hulme said.

"He was just a young man who liked his own company."

The uncertainty of Mark's whereabouts for the past eight months had emotionally drained the family, Mr Hulme said.

"We are hoping for some indication of what happened. There's no logical explanation, which has all been quite challenging," he said.

"I think he's been reckless and got lost, but the fact that we can't find a thing is very confusing.

"The weather was good, he was fit, he knew the area, he was skilled.

"My wife seems to think that he'll walk in on us one day, but I don't know how realistic that is."

Anyone with information should contact Crime Stoppers on 1800333000 or Sgt Skurka on 97259999.

2004

First deaths in ambulance service

Paramedics killed on mercy mission

by Patrick O'Neil

Two paramedics died yesterday when their ambulance crashed into a tree as they were on their way to an accident.

The ambulance ran off the Maroondah Highway on a sharp bend, down a steep mountain slope and smashed into a tree about 3.25pm on the Black Spur road north of Healesville.

The two men were crushed inside as the roof crumpled. It is believed both died instantly.

Ambulance spokeswoman Liz Tunnecliffe believed it was the first time a Metropolitan Ambulance worker had died during active service.

One of them Phillip Oakley, 33, was a married father of six and a long standing State Emergency Services volunteer.

He was a student paramedic, Robert Bland, 50, had been a member of the Metropolitan Ambulance Service for 23 years.

Mr Bland also had adult children and was a well known figure in the ambulance community.

A police spokesman said he believed emergency lights and sirens were operating at the time of the crash.

Skid marks stretched down the road.

Acting police Inspector Michael Talbot, from the major collision investigation unit, said all emergency workers at the scene were local.

"The ambulance men were local, the rescuers were local, the SES, the CFA, the police are all local," he said.

"They all knew each other so it's like losing a friend or family member."

Ambulance officers who were close friends of the pair were last night comforting family members.

General manager of emergency operations for the Metropolitan Ambulance Service, Ian Clark, said the community was shattered.

"It's deeply affected us," he said.

"We respond to over 300,000 jobs a year, about 60 percent of those with lights and sirens, and I can't remember the last time this happened," he said. "I worked with the senior paramedic numerous times. He will be known by all the members down here."

Mr Clark sent his condolences to the families.

"With deep regret and profound sadness, the Metropolitan Ambulance Service expresses its condolences to the families and we offer our support to all those affected by this tragedy."

He said he had been taking calls from other emergency services offering their support all day.

Casualties spur on work

by Jo Robertson



VICROADS will carry out urgent resurfacing work next month on the notorious Black Spur where two paramedics died on January 2.

The Maroondah Highway between Healesville and Narbethong will close for three weeks for the work.

The 17 kms of winding and sometimes treacherous road has been the site of more than 90 accidents in the past five years.

Vicroads spokesman Michael Cockburn said there had been 89 casualties and five fatalities from accidents on the Black Spur between January 1, 1998 and July 1, 2003.

Mr Cockburn said the accident involving ambulance officers Robert Bland and Phillip Oakley had not prompted the work.

"This has been in the pipeline for some time," Mr Cockburn said.

"We categorised this road, one where significant accidents occur, and it is monitored regularly to ensure the surface doesn't deteriorate."

He said work had been carried out on the road late last year with the second stage next month.

"It is a difficult road to carry out works on because it has to be closed so we attempt to do that with as little impact as possible on public transport, commuter transport and tourist traffic," he said.

Public meetings will be held on January 19 at the Marysville Retirement Village Hall and on January 20 at the Healesville Memorial Hall, both at 5pm, to discuss the road resurfacing work and detours.

Healesville ambulance officer Malcolm McLeod said he hoped the condition of the road would be included in the inquiries into the deaths of the two ambulance officers.

Police, the State Coroner, and the Metropolitan Ambulance Service will carry out separate examinations of the tragedy.

"It is a notorious road. It is dangerous and we see an excessive amount of road trauma on that stretch of road," Mr McCleod said.

"We hope that will be looked at in the inquiries."

Yarra Ranges Council spokesman James Martin said the council had held discussions with Vicroads regarding improving safety on the Black Spur.

"Council officers have spoken with Vicroads on possible improvements including smoothing out some of the corners," Mr Martin said, "But to do too much would involve wholesale removal of trees on a beautiful but windy road and no one wants that," he said.

Drivers will be diverted during the three weeks along the Melba and Goulburn Valley highways, through Yea and Healesville.

2004

## Stray logging fires hit key water catchments

By Melissa Fyfe

The State Government has admitted it lost control of five fires connected to logging operations, most of them in Melbourne's water catchments.

One fire incinerated several boxes that forest animal specialist David Lindenmayer had set up as experimental habitats for the endangered Leadbeater's possum. It is believed possums were not using them at the time.

The post-logging fires escaped into national park in the O'Shannassy and Maroondah areas - "locked" parts of the city's water catchments. Two other fires in April, also lit to regenerate logged areas, burnt 280 hectares of the Thomson catchment, one of the city's major water sources.

Logging in water catchments is sensitive because it replaces old trees with young trees which while growing, suck up water that would otherwise flow to dams. Melbourne Water research shows that water yield from logged areas drops 50 per cent by the time the trees are 20 to 30 years old. For

this reason, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Melbourne Water only allow 150 hectares to be logged each year in the Thomson catchment. A fire which also encourages young trees to grow, also has a water reducing effect.

A department spokeswoman said the fires that escaped into the Yarra Ranges National Park were minor. In the Maroondah catchment, a quarter of a hectare was burnt, and half a hectare in O'Shannassy, she said.

"These escapes occurred during the extreme weather conditions experienced post Easter," she told The Age. Another controlled burn got away in a special forest experiment, also part of Professor Lindenmayer's work. In a logging area, an island of trees that was supposed to be left for future animal habitat was burnt. But the spokeswoman said : "At Toolangi the regeneration burn did get into the island, but the mountain ash will survive and provide animal habitat in the future."

Professor Lindenmayer from the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at the Australian National University, is helping research ways that clearfell logging can be changed to leave clumps of forest that will grow old and provide hollows, key habitat for Leadbeater's possum.

"Essentially we have a big problem in the Central Highlands with clearfelling." Professor Lindenmayer said. "It eliminates the structural complexity of the forest ... There needs to be a mixture of old trees and young trees."

Professor Lindenmayer said he did not know how many possum boxes he had lost. The experiment - to see if they would live in boxes in the absence of suitable hollows - had not attracted possums so far.

The Wilderness Society said local conservationists believe that logging should be stopped in Melbourne's water catchments.

Central Highlands Alliance president Sarah Rees said her group had stumbled on the "smouldering secret" in water catchment areas. The (department) has displayed nothing but nonchalance and disregard for the sensitivity of these surrounding national parks," she said.

2004

### Gliders' ramp smashed

The Victorian Hang gliding Association's ramp on Donna Buang Road was destroyed in a freak accident a few weeks ago when a female motorist ran off the road after swerving to avoid a wombat.

A spokesperson said the driver was just inches away from plunging hundreds of metres down the mountain.

"It was sitting on the broken part of the ramp," he said. "It snapped that in half and had one wheel hanging off."

He said there were no trees below the ramp and nothing to stop the car from plunging down the side of the mountain.

"I think she was lucky the hang gliding ramp was there.

"If she had swerved a bit earlier she could have ended down the bottom."

Amazingly enough, the woman escaped the accident without injury.

But the Victorian Hang Gliding Association is feeling less lucky as it now has to repair or replace the ramp.

"My first thought was that is unbelievable," said club member and one of the ramp's builders, Tony Caneva.

"I wondered how they got around the steel railing on the road in front of the ramp to hit it.

It's a mystery...they must have run off between the railing and the trees and launched on to the ramp."

Mr Caneva said the club was currently making enquiries to determine who would, or could, pay for the damage.

"If she is insured we'll be repairing it in accordance to what we think is best and safe," he said.

"If she's not insured there's not a great deal we can do and we'll have to repair it with what we have."

He said the club was fortunate to count engineers and tradesmen among its members.

About 30 hang gliding enthusiasts regularly make use of the ramp, with another 30 or so making occasional use of the ramp over the summer months.

It cost \$8,000 to build a decade ago with a lot of donated time and effort.

Mr Caneva said it was a shame the ramp had been destroyed.

It's the second highest launch site in Australia," Mr Caneva explained.

"It is quite unique, the take off is down a slot in the trees and most sites aren't like that.

It's also been proven to be a very safe launching site."

He said whatever happened, the ramp would hopefully be back in action in time for summer.

"We want to get on and do the maintenance on it straight away," he said.

2004

Epic trip down the Yarra

By Andrew Fenton

PHOTOGRAPHER David Flockhard has begun an epic three-week canoe journey, tracing the Yarra River from its source to the sea.

David spent a few days recently in the closed catchment area, photographing the river with the aid of Melbourne Water staff.

He launched his 16-foot Canadian Canoe at the Reefton Pub on 8 October and made it as far as Millgrove on 10 October when his canoe capsized,

Yarra Ranges Community Forests Program co-ordinator Jane Scott said the tip-out had put a temporary halt on proceedings.

"He had a big tip out near Millgrove coming straight out of a rapid," she said.

"Fortunately, all his camera gear was in watertight boxes."

David intended to leave the river shortly in any case, to curate his first major photographic exhibition at the Yarra Valley Grammar in Croydon last week.

He was due to set off again on Monday (18 October) from Millgrove, and was scheduled to meet with a group of school students from Yarra Junction Primary School the same day.

David told the Mail he'd been inspired to conduct the trip after hearing about the Yarra Ranges Community Forests program.

"The linkages in the Community Forests program provide a means to inform people about the importance of rivers as a water source and as a means of sustaining different eco systems; to let people know why the catchments are there," he said.

"By travelling all the way down the river it links the source and the end. The main thing is to give an appreciation of what the river is, what it has to offer and how it affects us."

David will be making a photographic study of the river along the way, which will be featured in an exhibition later this year.

The trip is scheduled to end on 4 November.

Further Reading

Predicting Water Yield from Mountain Ash Forest Catchments, Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Catchment Hydrology, by Robert Vertessy and others April 1998.

This 38 page book deals with recent water catchment research for the North Maroondah Area and the Coranderrk experimental area. There are a number of black and white pictures showing the interesting equipment and techniques that they use in their research in an area closed to the general public. The report ( 98/4 ) is easy for the layman to understand and is as non technical as possible.

Interesting features are the description of how the water cycle works in a mountain ash forest and the use of computer models on small and large catchments. An internet site was established for one model, <http://www.clw.csiro.au/topog> but this may no longer be current as time goes by.

For people interested in current research in the National Park this industry report is the one to obtain as there can be many years between such reports.

Over a dozen similar reports had been issued by The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and Melbourne Water from the late 1960s to the early 1990s. The CRC subsequently took over this research. A VHS Video covering the CRC research is also available.

Regional Forest Agreement, Central Highlands, Directions Report, September 1997.

This is a small report, produced by the Federal and State Governments, It has a good map showing the proposed land use for the publicly owned land surrounding the Yarra Ranges National Park. The only real problem with all the Regional Forest Agreement type reports was the short period of consultation and little real research which went into establishing true facts. The outcome of these reports was I believe pre determined and public input had no effect on any final result and so I consider the entire work a farce.

Secrets of the Forest, Discovering history in Melbourne's Ash Range, by Tom Griffiths, 1992. Published by Allen and Unwin.

This is an excellent book that cover the history of the area covered by the Yarra Ranges National Park and the area beyond it. There are many interesting stories about the mountain ash forests and the water catchments and water harvesting. One of the minor authors has even written a short report about O'Shannassy Lodge, which had for long been hidden from the General Public. The references in the book are particularly good for anyone wanting to conduct further research.

In its 212 pages the book has many photographs and small scale maps relating to the area covered by the park. The park is not mentioned as it was declared and really only thought of after the book was published.

Victoria's National Parks, A Centenary History, by Esther Anderson, 2000.

This book has a picture of the Yarra Ranges National Park on its front and back covers. It has good information about the development of National Parks in Victoria. The part I like the most is the painting titled 'A Spring Morning near Fernshaw' by Isaac Whitehead. The painting according to the text was exhibited at the International Exhibition in Melbourne, 1880-1881 and is currently held by the National Gallery of Victoria.

Parks Victoria Annual Report 1999-2000.

This report states that 3 hectares was added to the Yarra Ranges National Park. It also states that the final management plan for the National Park has been completed but awaits native title claims.

Yarra Range National Park, Draft Management Plan, 1998.

This report gives a brief outline of the National Park, its main features such as walking tracks, their condition, and future is discussed. The plan has 54 pages and six maps but only one photograph, which is black and white and on the front cover. The photograph is identified as being a Mountain Ash forest and taken by a photographer who has taken many pictures in the area, Ern Mainka. Judging by the amount of flow of water in the picture and the type of forest the picture was probably taken in the closed catchments. The only place where a large river is legally accessible in the park is at the southern end where the O'Shannassy and Yarra Rivers flow and the goldfields walk is. The park is broken up into what are known as four units, Upper Yarra, O'Shannassy, Lake Mountain and Maroondah. The report is printed on Recycled Paper the cover of which, on my copy, the silverfish have taken a liking to. Lists of Flora and Fauna as well as pest plants and environmental weeds are included. Eighteen pest plants and 43 weeds have been identified.

The maps showing the boundary and features in the National Park are the best currently available but are not suitable for bush navigation and only suitable for a general overview. The maps show the facilities located at the major places of interest. I have obtained a 1:100,000 dyeline of the park from the Parks Victoria office in Worri Yallock and this is of a larger scale and probably available to the public.

Other items discussed include Strategic Directions, Resource Conservation, The Park Visit ( park users such as Bushwalkers, Cyclists, Hang gliders etc ) and Community Awareness and involvement.

The list of references used is a little disappointing as mainly only other government reports are referred to. Some 28 publications are cited.

If there was one place in the closed catchment area of the Yarra Ranges National Park that I would like to visit on the ground, if allowed, it would be the Old Growth and Rainforest areas of Deep Creek. Deep Creek ( Australian Map Grid Coordinates 5837200 N 394000 E ) is located in the central part of the O'Shannassy catchment. So far I have only been able to observe this area from the air, on air photographs and satellite images.

For people interested in this area I can direct you to a thesis I wrote at the University of Canberra in 1994. It was called Change Detection in the Upper Yarra Valley using Landsat MSS Satellite Imagery. There are a number of images in it which cover the closed catchment areas and it should be available by inter library loan.

Books relating to various aspects of the Yarra Ranges National Park which may not mention the national park by name as it was only declared in December 1995.

Maps to consult

ESMAP BOOK 1st edition Outer Melbourne Directory, 1991, at scale 1 : 50,000 covers the entire National Park area and the regions beyond. This book shows some of the walking tracks and has contours at 20 metre intervals. I would recommend this book for undertaking travels in the National Park. The park boundaries are not shown because the edition was printed before the park was declared. It is also handy if you find

yourself lost in the National Park because it shows all the roads in the closed catchment areas.

Marysville-Lake Mountain, Outdoor Leisure Map, 1: 30,000 and 1 : 10,000, Survey and Mapping Victoria, Department of Property and Service, Government of Victoria, Edition 2, printed June 1990. This map shows the area around Lake Mountain in great detail and is very good for exploring the northern part of the Yarra Ranges National Park.

The Yarra Valley and Gembrook Forest Map, 1 : 100,000. 1981. This Map shows almost the entire region covered by the Yarra Ranges National Park, except for the small area to the north of Lake Mountain. The map shows all the major and most of the minor roads, some of which are suitable only for 4wd. The rivers and streams are also shown as are the areas closed to the public.

Eastern Victoria Tourist Map, 2nd edition, 1998. Hema. 1 : 750,000 scale. This map has a picture of the Blacks' Spur on the front cover and shows the major access roads to the national park. It also shows the vast area of parks and forests to the east of the Yarra Ranges National Park.

Vic roads, Warburton 282012, 1 :250,000, Administrative series, 2nd edition 1991. This map shows the major roads and rivers in the region.

Marysville State Forest, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Forests Service. 1998. This pamphlet shows the Lady Talbot Forest Drive and gives distances to each location along the way. The pamphlet also shows walks around Marysville.

Lake Mountain, Visitor Information and Ski Trails Directory. 1998. This map shows the summit and alps view walking track and the ski trails.

Marysville in the Mystic Mountains, 1998. This pamphlet and map shows some of the attractions in the National Park close to Marysville.

Yarra Ranges National Park, May 1998. This pamphlet gives an overview of the park, showing the major tourist areas.

Tourist Map of Narbethong and Marysville Districts of Victoria, Published by the Authority of the Hon, The Minister of Lands for issue to tourists, 1925. This map gives a historic perspective to bushwalking tracks in the region. Many of the walks have since been overgrown or closed.

Baker Creek, Topographic Map 1 : 25,000, 8122-4-3. 1995, 1 st edition reprint. This map covers the Yarra track from near Shaws, the site of a previous shanty and now a rainfall monitoring site to beyond Fehring Clearing, which was also a shanty site. The map also covers the northern part of the Upper Yarra closed catchment.

Lake Mountain, Topographic Map 1: 25,000, 8022-1-1. 1984. This map shows the area around Cumberland Scenic reserve as well as the Warburton to Woods Point road, which closely follows the alignment of the old Yarra Track.

Mount Gregory, Topographic Map 1 : 25,000 8122-4-2. This map covers the eastern boundary of the Yarra Ranges National Park, from the Triangle picnic ground and then south past Mount Gregory. The road is suitable for normal cars. A small section of the eastern part of the Upper Yarra closed catchment is also shown.

Steavenson, Topographic Map 1 : 25,000, 8022-1-4. 1984 Provisional Edition. This map shows the northern boundary of the O'Shannassy catchment including the Marysville - Woods Point road from Marysville to Cumberland Scenic reserve.

Tanjil Bren, Topographic Map 1 : 25,000, 8122-3-1. First Edition reprint 1993. This map covers part of the Toorong road which forms the boundary between the Upper Yarra and Thomson water catchments. The map also shows a small disused aqueduct which flows under the road and in which I have seen some large trout. Also shows on the map is the South East corner of the Upper Yarra closed catchment.

Tourist Map of Healesville, Marysville and Warburton Districts, Victoria Australia, May 1938, Issued by the Betterment and Publicity Board, Victorian Railways. This map covers the Watts and O'Shannassy catchments. It was issued only months before the great bushfires of 1939. Shown are the walking tracks to Condon's Gully, Mathinna falls as well as a number of disappeared timber tramways between the Dee River and Cement Creek.

UBD Map of The Yarra Valley and the Mountains of Melbourne, Map 3869, 1st edition. This map gives some brief descriptions of the region as well as showing the major towns and roads.

Rooftop's Big River - Rubicon - Lake Eildon Forest Activities Map, Includes Lake Eildon and Yarra Ranges National Parks (Parts), Cathedral Range State Park, Lake Mountain, Marysville, Keppels Hut, Eildon and some features submerged below Lake Eildon. Ideal for Four Wheel Drive, Motor Bikes, fishing, boating, bush camping and deer hunting. Scale 1 : 50,000. Map Published by Rooftop Mapping Services October 2001, C/O Buxton PO 3711. Map Enquiries Ph 0357747576, Fax 0357747665, Email:Rooftop@ycs.com.au.

Rooftop's Yarra Valley - West Gippsland Adventure Map. Checked 2004. Previous name Yarra Valley - Bunyip Adventure Map. Ideal for motor bikes, 4WD and bush camping close to Melbourne. Includes Yarra Ranges National Park, Bunyip and Mt Worth State Parks, Kurth Kiln Park, Yarra, La Trobe and Toolangi State Forests, Pakenham, Warburton, Noojee, Neerim South, Marysville, Drouin, Gembrook, Warragul, Healesville and Powelltown. This map is printed on both sides and covers practically all of the Yarra Ranges National Park and access roads.

Warburton Victoria, SJ55-06, 1:250,000, 1cm to 2.5 km, 2002, Edition 2, Geoscience Australia - National Mapping Division, PO Box 2 Belconnen ACT 2616, Tel: 0262014201 Fax: 0262014366 or the NATMAP HOTLINE 1800800173.

There are many more maps that can be consulted than are indicated on this brief list.

In 1904 the Companion Guide to Healesville, Blacks' Spur, Narbethong and Marysville was issued for the price of one shilling. It was described on its brown cover as Historical, Descriptive and Pictorial.

The following is the complete text for the 1904 edition and covers much of the western part of the Yarra Ranges National Park.

COMPANION GUIDE  
To HEALESVILLE  
and DISTRICT

COMPANION GUIDE

TO

HEALESVILLE, BLACK'S SPUR  
NARBETHONG AND MARYSVILLE.

WITH SIXTY-FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE ATLAS PRESS (E. NEWLANDS), BLOCK PLACE.  
1904

PREFACE

THE purpose of this little Guide Book is to bring prominently before tourists and holiday seekers the beauties of the Mountain Scenery in the Healesville district of Victoria.

There is no getting beyond the fact that visitors from the old country have a confirmed idea that we have no scenery in Victoria worth seeing; and we venture to think that the illustrations in this Guide Book should give them the desire to visit the places described.

The districts are easy of access, and well opened up, and the cost of communication throughout is very moderate. Pedestrians and others will find the map of much assistance when travelling through the district. Having been reproduced, by permission, from the Government Survey Map, it can be absolutely relied upon.

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From Healesville across the Blacks' Spur.

By J. W. LINDT.

THE Blacks' Spur is portion of a range of wooded hills which rise north eastward from the town of Healesville. Geographically they are the water-divide between the Maroondah and affluents of Yarra and some of the upper tributaries of the Murray. The origin of the name Blacks' Spur has often been discussed, but the consensus of opinion among the old residents and those who have taken the trouble of inquiring into this matter seems to be that it was derived from the fact that at the time the Woods' Point diggings were discovered the blacks were employed as guides to show the diggers through

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what was then, and is now, away from the main road, an almost impenetrable primeval forest.

No doubt equally fine eucalypti forests exist in several other parts of Victoria, but the Blacks' Spur is second to none and to tourists and health seekers it has the great advantage of being within 50 miles from Melbourne and adjacent to the railway terminus at Healesville.

The coach, on leaving Healesville, and after a few minutes halt at the local post office, proceeds at a good pace until, just out of the township, a steady rise known as Green's Hill reminds the driver to spare his team for further and greater efforts. "Aberfoyle," a popular boarding establishment, is passed, and on arriving on a little tableland, crowned with an orchard, a great mountain panorama unrolls itself before the traveller. On the right Mount Riddell shows out prominently, being nearer, though not quite so lofty, as Mount Juliet, which is not much under 4000 feet. The middle ground is taken up with the Blacks' Spur and the mighty mass of

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Mount Monda, whilst on the left the cone of Mount St. Leonard, second in height only by a couple of hundred feet to Mount Juliet, forms a harmonious counterpart to Mount Riddell.

To watch the shadow effects of fleeting clouds on these hills during a fine morning is a sight not easily forgotten, whilst an electrical storm after the heat of a summer's day borders on sublime, especially if the tourist escapes the rain, which often accompanies or follows these atmospheric disturbances.

The road is tolerably level at this portion of the journey. Several farms and the homestead of "Forest Lodge," with its magnificent orchard, are passed, and shortly Gracedale House is reached, abreast of which line edifice the coach stops to deliver mails. Gracedale House is splendidly situated on an eminence commanding the mountain panorama already described. The height above sea level is about 600 feet, or 350 feet above the railway terminus at Healesville. The high standard of accommodation and its close vicinity to the railway has made

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Gracedale House a great favourite among the country resorts, whilst the surrounding scenery adds considerably to its attractions.

After passing Gracedale House, we enter into the domain of the Metropolitan Board of Works, a reserve of 35,000 acres, comprising the Graceburn and the Maroondah or Watts River water catchment areas, which supplement the water supply of Melbourne. The road, which is kept in splendid repair, rises steadily to about 1100 feet of altitude, and then descends on an easy grade until the Maroondah River is crossed at Fernshawe, to about 700 feet above the sea. There used to be a hamlet containing two inns at this place, but the Government resumed the territory, bought out the few settlers, and converted the locality into a permanent reserve.

At Fernshawe, as the name indicates, we enter into the region of ferns, and the coach slowly ascends the steep slope of the Blacks' Spur. The surrounding mountainous country has a copious annual rainfall, and this, in combination with a

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very fertile soil, produces the giant gum trees of which Victorians are so proud. Amongst these the stately Eucalyptus Amygdalina ranks an easy first. Thousands of its straight dove-grey trunks cover the hillsides, attaining at times 300 feet in height, and upwards of 60 feet in

circumference. In the valleys the timber is diversified, but acacias of several sorts predominate, including silver wattle, blackwood and golden wattle, whilst the Australian beech, also known as the myrtle tree, forms in places quite a feature in the forest.

The slow progress of the coach during the next few miles of the journey tempts many of the travellers to ascend the Blacks' Spur on foot, and thus enjoy the beauties of the bush the more by reason of the exhilarating influence of bodily exercise. The road in the main follows the eastern slope of the valley of Myrtle Creek, and about two miles from Fernshawe takes a sharp turn round the head of one of its feeders. In the angle of this elbow stands a great gum tree known as "Uncle Sam." This spot has been

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rendered historical by the fact that Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales (then Duchess of York) and party camped here for luncheon during her visit to this locality in 1901.

Another mile of a steep grade and we reach Etta's Glen, a romantic ravine, part of the upper portion of Myrtle Creek, and close to the tableland which forms the summit of the Dividing Range. By this time the pedestrian is glad to take his seat on the coach again, for from Fernshawe he has ascended 1260 feet, and the altitude of the range at the spot where the coach road crosses it, is 1960 feet.

Down the eastern slope the coach travels swiftly, and soon you are among the hills which contribute their rainfall to the Acheron, one of the headwaters of the Murray River.

Another delightful panorama opens out, with Mount Vinegar and Mount Dom Dom on the right, Mount Grant and Mount Strickland in the middle, and the jagged peaks of the Cathedral Range on the left. The sinuosities of the road present the

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landscape from different points of view, with changing foregrounds at every turn, and when, after a descent of 360 feet within the last two miles, you come in sight of the Hermitage, you can barely realize that you have traversed upwards of 12 miles since leaving the railway terminus.

The surroundings of this famous pleasure resort have been so ably described by the facile pen of Mr. James Smith in the Special Centennial Number of "The Leader" that we may be pardoned for quoting his text verbatim:

"Thirteen miles from Healesville the coach lands you at the Hermitage, which fulfils to the letter the wish of the poet Cowper when he wrote:-

'Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness-

A boundless contiguity of shade.'

"Only it is a lodge in which private enterprise has assembled the comforts and conveniences of civilisation in the very heart of the country where all the elements of scenery carry you back to the morning of time, and remind you that

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they are coeval with the age of stone in the northern latitudes.

"The scenery embraces every object which can charm the eye of a painter of sylvan subjects, while it offers a boundless field of study for the naturalist and more particularly for the botanist, if he is specially interested in ferns, mosses lichens and cryptogamic forms of vegetation; for an annual rainfall of from 50 to 60 inches, as determined by Mr. Lindt's rain gauge, and a soil of exuberant fertility, have combined to occasion such a rank growth of trees, shrubs, herbage, climbing plants and parasites generally, and most of these in such endless variety as to

exempt this huge aggregation of forests from the reproach so often brought against Australian bush, that it is wanting in diversity of foliage and color.

"The eucalypti flourish as a matter of course, and they sometimes attain to such a lofty altitude as to give you a crick in the neck when you attempt to measure it with your eyes, from the base of its corrugated bole, and snake-like arms,

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to its plumed crest, which is thrilled rather than swayed by the winds which sweep over its stately crown.

"The graceful form and bright leafiness of the blackwood, the tender greys, and faint blues of the silver wattles, the effulgent yellow of its golden congener, the slender shafts of the hazel which resemble "a plump of spears," sustaining supple garlands on their points, the symmetrical and conelike structure of the sassafras trees, the smooth white pillars of the silver birch, the shining leaves of the myrtle or beech, upon which the sun bestows a metallic lustre, together with the foliage of the native plum, the blanket scrub, indigenous holly, which flowers but bears no berries, the wild hop, the clematis, the native pepper tree, the rowan, the Christmas tree, and the blue berry; all these impart quite an unexpected variety and a special charm to the aspect of a mountain forest in this most secluded region, where a refreshing coolness is obtainable in the ferntree gullies during the most fervid heat of summer.

"In the spring the atmosphere is sur-

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charged with fragrance, for the white flowers of the sassafras tree distil an odour bearing a considerable resemblance to that of the orange blossom, the golden wattle pours out streams of perfume on the air, while the musk, the clematis, and the wild hop blend their respective emanations with the powerful and predominating effluence of innumerable eucalyptus.

"The views from The Hermitage, or rather from the crow's nests, which have been built high up in three of the tallest trees accessible, embrace a wide range of mountainous and densely wooded country. Stretching away for a distance of 20 miles, in a south-easterly direction, the horizontal line as it sweeps round from the Cathedral Rock, on the extreme left, to the Dome, which faces you as you carry your eye round to the right of that comprehensive semi-circle, resembles in its undulations the ground-swell of the ocean, after a magnificent tempest.

"The intervening space is filled with massive ridges and deep furrows, everywhere heavily timbered; but in places bush fires have worked havoc with these

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forests, and great grey squares of barkless and leafless trees vary the monotonous verdure of the ranges which have escaped the flames, and remind you of the spears of a vast horde of giants marching down towards the valley below.

"Here and there in sheltered nooks, and upon lofty ledges, you see far into the month of August, slabs of snow which glitter like bars of burnished silver in the sun. Each ridge is the birthplace of innumerable springs oozing from the slopes of the declivity, coalescing further down in rills and runnels, and feeding the creeks which go to swell the waters of the Yarra, the Watts and the Acheron.

"Among these creeks is one locally known as Mallory's, within a mile of the Hermitage, and containing a ferntree gully, especially beautiful because it is composed of a variety of the Todea, which, instead of putting forth a single hemisphere of fronds, is crowded with a thick mass

of foliage as exquisite in curve as in color, intermingled with which is the Alpine Lomaria, together with the oak fern, the native fuchsia, and upon the trunk of

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every tree in this moist atmosphere nature has woven a thick web of parasitic growths, ferns, mosses, lichens, and fungi, not to speak of miniature orchids, which are no doubt forests to the microscopic organisms which inhabit them."

Placed in the midst of such scenery, and under the personal care of Mr. and Mrs. Lindt, who spare no pains to minister to the pleasure and convenience of visitors, "The Hermitage on the Blacks' Spur" has necessarily become a favorite pleasure resort. It is an artists' home in the mountains, and an ideal retreat in which to rest and recuperate.

"if thou art worn and hard beset,  
With sorrows that thou wouldst forget,  
If thou wouldst read a lesson that will keep  
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,  
Go to the woods and hills! No tears  
Dim the sweet look that nature wears."

-Longfellow

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A Trip to Malleson's Look-out and the Don Valley.

By N.J. Caire

Most of the outings around Healesville are in the direction of Mount Monda, where the most picturesque bush tracks, fern gullies and waterfalls are the popular resorts of the thousands of visitors who annually visit the district in season. Malleson's Look-Out is unique, being more or less a sudden rise from the valley of the Badger River to very much over 1000 feet. The journey may be done on foot by good pedestrians, but parties will find it better to hire a cab, or avail themselves of joining the drag parties, which are so frequently made up at the accommodation houses.

A short distance out of Healesville, on the main road to Fernshawe, the road turns to the right at the Graceburn Glen House. Following along this road in a straight direction for a few miles to the Badger River Bridge, the road gradually turns to the left and winds up the steep ascent in a zig-zag way, until a clearing

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effected some years since by the late Mr. Malleson is reached. The hill here is very steep close to the road or track, and gives the visitor, in fine, clear weather, an uninterrupted view of the great Dividing Range for many miles around. On the right stands Mount Juliet towering far above Mount Riddell; at its foot Gracedale House, beautifully situated as it is, can be seen. In the distance the Blacks' Spur, with all its richness of nature's beauty, seems to call us alluringly to come and explore its sylvan dells. Out in front stands Mount Monda, sheltering its triplet "Mathinna" Fall, of exquisite loveliness whist Mount St. Leonard, away in the blue azure of distance, would seem to call us to visit the fern gully of all fern gullies, viz., Condon's Gully.

On our left the foreground displays the many settled patches of cultivation almost as true in detail as a map, being, as it were, suburban to the town of Healesville, which is clearly seen, and thence beyond we notice Yarra Flats, Yarra Glen, and the famous Christmas Hills still beyond. We linger to impress on one's

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mind the details of a panoramic scene so gorgeous, and then proceed on to the summit of the hill which leads to the Don Valley. About four miles along a bush track, past settlers' huts, who have selected land in this upper region, we come to the beautiful residence of the late Mr. Malleson, solicitor, formerly of Melbourne. Malleson's Glen is the name of this sylvan retreat. The fern glen here is a marvellous spot of fairy-like beauty. A depression near the residence has been dammed up and filled with water, making a lake on which a boat is kept, and where numerous water fowl are wont to disport themselves. Nature, art and means have combined to make this a small paradise on earth.

To get a view of the Don Valley, we continue down the Don road for half-a-mile, and from this elevation we overlook fern gullies, cleared patches of cultivation, hill beyond hill, and dale beyond dale, as far as the eye can reach, until in the far distance can be seen Launching Place, a mere speck, and beyond, the Wandin Ranges, towards Lilydale.

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Marysville

By N.J. CAIRE

Marysville has always been, and will always be, but a small village, seeing that it is surrounded by vast hills and wild unpopulated forests. It forms a connecting link by which the far distant gold country of Wood's Point can be reached. The exquisite scenery of the district is of sufficiently attractive character to guarantee the establishment of such a first-class hotel as Keppel's, which has become so well-known and popular among mountain holiday visitors. A glance at the visitors' book at Keppel's will suffice to convince one that hundreds of visitors have been there, and have recorded their impressions of the scenery and the good things provided by Hostess Keppell.

There are several outings around Marysville - some near and some distant. The near ones can be visited on foot, as fairly good tracks have been made, whilst the distant ones can be visited by arrangement

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with the hostess, who will provide conveyances for parties at a very reasonable rate. About half-a-mile from the hotel is

THE BEAUTY SPOT.

This is a favorite place for ladies to visit, as it is situated only half-a-mile from the hotel, along the track leading to Mount Bismarck. A sign board nailed to a tree notifies where to turn in on a small track, and in a few yards the beauty spot, a favorite resort on a holiday, is reached.

MOUNT BISMARCK.

By continuing on the Beauty Spot track, and ascending the track gradually, a steep stone rise on the right hand side of the hill is reached, which leads to the look-out on Little Bismarck. This steep pinch is a quarter of a mile, and from this elevation a grand panorama is obtained. Overlooking the valley of the Acheron, the hills around Alexandra and Mansfield, the Cathedral Rock, stands out conspicuously, whilst in the foreground the township of Marysville is discernable, only as a small patch of ground, in the

area which the great scene embraces. The descent is an easy one, and this outing can easily be accomplished in half a day.

THE STEAVENSON'S FALLS.

The Steavenson's Falls, situated two miles east of Marysville, are the chief source of attraction to the place. A good track has been made for

horses and vehicles to within a quarter of a mile of the falls. Beyond this they must be reached on foot with great ease. The falls comprise three or four ledges, and drop from a height of over 300 feet. The upper ledges may be reached by climbing but the best views are obtained from the valley below. If the falls are to be ascended, and the visitor essays the journey on foot, the day will be required for the outing, and lunch should be taken. The last leap of the falls, which is about 50 feet in height, is the best fall of the four, and in wet seasons a great body of water comes down from the mountains, giving a very majestic appearance to the scene, and the roar and din of the tumbling water lends a wild enchantment

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to the surroundings. The falls are so easy of access, and so picturesque, that every visitor to the district makes this the first place for an outing.

#### THE ROAD TO BUXTON.

For three or four miles from Marysville, along the Buxton road, the scenery is exceedingly pretty, and a ride of eight miles to Buxton and back, is well worth taking. The pedestrian, however, can spend an afternoon very pleasantly in a leisurely walk along this road. The long avenues of foliage, the vistas here and there, the crossing places, and the brooks to be met with (fit subjects for an artist), will well repay the tourist who does not mind a little gentle exercise.

#### TOMMY'S BEND.

To the visitor who is enamoured of gullies draped by nature with myrtle, sassafras, and tree ferns, then Tommy's Bend -par excellence - stands unrivalled in this respect. It is situated on the hill opposite the town, about six miles distant, on the Woods' Point Road. The road

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for four miles is very steep, after which it is pretty level, and runs along the side of the spur. The head of this beautiful gully is really the sources of the Taggerty River, which joins the Acheron near Buxton. Evidently this great hill is of volcanic origin, as the soil is exceedingly rich, and the gumtrees growing near at hand, are of gigantic proportions. The two spurs culminate in a sort of razor back formation, with a sudden bend of the road when they meet, and it has taken its name from one of the drivers of the coach on the road as Tommy's Bend. To describe this magnificent gully would require more space than can be devoted to it in the limited space of a guide book. Where the two spurs meet, they are almost precipitous. Near the head of the gully the beautiful myrtle and blackwood trees have grown up in thick profusion, giving shade and shelter to the lovely ferntrees beneath them. A few hundred yards below this spot the gully widens out, and here the sassafras trees have taken possession of the soil, and are easily recognised by their

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pointed tops, and pear-like shape. In terraces, tier upon tier to the height of a thousand feet from the bottom of the gully, these great trees, with their bark and leaves of great value to the herbalist, form one of the most remarkable and characteristic scenes to be found in the mountains of Victoria.

A visit thus far can be made in a trap in half a day, but it is just as well to make a day's outing, and continue on the road to Cumberland Creek, where are situated the Cumberland Falls and the Cumberland Giant trees. The drive from Tommy's Bend to Cumberland Creek is mostly down hill, and is about five miles, running nearly all the way through vistas of sassafras, myrtle and ferntrees. A side track on the right hand side



of the road is reached and is followed down a steep declivity for about a quarter of a mile, where the Cumberland Falls, amidst a profusion of the rocks and steep precipices, giant trees and ferns, forms one of the wildest scenes it is possible to conceive.

If an early start has been made, there will possibly be time to pay a visit to the

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great Cumberland giant trees, recently discovered. For this purpose a guide from Keppell's Hotel will be necessary, although it is probable that tracks to the Giants will have been made. They are situated about a mile nearer to Marysville on the same side of the road as the Cumberland falls. The first one of these to be seen is about half a mile from the road, and measures 58 feet around the trunk. This is a white Manna Gum(Viminalis), and has, in all likelihood, stood where it now stands considerably over a thousand years. A still bigger tree is to be seen a quarter of a mile from this one in a southerly direction, and is a Mountain Ash. The size of this one is 70 feet girth, and no doubt much older than the other one. By this time the day will be getting somewhat advanced, and a return to the road will be necessary to harness up the horses, and to experience the invigorating drive back over the hills, 3,600 feet above sea level, to Keppell's Australian Hotel, and so be in time for a sumptuous dinner always in readiness for the tourists who visit the district.

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THE GOOD OLD COACHING DAYS.

BY N.J. CAIRE

"The good old coaching days" is a term often used to denote a time in the history of road travelling, previous to the invention of the steam engine, and its application to the railways as a locomotive. Many interesting incidents have been handed down to us of the stage coach in old England. Some in connection with highwaymen, others in connection with snowdrifts at Christmas time. In Australia the good old stage coach has passed through its historical phase and, likewise, has had to give place to the great iron horse of modern times.

In Victoria, the last of these to give place to the modern invention were the Gippsland one of Cobb and Co., from Melbourne to Sale, and Cobb and Co.'s Mail Coach from Melbourne to Marysville. The route of this last stage coach lay across the Great Dividing Range towards Wood's Point, well known in the

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early days as a great gold mining district, attracting many gold diggers to those then almost unknown regions.

The present popular town of Healesville was in those early but a mere hamlet or village at the foot of the mountains, with no road or passes yet surveyed. Here was located the Mining Warden, granting licenses to diggers who prospected in the neighborhood. Diggers were cautioned not to attempt to cross the Dividing Range without taking a fortnights' supply of food with them.

The first to attempt to cut a track across the Blacks' Spur, to Narbethong, Marysville and Cumberland Creek, was a party of stalwart Cumberland men, who by dint of sheer pluck and hardihood, after many hardships succeeded in reaching a spot eleven miles from Marysville, and named it after their own native place in England, viz., Cumberland Creek. Here good gold was found by them, and in the track they had cut and

blazed, others followed. In a short time communication by pack horses was established, enabling many to reach the Eldorado,

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whilst others settled along the road to establish accommodation houses, and in some cases shanties. Marysville obtained its name from a young lady named Mary - establishing a place near by, to supply food and lodging to wayfaring diggers. Between this and the Cumberland Creek diggings, a bushman who went by the name of "Dirty Dick," established his hut on the roadside, and essayed to supply tea and damper to the weary digger. The tariff at this bush hostel was 2/6 for a feed of damper and a pannikin of hot tea. For a second helping of damper 1/- was the charge. It is recorded that the diggers were so successful in those days in that neighborhood that when a second helping was asked for, Dick got 2/6 more often than the stated charge of 1/-. And now, when multitudes of men were rushing to the diggings, came the time to cut tracks or make roads. The road from Healesville to Fernshawe was made, and also the very steep road to the Blacks' Spur, and eventually across Mount Arnold to Cumberland Creek, and thence to Woods' Point.

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A good road having been made, and Cobb and Co.'s stage coach fairly established, the magnificent scenery to be passed through, soon drew the attention of tourists and holiday seekers to the district. The journey from Melbourne to Marysville occupied in the early days 12 hours. The stage coach, drawn by four or five grey horses, started from the Albion Hotel, in Bourke street, punctually as the post office clock struck eight. It was then a busy scene to see the bustle of passengers and luggage being seated and packed into the large coach, awaiting the strike of the clock, when the driver reins in hand, would crack his whip, and the prancing greys would wend their way eastward with their living freight, to the admiring gaze of a crowd of onlookers. Onward, and eastward, the route lay by way of Victoria Parade, Kew, and the White Horse road to Lilydale. Thus far the road lay through undulating country, occasionally giving glimpses of the Dandenong mountains, whilst on the roadside many homesteads, with their gardens and orchards, were objects of admiration for

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the elated traveller. By noon the then small town of Lilydale was reached, where lunch could be obtained at Lithgow's Lilydale Hotel. Fresh horses having been yoked up, the coach would proceed on to Healesville, a then small village at the foot of the Great Dividing Range. A few miles out from Lilydale would find us abreast of the St. Hubert's Vineyards, since become so celebrated for its wine. The loose mail-bag system had now to be adopted for outside stations, and, by the way, it is interesting to note that "St. Hubert's" and "Yering" was the first run taken up in Victoria as a sheep station. From St. Hubert's we get the first glimpse of the Great Dividing Ranges. Five miles further on the road the River Yarra was crossed over Roorke's Bridge, where some exceedingly pretty scenery was to be found. The road here passed alongside of the aboriginal station named Coranderrk, and a drive of three miles brought the coach into the small hamlet of Healesville, then a small unimportant place, named after a very popular legislator in Victoria, since deceased.

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Daly's Hotel was the only place of accommodation, and was always a popular place on account of the landlord and landlady being so obliging, and the bill of fare of good repute. This good old house is still

dispensing the good things of life by the grand old widowed lady, who is yet hale and hearty, and as obliging as ever.

The mails for Woods' Point being on board, and a good hardy team in hand, the climbing of the hills is now commenced in earnest. The Graceburn River is soon crossed very near the road. On the right hand side Mount Riddell is seen clear and distinct as a sugar loaf, and near there is Malleson's look-out, leading over to Warburton, via Launching Place. The present stage ran to Fernshawe, a distance of seven miles.

Mount Monda is passed on the left side of the road, with a distant view of Mount St. Leonard. As we rise gradually along the road, Mount Riddell comes into close and near view, since which time the celebrated Gracedale House has been erected at the foot of the great mountain.

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To the left, occasional glimpses of the Blacks' Spur are seen. The first four miles is a steep climb, and then from the head of Wombat Gully, where the fairy-like ferntree glens commence to be seen, it is a down hill ride into Fernshawe. The four-in-hand doing a spanking pace (sniffing, as it were, their stable afar off), and the mountain scenery improving rapidly at every turn or bend of the road, created an exhilaration and excitement which must be experienced ere its sensations can be described.

Fernshawe is soon reached and here the four-in-hand stage came to an end. The greater number of visitors rested here, as the scenery of the beautiful Watts River, and the marvellous beauty of the Blacks' Spur, were sources of great attraction.

In those days there were two hotels, both well patronised in the summer season, for here the place was correctly named Fernshawe, as truly the whole district around was a veritable nest of fairy fern glens, nothing like it being known in the wide world, except in one

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portion of the Himalaya mountains. To describe its beauty would require the pen of the poet. The clear rippling waters of the Watts River, with its overhanging ferns and deep shady glades, suggesting the homes of fairies. The music of the gentle zephyrs playing among the great giant gums, combined with the bird sonnets, and other multitudinous sounds of animal and insect life in the great forest, impressed one vividly with the feeling that we were within the precincts of fairy land. Veritable fairy glades, the winding fern-bound road, and innumerable fern gullies spreading as far as human sight can discern all over this vast hill, is calculated to give the visitor, on his first impression, a feeling of ecstatic bewilderment.

Our destination being Marysville, we now take our seats in a light coach drawn by three horses, and commence the ascent of the most steep portion of the journey, viz., the Blacks' Spur. The beauties of this celebrated hill would require a volume written to do it justice. Its giant eucalyptus trees towering two to three

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hundred feet high; its giant ferntrees reaching 50 and 60 feet in the air, and its sassafras and myrtle gullies.

MORLEY'S TRACK.

At the foot of the Blacks' Spur, a track on the right hand side of the road leads to what is known as Morley's track, named after a splitter of former years. The writer has explored this track for eight miles, through dense fern gullies, over creeks and hills and valleys, until at last it was impossible to penetrate any further in the dense forest. Some enchanting valleys exist down the slopes of Mount Juliet, well sheltered by these steep ranges - fit glades for sprites and fairies.

Retracing our steps, we come back to the Blacks' Spur, the ascent of which for the first two miles is of a very steep gradient. At about a mile we come to a very steep pinch and a sudden turn in the road, known as the devil's elbow, and a little further up the hill, near the commencement of Myrtle Gully, we pass through the "one mile bend of the road," which overhung on either side with giant

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ferns, forms one of the most beautiful road avenues it is possible to conceive of.

Another mile of steep climbing and pulling for the horses, and the two mile bridge is reached, where we see the great giant tree "Uncle Sam," so named by the writer. It measures 40 feet girth, and 250 feet high. Yet another steep pinch of the road and a more easy grade is made to the top of the spur.

MYRTLE GULLY.

Of all the fairy glades, Myrtle Gully, without doubt, is one of the most enchanting. This gully follows the road up to near the top of the spur; at times in steep pinches, and at other times in gentle rises, the bed of the valley forming the creek. Throughout its full course it contains a profusion of ferns, forming bowers and fairy dells, where a cool shade can be found on the hottest day in summer. To find a competitor for this paradise of two miles in length would be a difficult matter.

ETTA'S GLEN.

On the side of the road the gentle murmur of rippling water is heard close

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by - a murmur that continues on for ever - sometimes a gentle, subdued, plaintive sound, as if of zephyrs' whispers. No water can be seen. Bowers and vistas enshroud the silvery stream which utters its sylvan sounds so audibly. At other times the sound of a roaring torrent rises above the wind and all other sounds. A deluge of rain is falling and the circumscribed valley has all its work to disgorge itself of the vast torrent of foamy waters leaping angrily to find its proper level in the quiet and limpid bed of the River Watts below.

Here the horses could be refreshed after their arduous pull up the hill. This is Etta's Glen waterfall, and is a favorite picnic resort for visitors. On the top of the Blacks' Spur, an old hut was kept by a very cheerful lady, who provided tea for visitors and passengers in hot weather, at very moderate charge.

The steepness of the Blacks' Spur has made it necessary for the male passengers to walk up the hill, but now they can keep their seats for the rest of the journey, which is mostly of an undulating character.

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This portion of the journey was often attended by adventure and sometimes inconvenience. The writer on one occasion found a large tree had fallen across the road, blocking the way for the mail coach. Some of the passengers essayed to walk on. An axe and other tools are always carried on these coaches, and with the help of passengers, this big tree was cut through and rolled over the hill, the mail coach resuming its journey slightly detained, but as if nothing had happened.

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a full bound over this temporary bridge, he got safely across and overtook his fares, half drowned in the soaking rain, some two miles ahead on the road.

THE DEVIL'S HOLE.

In the early days a bush track was made lower down than the present surveyed road, and near the top of the spur it passed through a gorge in the hills, which was dreadfully boggy in winter. The teamsters here laboured with their oxen under the greatest difficulties. The track strewn with dead timber; mud and bog-holes, at times, up to the axles; rain storms, and fallen trees blocking the way at almost every turn, will give some idea of the difficulties of the transmission of goods across the great Dividing Ranges in the early days. The teamsters considered the tern "The Devil's Hole," a suitable one for this spot. The bush pilot, as the teamster is appropriately called, was wont to navigate his team of oxen with "long oats" and "loud oaths" through the Devil's Hole, which was perhaps the most terrible piece of country a teamster has ever had to journey through.

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#### THE BUSH POST BOX

On the road could be seen, nailed to a tree, a "Bush Post Box," in which, without stopping, the mail coach driver could drop the letters and papers. Since these early days, dogs have been trained to go every morning and wait for the coach, and when letters and papers are thrown to them by the driver, they pick them up and carry them home with delight.

Along this road some very pretty vistas of distant scenes are to be obtained through the trees.

#### THE HERMITAGE.

Since the advent of the railway to Healesville, the Board of Works has taken possession of Fernshawe for a water reserve for Melbourne. The hotels and inhabitants were compensated and removed, and in place of them the Hermitage was established by Mr. J. W. Lindt, an artist of great repute. This gentleman chose a spot half way to Narbethong, with sufficient elevation to command some most extensive views of the adjacent mountains.

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This is undoubtedly one of the most picturesque places that can be found in Australia, and reflects the greatest credit on its proprietor for his artistic conception, after a very considerable expense and labour in clearing and erecting buildings on the Swiss Chalet principle.

#### THE SPRINGS.

Before reaching the Hermitage some springs are seen on the side of the road, said to contain slightly some chemical elements. To the weary traveller in summer time they are a boon. The sources of these springs have been traced near the top of the Blacks' Spur, and keep trickling down all year round.

#### NARBETHONG

From the Hermitage it is about two miles to Narbethong, where there is usually a short stay made to change horses, and where refreshments can be obtained, if required, at the hotel. Fisher's Creek runs close by, and affords many charming little pictures for the artist.

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#### ST. FILIANS.

The next stage is a short run to St. Filians, a pleasant country home conducted on first-class principles by Mrs. Miller. Here the coach meets the Marysville one and again returns to Healesville.

#### MARYSVILLE.

Marysville is about eight miles distant and we now commence the final stage of the journey. The road from here is of an uninteresting character, until we arrive near to Marysville, where the scenery again improves. The hour being late, but little could be seen between the avenue of trees, unless it chanced to be moonlight, when frequently some

pretty effects could be seen. Arrived at Marysville, the visitor had a hearty welcome, and some good substantial refreshment at the only hotel in the place, kept by mine Host Keppell.

The description of the scenery around Marysville has been reserved for a special paragraph containing interesting notes of a more recent visit to the district.

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Coranderrk Aboriginal Mission Station.

Among the five or six stations set apart by the Victorian Government as homes for the aboriginal natives of this State, Coranderrk is perhaps the most important, supporting the largest community to be found on any of the Native Mission Stations. The well being of a native community depends largely on the organising capabilities of the manager in charge. The Rev. J. Shaw, whose long tenure of the position of Superintendent at Coranderrk, has proved what firmness and kindness will do in establishing, as it were, a social circle of the original sons and daughters of the Australian soil.

The daily routine at the station works like a clock. At 7 a.m. rations are served out. At 9 a.m. the bell rings, and is the daily call to morning prayers. The call is not a compulsory one, as all are

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free to avail themselves of the benefits of the pastor's spiritual services. Comfortable houses are provided for the numerous families, and these are gradually furnished and improved by the individual efforts of the various members of the community, as they occupy a great deal of their time in making weapons, such as spears, waddies, boomerangs, shields, etc., which they dispose of to the numerous visitors who call at the station.

The station is not by any means regarded as a show place, but the genial Superintendent is always pleased to grant permission for visitors to see around the place on their applying to him. Sunday is regarded as a day of rest, all work being suspended, and the usual church services are held in the building used for that purpose.

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OUTINGS.

THE following is a concise description of the most popular beauty spots and places of interest within walking distance of Healesville; also the easiest means of getting to them, starting from the railway station entrance gates:-

Coranderk.- An aboriginal station under the supervision of the Rev. Mr. Shaw. Open to the public during the week, Sundays excepted. The natives make and sell the various implements used in war and chase, and are always ready to give exhibitions of boomerang and spear throwing; also fire making. They are christianised. Most are educated and assist in raising hops.

Distance, 2.5 miles.

Follow street passing front of Terminus Hotel and stables, turning first corner to right, until Lilydale road is reached. Continue along this for 1.5 miles, turning as shown by finger post, along Launching Place road for 1 mile, when gates of station are reached.

Badger Creek.- Atypical Australian mountain stream flowing into the Yarra. Abounding in English trout, blackfish and eels.

Distance 3.5 miles,

Continue along Launching Place road for about one mile past Coranderrk gates.

Roorke's Bridge, River Yarra.-The principal bridge on the Healesville-Lilydale road, crossing

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the Yarra at a very beautiful spot, which is specially charming at the end of August, and beginning of September, during the time the wattle trees are in bloom. The soil along the flats being very fertile.

Murray cod, perch blackfish and eels are plentiful, good sport being obtained. Rabbits abound, whilst quail are to be had during certain seasons.

Distance, 3.5 miles.

Continue along main Lilydale road.

Junction of Rivers Yarra and Watts.- A most picturesque spot, being the old crossing place for traffic to Woods' Point in early days; the remains of the old bridge may still be seen. The river here is very fine, the wattle being in masses. From bridge crossing railway one of the best views of Healesville and surrounding mountains is obtained, whilst the railway tunnel is close at hand. Good fishing and rabbit shooting.

Distance, about 2 miles.

Take road passing side of Terminus Hotel and crossing railway line, and keep thereafter always bearing to the left until reaching railway bridge, then follow road along line, which stops at entrance gate of Lalor's farm, which is at the junction. This being private land, permission should be asked before going on to rivers.

Myers' Falls.- A beautiful cascade on Myers' Creek, in the midst of large timber, scrub and ferns. A popular picnic ground outside the control of the Metropolitan Board of Works.

Distance, about 5 miles.

Follow Nicholson street to the left until reaching

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St. Leonard's road (which is the first on the left after passing the second Graceburn bridge). A tram line will be noticed near corner, which tourists must keep on till the falls are reached.

Donelly's Weir.- The smallest of the three weirs supplying Melbourne. The situation is picturesque, and has been greatly improved by plantations of pines, English trees and ivy. Two million gallons of water is supplied from this point daily.

Distance, about 2.5 miles.

Follow St. Leonard's road, take first turning to right, just before reaching the Watts. Keep along this road until river is crossed by pretty rustic bridge, thence bearing towards the left, and keeping track which fords Donelly's Creek three times, the weir is reached. Shortly before arriving at Weir, McGinnis's well-known boarding house, the "Glen," is passed, whilst just before the weir the water enters No. 10 tunnel.

Condon's Gully.- One of the best and most beautiful of the many fern gullies in the district.

Distance, 5.5 miles.

Follow Donelly's Weir road until meeting the first track to the right after crossing first ford over Donelly's Creek, which leads to the exit of No. 11 tunnel. Keep on cart track following the fence, which encloses the tunnel exit and aqueduct. Crossing the Sawpit Creek, firstly by a little ford, thence in about quarter mile by bridge. Do not leave path until gully is reached.

The exit of No. 11 tunnel may be found by following the aqueduct near Donelly's weir to the right.

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Shortly before arriving at the exit of No.11 tunnel by the road, the tourist will notice at the locked gate across a road bearing slightly to the right. This leads to the entrance of No. 11 tunnel, from which a return to Healesville may be made via path through Gileads' old garden and main Fernshawe road.

Tunnel No. 11. Gileads." - The first of eleven tunnel, conveying the water supplying Melbourne through numerous hills that intervene between Healesville and the metropolis. At the entrance, the waters of the Maroondah and Graceburn meet. The tunnel is perfectly straight, can be seen through, and is 55 chains long. Good echo may be had by talking into either end.

Distance, 3 miles.

Following Fernshawe road, which is a continuation of Nicholson street, until reaching the 2-mile post in front of Miss Cameron's cottage; go through iron gate on left of road, indicated by sign on tree, "The tunnel." Keep on this path passing a second gate, until river is reached. Cross bridge and turn right through old orchard; when at end of quince trees look towards left, where a large heap of blue reef placed at entrance of tunnel is visible. The exit of tunnel may be reached by following Zig Zag road over the hill, and Healesville reached by Condon's Gully, road as previously described.

Maroondah and Graceburn Pipe Tracks.-

Directly facing tunnel will be noticed the path of the pipe conveying the water from the Maroondah weir. Follow track, which, after passing over a short but steep rise, branches right and left. Keep on left track until weir enclosure is reached.

Distance from tunnel to weir, about 1.25 miles,

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Looking towards right from mouth of tunnel will be noticed a small iron shed (a valve). This is over the Graceburn syphon, which shortly passes under the Watts river, to cross which the tourist will find a footbridge about 70 yards up stream. When over return on to syphon and follow the track through forest until arriving at entrance gates of Graceburn weir reserve on the Fernshawe road, near Gracedale House.

Distance from tunnel to gates, about 1.75 miles.

From gates to Healesville, 3.25 miles.

Maroondah Weir.- The largest of the three weirs of the Watts system of water conservation. It is situated immediately at foot of mount Monda. 10,000,000 gallons daily of beautiful clear, fresh water is at this point diverted from its natural course and conveyed 41 miles by syphons, tunnels and aqueducts, to the Preston reservoir, where it joins with that of the Yan Yean, thence to be distributed over the whole of the metropolis.

Distance, 5.75 miles by road.

Follow Fernshaw road to a road leading to left 100 yards past the back entrance of Gracedale House, 3.25 miles from Healesville, when the river is reached, pedestrians must follow river down stream about 50 yards, where a footbridge will be found; cross river, get on main track, and in about half-mile weir enclosure will be seen. To see the weir get into fenced reserve.

Mathinna Falls.- A beautiful series of three falls and cascades on the side of Mount Monda.

Distance, 8 miles.

Take Maroondah Weir road, turning to left at finger post near weir, commence ascending and

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continue on bridle track till falls are reached, the tourist arrives on the upper fall. To see the others it is necessary to descend the gully for about 300 feet.

NOTE.- In all damp places in gullies, and where treeferns abound, leaches are plentiful.

Graceburn Weir.- The prettiest and most beautifully situated of the three. It is a most perfect place for a picnic, being easy of access, dry under foot, good walking and well sheltered. 6,000,000 gallons of water is daily taken from the Graceburn and conveyed to open aqueducts and 18 inch syphons till it meets that from the Maroondah at No. 11 tunnel basin, a distance of about 2.5 miles. A peculiar illusion may be noticed in the aqueduct, of the water apparently running up hill.

Cobb's coach passes entrance gate daily; fare, 1/- each way.

Distance 4.25 miles.

Follow Fernshawe road till arriving at white gates on right hand side, which are about 250 yards beyond Gracedale House back entrance, get into fenced enclosure and walk along aqueduct.

NOTE.- The public are warned that they must not in any way pollute the water by throwing about rubbish. paper, remains of hampers; or bathing. Fires are only allowed in places set apart, and they must be carefully extinguished. Dogs are not allowed within the forested areas.

Splendid English spotted and American rainbow trout abound in all the streams within the reserve. Permits must be obtained to fish this area. Charge,

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5/- for three days. The best baits are yabbies or grass-hoppers, both of which are supplied by Harley, of Healesville. Trout will not take artificial fly, nor can casting be done from the banks of the streams; they must be waded.

Mount Juliet.- A trigonometrical station. The largest and highest mountain in the district (height 3651 feet), from the top of which a most extended panorama is obtained of the surrounding country. Melbourne, the Bay, Macedon, and the You Yangs, being easily seen on a clear day. Snow lies on the summit during winter.

Distance, 9 miles.

Follow Fernshawe road as far as 6 mile post, where finger board on right indicates track, which takes tourist to the top of Mount. When about half mile from summit a notice board indicates water. Obtain that essential fluid here for none is to be had higher up. Also when leaving the well-defined track and getting into that through long grass, take bearings well in case a fog should come on and obscure the country generally.

Cobb's coach daily passes the 6 mile post. Fare, 2/- each way.

Fernshawe.- The site of an old settlement, now completely effaced, situated on the Watts, in the centre of the water reserve. It was in old days the most popular resort of all classes. As the name implies, ferns abound. Good rabbit shooting may be had.

Distance, 7.25 miles.

Follow Fernshawe road until arriving at clearing immediately after crossing bridge over Watts river.

Morley's Track.-The old pack track across

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Blacks' Spur. Now a beautiful walk where one may enjoy the solitude of the Australian forest amid giant trees, myrtle, sassafras, treeferns and other foliage.

Distance to entrance, 7.5 miles.

Follow road past Fernshawe until it takes the first bend to left. Immediately facing tourist is the commencement of track.

Uncle Sam.- A giant gum tree on road side.

Distance, 8.75 miles.

Follow main road, or if preferable, take indistinct track starting at the entrance of Morley's track, but bearing slightly to the left. By this a pedestrian saves about one mile.

Etta's Glen.- A romantic fern and myrtle gully close to left of main road, near top of Blacks' Spur.

Distance, 9.5 miles.

Continue on main road.

Blacks' Spur.- A ridge of mountains dividing the watershed of the Watts from numerous creeks flowing into the Goulburn. About 2000 feet high.

Follow main road to "The Hermitage," a distance of 12 miles. After this the country changes, the scenery becomes uninteresting, less fertile, trees more stunted, until Marysville is reached, a distance of 22 miles.

Lindt's, "The Hermitage," should be visited. Built after the Swiss Chalet style, in the midst of the forest, the house itself contains much that will interest the visitor in the way of curios, collected by

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Mr. Lindt during his travels in New Guinea and the South Sea Islands.

Continuing along the main road as far as Marysville, 3 miles from which may be seen Stevenson's Falls, the finest in the district, being a beautiful cascade descending the mountain side, with a series of leaps, total height being 387 feet.

Beyond Marysville the ascent of Mounts Grant and Arnold commences, which rise to a height of about 4000 feet, on top of which some of the finest scenery of Australia may be seen, including Tommy's Bend, Cumberland creek and falls, forests of giant trees, some measuring 70 feet in girth, and ferns in masses on all sides.

Malleson's Look-Out.- A beautiful spot on Mount Tonnebuang, originally taken up and named after the late Mr. Malleson, from which a most extensive view of the surrounding country may be had, extending as far as Melbourne.

Distance, 7 miles.

Follow Nicholson street as far as Don road, where a sign post will be noticed pointing to right. Keep along this road, passing the Badger Creek about 3.25 miles out, and then commencing the ascent by winding road for about three miles, when road takes a sudden acute angle turn to left. This leads to "Look-Out," which is located by sign-board.

Continuing along, the tourist passes first Panton's clearing, known as "The Gap," thence after a walk of about two miles, slightly on the down grade, reaches Malleson's homestead, now owned by Mr. A. Agnew. This is worthy of close inspection, a great sum of money having been expended

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by the founder in perfecting and laying out the grounds, forming lawns, artificial lakes, planting holly hedges, improving by rustic bridges, nooks, grottos, fords, paths, and uncouth representations of animals, a most lovely fern gully, in which, besides native ferns, others from different parts of Australia and New Zealand, have been planted. Continuing for almost two miles through the cutting, the main lower road to Launching Place is met; turn to right, which brings tourist back to Healesville, thus doing the round trip.

Don Road.-Off the road are many bye-roads, all of which form pleasant walks. That leading past the cemetery leads into Lilydale Road, passing "Monte Carlo," or if continued to next turn, to Coranderk, through part of the village settlement. Further on, the first turn past the Badger Creek to the right leads through the Boggy Creek village settlement, the home of raspberries, and across a beautiful ford to the State school, thence to Coranderk.

Amongst the many attractions offered in this district, none are more worthy of a visit than the well-known and splendidly appointed hostelry, Gracedale House. The founders, in selecting the site for this house, have shown in every way very great taste and judgement, being built on a slight rise, about 400 feet above, and within three miles of Healesville, on the banks of the Graceburn, close to the Fernshawe road, and immediately at the foot of Mounts Juliet, Riddell and Monda, whilst towards the south-west an uninterrupted panorama of the Yarra Valley is obtained, extending as far as Doncaster.

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Sheltered on the north and east by the great mountains of the Dividing Range, hot winds rarely occur. In fact, winds from a northerly direction are unknown. For this reason alone the house is a most popular resort of all city folk, who wish to escape the enervating effects of our well known brickfielders. The climate is, during summer, generally cool, blankets being always acceptable at night, whilst the winter is mild, frosts seldom occurring.

The house has accommodation for upwards of 100 guests, and is provided with every modern convenience in way of sitting, smoking and reading rooms, a splendid dining hall, which seats 100 without crowding, hot and cold baths, a noble verandah 120 feet long by 16 wide, which invites to the enjoyment the outlook offers. The view obtained from the tower well repays a visit.

Amusements in the form of billiards, croquet and tennis are provided.

Attached to the house is an orchard containing a perfect selection of fruit; also strawberries and raspberries. The vegetable garden, in the hands of a first-class Chinese gardener, supplies the house with the best of fresh vegetables during the whole year.

Amongst the patrons to Gracedale are numbered Vice-Royalty, titled gentlemen and tourists from all parts of the world, together with all leaders of society from Victoria, who are unanimous in their praise, and pleased with their visits.

Mr Gilbert, the host, is only too pleased to conduct visitors through the house, and point out the many attractions in the neighbourhood, for Gracedale is situated in the midst of the whole of the beauty spots in the district.

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#### THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' PARADISE.

Myer's Creek.- A very pleasant outing, and one which can be done comfortably in a day, is Myers' Creek. This creek forms one of the numerous gullies which radiate from Mount Monda, and owing to its being traversed for a considerable portion of its course by a tramway, which terminates at Mr. Cowley's sawmills, about six miles from Healesville, many charming fern and forest scenes are revealed, which in other gullies are not accessible.

The directions for reaching Myers' Creek are simple. Follow St. Leonard's road to the end, turn to the left, and then follow the tram line for the rest of the way. The first portion of the route passes through scenery of a very ordinary description, and after the ascent of a small hill the route is fairly level as far up as the Myer's Falls, which are some distance up the tram line, on the left. After passing this point the scenery gradually gets of a grander description, and the many shady nooks, overhung with treeferns and other shrubs, often many a sheltered resting place for the pedestrian. The creek is ver picturesque, and the numerous little waterfalls add not a little to the general charm and delight of the walk. The sawmill is the terminus of the line and stands on the slope of Mount St. Leonard. Here one can see the huge eucalyptus

trees cut into suitable length for loading the trucks, which make frequent journeys to Healesville. If a very early start is made and arrangements have been concluded with those in charge of the timber trolley, a rather novel experience may be indulged in having a ride on

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the trolley up to the mill. This considerably lightens the day's outing, and leaves only the walk back to be accomplished, and this being down hill almost the whole way, is of an easy nature. The Myers' Falls before mentioned are well worth inspection, although unfortunately, their pristine beauty is a thing of the past.

The Maroondah Weir and the Mathinna Falls. - Distance to Weir, 3 miles, to Mathinna Falls, 8 miles.

This is perhaps the most delightful walk in the Healesville district, and one which every visitor should endeavour to make. It is not a difficult trip, and the track throughout is in good condition. The entire journey can be made on foot, but for those who are not fond of walking, the assistance of a conveyance as far as the weir will reduce the distance by about half way. Presuming, however, that it is decided to walk the entire distance, then we would suggest that an early start be made. Not so much because it is necessary, but that by so doing one is able to enjoy the delightful and exhilarating scents which fill the air with their sweet fragrance; notably, the wild musk and eucalyptus.

This experience is well worth the trouble of rising early and making a start, say at 7 a.m. From Healesville the choice of two routes is available to the tourist. The St. Leonard's road can be followed to the end, then turn to the right, cross the Watts River, a little further on by a good bridge, and take the Condon's Gully track nearly as far as the aqueduct, when a broad track will be noticed on the right. Pass through the panels and follow the winding track over the hill dividing the Condon's Gully from the Watts Valley

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Through this hill the aqueduct passes, and the track brings you out at the place where the tunnel enters the hill. A good deal of amusement can be indulged in here by speaking into the tunnel and listening to the resulting echoes, which are wonderfully distinct. From this point a very fine panoramic view is obtained of the Watts Valley, with the lofty summit of Mount Juliet (3700 feet) in the background. The track lies straight before you, and runs in almost a straight line for a mile, when it vanishes into the bush. This route is a little longer than the alternative one, but gives the tourist an opportunity of seeing the tunnel, and also the view just mentioned.

The second route lies along the Fernshawe road, as far as the two-mile post. On the left a hurricane gate will be noticed just beyond a little cottage, and a much defaced notice board announces "To Mathinna Falls," also a board to "The Tunnel." Enter by the gate and follow the track, when you will shortly cross the Watts by a substantial bridge, and by continuing you will come to a deserted orchard, after which you will join the track quite near to where No. 1 route left you, the tunnel being visible up a track on the left just after you enter the orchard. To those who are not fond of walking, this will prove to be the better of the two. Follow the track now until you come to the weir, but don't take the road which you see on your right, about three-quarters of a mile from the orchard. There is nothing of interest to see along this road, and it necessitates crossing the Watts by a fallen tree, there being no bridge; and if much rain has fallen it is not a very pleasant undertaking. Just before reaching the weir the bridle track again joins this road, and it is worth turning back along it for a short distance, as far as the river. When

the river is reached, a track will be seen on the right; take this and cross over the bridge. If you are of an artistic turn of mind and possess a camera, some very charming little views can be obtained of the bridge and river stretches. Resuming the journey, after leaving the bridle track, follow the carriage road, and the weir will be reached in a few minutes. A considerable rest may be taken here, as the remainder of the journey requires all your energy, especially if it is a hot day or the track at all wet.

There is much about the weir to interest one, and the scenery in the vicinity lends itself to the making of many beautiful pictures. After resting for a while, retrace your steps a little, and on your left, facing towards the weir, the Mathinna track will be noticed striking right into the bush. There is a guide post pointing to this track, so you cannot go wrong. It is a very beautiful bush track, and many pretty pictures can be taken along it. There are three steep climbs to be done, and take it easy, as the last is the stiffest. There is one good feature about this track, and it is that there are long spells of fairly even walking in between the ascents. Some very delightful views are obtained in climbing the hill, when looking back towards Healesville, and here and there extensive views of the mountains, including Mount Juliet, are obtained through the magnificent eucalyptus and treeferns which grow luxuriantly all along the track. The distance from the weir to the falls is about four miles, and it is at the end of this distance, that the stiff climb comes, it being a good half mile up the hill, which brings you within cooee of them. The ascent made a track leads off to the left, and before you, nesting in a bower of luxuriant tree ferns, shrubs, etc., are the beautiful upper Mathinna

Falls, and well worth all the trouble of getting to them. A large fallen gum tree, which lies right in front of them, unfortunately does not improve their appearance, and it is doubtless waiting until the authorities begin to recognise the beauty of the place, to be removed. It is notorious that throughout Victoria so little attention is paid by those in authority to the preservation and upkeep of the show places we possess. Such is not the case in New South Wales, nor in America and other countries, where everything is done for the careful preservation of the show places, and every effort made to advertise them and make them easy of access to the general public.

Having arrived at our destination, lunch can be partaken of before commencing the descent to the lower falls, but if Healesville was left early in the morning it will perhaps be too soon for refreshment, when the lower falls can be visited right away. The descent is not a very difficult one, although care should be taken, as a slip would doubtless end with very unpleasant results. The track follows the creek the whole way, and the innumerable waterfalls, overhung with foliage, afford many a pleasant and romantic glimpse. The upper ledge of the lower fall will soon be reached. The upper ledge of the lower fall will soon be reached, and it is here that care must be exercised in negotiating the rather precipitous descent to the bottom of the lower fall. This being gained, cross the creek, and from a little eminence on the opposite side a good view is obtained, as the stream is hurled over the rocky precipice only to lose itself in the densely wooded gully below. By turning your back to the fall a glorious view of the gully is obtained, and by looking into its great depth you will have an idea of the good climb you have made. The return journey from the falls to

the weir is made in much less time than it took to come, so this should be allowed for to avoid hurrying away from such a delightful fairyland. If time will permit, do not return till late in the afternoon, as it is very pleasant walking along the bush track towards evening.

Visitors who are staying at Gracedale House need not take the track as described to the weir. On leaving the grounds turn to the right along the Fernshawe road, and a short distance beyond, a road will be seen turning off to the left. Take this and it will take you direct to the weir.

NOTES ON THE TRIP.- Be it understood that no fires are allowed within the area of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the ground covered in this journey is entirely within that area.

The destruction of trees, ferns, and shrubs is strictly prohibited, and very wisely so too. May we, through the agency of this little guide, appeal to all who visit this glorious district of Healesville to refrain from the wanton destruction that is so frequently carried on by many who visit this part, and especially is this the case with regard to treeferns and wattle, when in bloom. If only a love and admiration of the beautiful can be instilled into the minds of the rising generation, then and then only will it be possible to hand down to those who are to follow us the glorious heritage of the bush, with all its innumerable beauties and features unimpaired. If such a spirit can be aroused, then one of the main ideas in the publishing of this book will be fulfilled.

Condon's Gully.- Four miles. Every visitor to Healesville should set aside one day to visit this, the most beautiful and romantic gully in the district. It is an easy day's outing, and it is not

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necessary to make an early start, as it is only about four miles distant, and very little climbing to be done. Those who do not care to walk the whole distance can be driven about half way up the track, and thus considerably reduce the amount of walking to be done. Starting from Healesville, take the St. Leonard road and then turn to the right, following the road straight on and over the Watts River by a bridge. A little further on you will notice a road turning to the left; it leads you to "The Glen" (Miss McGuinness), don't take it, but walk straight ahead, and after a walk of three miles the gully will be reached. On the way the aqueduct, which carries the water to Melbourne, will be passed on the left.

From here onward the dense eucalyptus forest seems to assume grander proportions at every turn in the road, and many delightful views reveal themselves to the elated traveller as he presses on to the fairyland beyond. Very little sign is visible of any gully being so close, but it is perhaps one of the charms of this outing that the magnificent scenery of the gully opens out upon the unwary traveller in all its majesty and grandeur with quite an unexpected suddenness.

The last hill being ascended, the track winds in and out amongst the trees, and then slightly descending one is face to face with the grand entrance of Condon's. Graceful treeferns grow luxuriantly on either side, and the view down the track at this point is one of very great beauty that will never be forgotten by those who see it. The huge gum trees add greatly to the stateliness of this charming vista. Continue straight on, and the track taking a turn to the left reveals one of the most exquisite combinations of treeferns, black-

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wood, gum trees and the innumerable bush shrubs and undergrowth that one could wish to see. The gully is hemmed in by the surrounding mountains, which are clothed far up their steep sides with treeferns, interspersed with the other vegetation, and forming a scene of transcendent beauty. The fairy bower which is passed through before descending into the gully

is most picturesque, and affords a cool and pleasant shelter on a hot day. A few yards further on and the bottom of the gully is reached, when the traveller, who will be ready for a rest and refreshment, can sit down and enjoy the beauty of this veritable haunt of fairies. Unfortunately the work of the thoughtless is to be seen in damaged treeferns, waste paper and numerous other signs of desecration which so many holiday makers delight to leave behind them.

There need be no anxiety in making the return journey too soon, as it is much easier than the outward one, Leave late in the afternoon and enjoy the full glory of the Australian bush.

#### NOTES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Healesville.- In the immediate vicinity of the township there are a great number of very charming scenes to be secured, and it will well repay the enthusiast to spend a good deal of his time rambling about the immediate neighbourhood. Some of the most beautiful pictures in the district are to be got close at hand if they are looked for. A good general view of the township is secured from the hill in front of the Church of England.

Corranderk.- The aboriginal station. Permission to photograph must be obtained.

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Roorke's Bridge, about two miles from Healesville, on the Melbourne road, affords the opportunity of several views, including the Yarra River. A good view of Mound Riddell, from a totally different aspect, can be obtained here.

Mount Riddell.- A good view of this mountain is obtained from the Don road. The early morning in the spring and autumn is very favourable for getting good atmospheric effects. From a small hill just beyond the hop field a somewhat extensive view can be secured, the cone-like form of this mountain being a prominent feature in the landscape.

Mount St. Leonard.- Perhaps the best view of this mountain is to be got about 1.25 miles along the Fernshawe road. Walk along the road, keeping your weather eye on "The Glen" (Miss McGuinness), and you will come to a point where it will get hidden by the intervening bush. Turn off on to the side of the road and the view, as depicted opposite page 30, can be got. For this view a lens of normal focus is required, so as to get in as much foreground as possible. Don't use a wide angle lens.

Two other good views can be obtained, one from the Healesville end of St. Leonard's road, with the houses as a foreground, and another from a few yards along the Don road, before crossing the Graceburn bridge, with the houses in the middle distance, the trees forming a picturesque foreground. For this view get close up to the fence. Long focus lenses are best for both these views.

Mount Juliet.- A good view can be got off the tram track, near the station, if a lens with a long

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focus is used. There is also another view from the tunnel, as already mentioned in the trip to Mathinna Falls.

Myer's Creek and Gully.- Only photograph here on a dull day; it is only wasting plates if the sun is not obscured. There are some good tree fern studies here; also several waterfalls, the principal being the Myers' Falls, but unfortunately the surroundings have been much destroyed.

Condon's Gully.- The photographer's El Dorado. Undoubtedly the finest gully in the district, and acknowledged one of the best in Victoria. There is nothing of much importance along this track until the entrance to the gully is reached. The entrance makes a good upright view, and from there onwards there is an almost endless succession of choice fern

pictures. A dull day is preferable, but should the sun be shining from the clear sky, good views can be got late in the afternoon.

Malleson's Look-Out - A very fine panoramic view is to be obtained from the top of the Zig-Zag road, extending from Mount Juliet to Christmas Hills and Whittlesea Ranges embracing the whole. In spring and autumn the effects in early morning are simply beautiful. On the top of the hill known as "The Ridge," the road leads down to the Don Valley, and on reaching Malleson's Glen, a most extensive panorama is obtained of the Warburton district. The gully affords many fine studies of ferns. For the distant views in this neighbourhood, a long focus lens is preferable.

NOTE.- Rather over-expose in the fern gullies than err in the opposite direction. Nothing is more unsightly than an under-exposed fern picture.

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When working in fern gullies and other similar places use as large an aperture as your lens will permit, so as to enable you to give as short an exposure as possible, owing to the tendency the fern leaves have to move at the least breath of wind.

Get up early and do some photographic work before breakfast-it will repay you. The mist effects are often very beautiful.

The Weir and Mathinna Track.- Several good views are to be obtained at the point where the carriage road crosses the Watts, not far from the weir. A little foot-bridge lends itself well to composition. At the weir, views can be obtained of the weir itself, and don't miss the little pool within the enclosure. A photograph with good reflections is to be got there.

Up the Mathinna track several charming little pieces of bush scenery are to be had, but don't attempt them if there is a brilliant sunshine. Remember that to see the bush in its photographic glory you should see it on a dull day. The best time to take the falls is in the late afternoon or early morning. During the middle of the day the sun shines almost direct into the lens, and even if this can be avoided, the general effect is spoiled owing to the falls being in the shade and the foliage in sunshine. Don't be afraid of over-exposing. Remember that in the bush you are photographing almost exclusively green objects, and that the actinic power of the light is considerably reduced owing to the nature of the surroundings. A lens of ordinary focus is all that you require for the upper falls. For the lower falls a very short focus lens is necessary, owing to the confined nature of the scenery.

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The Blacks' Spur Road.- This road affords a host of views - panoramic, pictorial or otherwise. About 1.75 miles from Healesville, a view of Gracedale House is to be seen, and beyond this to Fernshawe numerous road scenes and bush studies can be got.

Beyond Gracedale House a track turns off on the right hand side of the road to Gracedale weir.

Just before entering Fernshaw the track to Mount Juliet will be noticed on the right - there is a guide post. This track affords some picturesque "bits."

Fernshawe.- The township has been removed. The Watts river at this point affords two or three picturesque views.

Morley's Track.- Immediately after leaving Fernshaw, and just where the road takes the turn to ascend the Spur, the track will be noticed on the right. Walk along this as far as the river, and a few rather pretty fern scenes can be got. The track beyond this now much over-grown, and we doubt whether it can be followed for any great distance. Some years ago some beautiful views were procurable.

Ascend the Spur, and one mile from Fernshawe the One Mile Bend is reached. This makes a good view and can be taken either from the road or



by climbing on to the top of the bank, where a much more comprehensive view is to be had.

The next point of interest is the large eucalyptus tree known as Uncle Sam, which is situated at a sharp turn in the road on the left, about a mile further on. Beyond this, up the hill, an extensive

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view is seen looking across the gully towards Gracedale House, which can be seen in the distance, the road is seen down below winding its way up the hill.

Etta's Glen.- Some distance further on, on the left hand side, this favourite picnic resort is reached. One or two views can be taken here, but it has been considerably damaged by visitors.

In the ascent the road follows the Great Myrtle Gully, and several splendid photographs should be taken.

The summit being reached, there will be seen here and there several good stereoscopic "bits," although the district generally offers innumerable opportunities for the stereo worker.

Just before making the descent on to the Narbethong side of the mountains, three tall trees will be noticed on the right, to one of which is attached a letter box. These, with Mount Dom Dom as a background, make a pleasing composition. Long focus lens preferred.

After leaving this point keep a good lookout for a break in the trees on the right, as a very fine view is to be got of the Cathedral Ranges, the trees in the foreground forming a graceful framework. There are two such views, but the first one is by far the better. A long focus lens is most suitable.

The Springs are reached a little further on. They are on the left hand side of the road, and are easily discovered by the trickling water. Have a figure in the act of drinking; it will add to the pictorial effect.

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"The Hermitage." -Between the springs and "The Hermitage" there is splendid material for good stereoscopic work, the eucalypts and treeferns being of the first order. "The Hermitage" itself is just beautiful, and its picturesque gateway makes a delightful study, especially with suitable figures. In the grounds there are two look-out houses placed a considerable height up two gum trees, and from which very fine panoramic views are obtained. It will be necessary to ask permission from Mr. Lindt if it is desired to ascend them. Between this and Narbethong there is nothing of note until Narbethong is reached, and there are several good pieces here which lend themselves to pictorial effect and composition, notably, the hotel and bridge.

#### GIANT TREES

By N. J. CAIRE.

The Healesville district has been noted from its very early days for the gigantic growth of its forest timber. The city of Melbourne and suburbs have drawn largely from here for their supplies of hardwood timber for building purposes. Several species of the eucalypt family of plants have found their home in these Great Dividing Ranges in the past centuries, and surrounded by favorable conditions combined with the best of soil, have grown to monstrous and gigantic proportions, outrivalling all other districts in Victoria.

The first to be met with is "Uncle Sam," on the

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Blacks' Spur Road, 40 feet girth and 250 feet high. "Big Ben," higher up the Spur, at Syncona Hill, a still bigger specimen, measuring 57 feet

girth, is no longer in existence, having recently been destroyed by bush fires, through neglect in not being protected. Towards the top of the Blacks' Spur and thence down to the village of Narbethong, many fine specimen of giant trees can be found. At Narbethong there is one about a quarter of a mile from the hotel named Coulson's Camp, having been used as a camping place in former days. Narbethong boasts of another very big tree at some considerable distance from the village. Little is as yet known of this monster.

From Narbethong the country gets very poor for several miles, and very poor forests of messmate are passed through for about eight miles, until Marysville is reached. Here similar country to Blacks' Spur is met with, and on Tommy's Bend and thence to Cumberland Creek the most gigantic growth of forest timber in Australia is to be found. Great Australian gum trees from 30 to 70 feet girth can be seen in considerable numbers. Two giant trees have recently been found at Cumberland Creek. The one a white manna gum, 58 feet girth, about 180 feet high, and probably 1500 years old. The other, half a mile from this one, is a mountain ash, 70 feet girth and about the same height, but broken off at the top, evidently in an advanced state of decay. This one is supposed to be nearly 2000 years old.

Only a comparatively small portion of this great forest has been explored, so that probably several other giant trees may exist, to be discovered in the future.

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#### Bicycle Tour Through Healesville.

By means of the ubiquitous "wheel," one is in a position to see much of the surrounding country and its people. Lanes and by-ways can be explored at will. To the observant, travelling is an educating medium, and the pleasure and enjoyment of a tour are greatly enhanced by having congenial companions. Cycling holds a unique and unassailing position among the pastimes of the people, and in this capacity exhibits an earnest, and a guarantee, of its community.

Melbourne to Healesville and Alexandra.

The road is fair to good, but rather hilly. It can all be ridden, except the pinch near Lilydale, and on the Blacks' Spur.

We give a few of the distances en route:-

		Miles.			Miles
Kew	...	6	Blacks' Spur	...	45
Box Hill	...	9	Marysville	...	60.5
Ringwood	...	17	Buxton	...	63
Lilydale	...	24	Taggerty	...	70
Healesville	...	37	Alexandra	...	88.5

The Healesville Tourist and Progress Association.

The above Association has recently been formed, under the presidency of Mr. Charles N. Gilbert, its objects being to open up tracks and improve the means of access to the various beauty spots in the district; and to give information to visitors in reference to accommodation available. Mr. H.R. Thomas, of Nicholson Street, is the Secretary, and will be pleased to supply any information to enquirers.

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#### PLACES OF NOTE.

Places of interest  
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 proposes to send his family out of London for safety; and all express

regret that their business will prevent their going with their families. All are, therefore, exceedingly anxious to know what they can do to ensure that they will not fall victims to the dreaded disease, when one who until then had been a silent member of the group informs the others that he had that day been advised by a friend to wear a rabbit's paw tied around his neck, and the diarist, Samuel Pepys, who has recorded the incident here narrated, adds that he thereupon decided to adopt the suggestion for himself and hoped that it would protect him from falling a victim to the disease.

In reading Samuel Pepys' most human and interesting account of the manners and customs of the years 1659 to 1669, in which is embodied a most vivid description of the Great Plague of London, one notes that despite the fact that more than one in five of the population of the city had fallen victims to the Plague and that more than 32,000 had died, nobody seemed to have asked what would now appear to be a very obvious question - What was the cause of the outbreak? It would appear that though such outbreaks had regularly scourged the human race, man, at that stage of his mental development, was quite prepared to accept them as special visitations by God as punishment for sins, and there the matter seemed to rest until comparatively recent times.

That such events were but the effect of the conditions that man himself had allowed to develop as a result of the large congregations of human beings in relatively small areas does not seem to have occurred to him. However, once he began to associate the state of the public health with such conditions, it soon became apparent to him that the pollution of his water supply and the absence of sanitary drainage were the causes of most of the ills to which he was subject. Cholera and typhoid fever were then labeled as the effects of man's own actions, and the time had, therefore, arrived to acquit God of the old imputation - divine retribution and punishment in such matters. The full realization of this is but a little more than 100 years old. However, once these facts were established beyond doubt, it can be said to man's credit that he immediately got busy, and in every civilised country of the world organizations of one form or another were soon set up to deal with the problems of water supply and sewerage.

And this brings us to the subject of this particular study, namely, a historical survey of the water supply to the city of Melbourne.

In 1835 John Batman made his way up a stream which we now know as the River Yarra, and, landing at a spot near where the Customs House is now situate at the corner of William and Flinders Streets, made his famous declaration: "This will be the place for the village." Batman also records that: "The river comes from the east, and I am glad to state that I found it good water and very deep." Obviously the determining factor in the selection of a site for this "village" was the prospect of a plentiful supply of fresh water, and it is here worth recording that the city of to-day with its 1.25 million inhabitants is still almost totally dependent upon this same river and its tributaries for its most vital need. And just how well this sometimes much maligned river has supplied that need will be unfolded as the story proceeds.

The Yarra in 1835 was very different from the river that we know to-day. Just above the point where Batman landed was a rock ledge extending right across the river which acted as a weir, damming back on the one side fresh water, and for most of the time marking the limits of the tidal salt waters of Port Phillip, whilst early records also establish the fact that the banks of the river and the major portion of the site on which the city proper now stands were fairly heavily timbered.

The earliest inhabitants of the village had perforce to obtain their domestic water supplies above the point of ant tidal influences, and it is of interest to note that within four years of the establishment of the village 14 pumps had been installed by enterprising citizens at various

points on the northern bank of the stream between what is now Russel Street and the site of the rock ledge previously mentioned. At certain times, however, salt water did get beyond this rock bar, and the first recorded proposal to conserve water in the new settlement was made in 1838, when Robert Hoddle, the newly arrived Surveyor-General, suggested that a small dam or weir should be built at the bar, using the rocks as a base. The proposal appears to have been sound, but the work was not satisfactorily executed and its purpose was never achieved, the project being ultimately abandoned. All that marks this spot to-day is the Queen's Bridge, the rocks in the stream having been removed many years ago to give better flood control of the stream.

These enterprising citizens were selling water to householders in 1839 and 1840 in barrels of approximately 120 gallons at an average price of 3/- per barrel and were apparently so prosperous as to arouse the envy of their fellow citizens, for they were described in the "Port Phillip Herald" of the 18th April, 1840, as a "band of parasitic gentry who had formed a monopoly to charge most outrageous prices for water." It was further alleged against them that instead of drawing water off at low tide they took it at any hour, regardless of whether a succession of high tides had rendered the water above the rock bar brackish, and it was considered that this practice was responsible for the then high death rate in Melbourne. This is of particular interest, as in 1840 it was recorded that a disease described as "colonial fever" had broken out and was responsible for twenty deaths a week. Feelings at this stage were running so high against these water-men that a largely attended public meeting was held in 1840 at the "Lambs Inn," when it was unanimously agreed to form a Company with a capital of 20,000 pounds for the purpose of establishing a satisfactory water supply for the public. A provisional committee was appointed to give effect to the resolution but nothing more was ever heard of the project.

The village had been growing in population and importance, and in 1839 Mr. C. J. Latrobe took up his position as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District, acting under the direction of the then Governor of the Colony of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke. The settlement was, of course, governed from Sydney, although in 1840 the residents were granted the right to elect six members to the Legislative Council which met in Sydney. However, the many domestic problems associated with the rapid growth of the township soon required a closer association with the Legislature than was possible at such a distance as Sydney, and in 1842 the Town of Melbourne was duly incorporated under the provisions of a Local Government Act. A Council consisting of twelve Councillors and four Alderman was set up, and amongst other duties the sewerage of Melbourne and providing for its water supply were delegated to this Council, notwithstanding the fact that it had only been given very limited powers of taxation and had no funds on hand except a special grant of 2,000 pounds from the Colonial Government. Nevertheless, the Council at once interested itself in the question of the town water supply, as by this time the river had lost many of its pristine characteristics and was now acting as a common drain for the settlement. One of the Council's first actions was to ask the Sydney Government in 1843 for a grant of 25,000 pounds to enable it to tap the waters of the Yarra above Digh't Falls, bring a supply in to the City boundaries by pipes, and store it in two reservoirs, one on the eastern hill and the other on the western hill. Nothing further seems to have eventuated about this project, and there appears to be little to record for some two or three years in respect of the proposed water supply scheme. Water for the inhabitants was still being drawn at the point previously described, and one chronicler has described the water being delivered as "compounded doses of luke warm water and glauber salts," whilst he also alleged that the Town Council

had apparently too much to do in small intrigues about jobs and elections to bother about the water supply.

In 1847 Melbourne was advanced to the status of a city, and when by 1848 the population had increased to 14,000 the Dight's Falls proposals were again revived, following on a report submitted to the Council by Mr. J. C. King, the town Clerk. This project was still under consideration in 1849, when there arrived in Melbourne a man whose name in after years was to be inseparably associated with the water supply of the city. He was Mr. James Blackburn. Mr Blackburn was a civil engineer by profession, and soon after his arrival he persuaded four other citizens to join him in forming a syndicate known as the Melbourne Water Company, its object being to supply good water to the inhabitants at a much lower price than was then being charged. He proposed to erect a steam pump at the river and lift the water to a number of elevated tanks to be erected at a spot now known as the corner of Flinders Lane and Elizabeth Street. The water in the tanks would pass through a filter consisting of charcoal and sand, and he proposed to sell it to the water carters at one penny per load at the tanks. This project so appealed to the City Council that Mr. Blackburn had no difficulty in obtaining the necessary licenses to pump the water and to erect the tanks, and he very soon established himself in business where, in a short time, he earned a reputation as an authority on water supply and was regarded by most inhabitants as a public benefactor.

In less than twelve months the office of City Surveyor to the Council became vacant, and the Council unanimously elected Mr. Blackburn to this position, there being ten other applicants. On 26th June, 1850, the sum of 300 pounds was appropriated out of the City's funds "for a comprehensive survey by the City Surveyor of the comparative merits of the various modes by which the city may be supplied with a sufficient supply of water."

On the 28th April, 1851, Mr. Blackburn furnished a report on "The Causes of the Impurity of the Waters of the Yarra from Melbourne to the Falls." Therein he records that many dead cows were to be seen in the river, tanneries were draining into it, fellmongeries and woolwashing establishments were discharging direct into the stream, whilst the cattle and horses of the settlement were using the shallow water for drinking within 60 yards of one set of pumps supplying the water carts. He also records that he examined one load of water taken from these pumps "which had a degree of viscosity equal to that of a very weak gelatin."

Little more than three months later Mr. Blackburn presented a comprehensive survey of all possible means of supplying the city with water. Since first receiving his instructions, he had made a detailed inspection of the Deep Creek and its catchment as far as Macedon; he followed the Merri Creek to its source; and thoroughly explored the Dandenong Creek. The Plenty River was duly examined, and last but not least he gave close attention to the Dight's Falls proposal. After a survey of all these schemes he strongly recommended the adoption of the Plenty River proposal, the principle reasons being the purity of the supply at that time and the fact that future contamination could be avoided, whilst the waters could be impounded at a level that would permit of a gravitational supply to Melbourne. The Council received the report on the 9th August, 1851, and ordered it to be printed and distributed amongst its members.

It is of interest to note that the actual cost of these investigations and the report was 357 pounds 3s. 11d. as passed for payment by Council on 30th October, 1851.

The importance of the matters being investigated by Mr. Blackburn in 1850 and 1851 was to some extent overshadowed by the principal topic of the day, namely, Separation from New South Wales. Port Phillip District was officially proclaimed as the Colony of Victoria on 1st July, 1851,

and given a limited form of self-government, complete self-government not eventuating until 1856. This change in the political structure made approaches to the Government much easier than heretofore, and the Council on the 1st December, 1851, forwarded a request to the Colonial Secretary for a grant for the purpose of providing a water supply for the city, and renewed this application on the 5th April, 1852. On the 10th July, 1852, the Council declined to adopt Mr. Blackburn's recommendation of the Plenty River scheme (later known as the Yan Yean scheme) owing to insuperable difficulties in procuring sufficient labour, but re-affirmed its earlier decision to take a supply from a point on the River Yarra above Dight's Falls, the estimated cost being 81,492 pounds 7s 6d. To enable the Council to carry out this proposal, another application was submitted to the Colonial Treasurer for a grant of half the estimated cost, the balance to be raised by public loan. Mr. Blackburn's position as a paid servant of the council must necessarily have been somewhat difficult at this stage, but he reported to the council that if the Dight's Falls scheme was to be proceeded with certain modifications should be made to the plans before it so that in the event of the Yan Yean scheme being adopted at some later stage the respective storages should be so situated as to fit in with the later scheme.

The Government had apparently heard something about Mr. Blackburn's Yan Yean proposals, and before deciding to accede to the Council's request appointed a Select Committee on the 27th July, 1852, to consider the various schemes propounded. It consisted of Mr. J. F. Palmer, the Speaker, and Messrs. Russell, Pohlman, Johnston, and Westgarth, and power was given to the Committee to take evidence and call for any documents. This Committee held many sittings and called for evidence from the medical profession, representatives of the Insurance businesses, Mr. Robert Hoddle, the Surveyor-General of the Colony, Mr. C. Hodgkinson, Assistant Surveyor-General, and Mr. T. Odham an engineer who had recently arrived from England and had some experience in connection with water supply schemes in England and Scotland. With the exception of Messrs. Hodgkinson and Oldham, none of the witnesses favoured Mr. Blackburn's proposals, chiefly on the grounds of impracticability, but after Mr. Blackburn had submitted his evidence in chief Messrs. Hodgkinson and Oldham suggested that the Committee should adjourn until such time as they could accompany Mr. Blackburn to the Yan Yean district and examine his proposals on the spot, and this was agreed to. Mr. Hodgkinson, who was at first in favour of the Dight's Falls proposal, said later - "After visiting the ground I have much pleasure in giving my humble testimony as to the care, industry, and engineering talent displayed by Mr. Blackburn in the details of his plans for the water supply," and added that, subject to the modifications recommended by Mr. Oldham, he would favour Mr. Blackman's proposal. Mr. Oldham made many useful suggestions for the modification and improvement of Mr. Blackman's plans, recommending the Committee to adopt the Yan Yean proposal, as it was his opinion that "the quantity of water will be abundant and better than is obtainable in almost any town in Europe." Finally the Committee recommended the Government to adopt Mr. Blackburn's proposals for the Yan Yean scheme, subject to the alterations suggested by Mr. Oldham. The Government adopted this recommendation and the Bill was duly placed before the Legislative Council authorizing the construction of these waterworks. The work was to be undertaken by a Board of Commissioners appointed by and under the direct control of the Government, with power to impose water and sewerage rates, and despite the strong opposition of the City Council the Bill became law.

Mr. M.B. Jackson was appointed constructional engineer, whilst Mr. Blackburn accepted the position of Consulting Engineer, and Governor Latrobe turned the first sod of the Yan Yean System on the 20th December, 1853.

While the earth works were in hand and the mains were being laid to the city, reticulation of the city proper proceeded apace, and in order to supply the inhabitants with water until the supply was available, a water tank was erected at Eastern Hill which was supplied from the Yarra by means of a steam engine installed at the foot of Spring Street. This tower and tank were dismantled in 1892 and re-erected at the Board of Works Metropolitan Farm where the tank is still in commission.

In March, 1854, whilst the work at Yan Yean was proceeding, Mr. Blackburn died as the result of a riding accident which occurred when he was taking part with the City Councillors in the time-honoured custom of "beating the bounds," and so this gentleman was not spared to see the fulfillment of the plans that could be said to be peculiarly his own product.

The finding of the Select Committee recorded that "the material features of the Yan Yean Scheme had been conceived with great boldness and evidenced considerable engineering skill," and at present time, when the events of 1849 to 1853 can be viewed dispassionately and when the fruits of Mr. Blackburn's labour have been manifest to each succeeding generation, there can be little doubt that this city is greatly indebted to this man for the quality of the water that it has enjoyed since the introduction of the scheme which he propounded. A well-known chronicler of a little later date said: "with all its shortcomings the Yan Yean has proved itself the best abused and most useful public servant the City of Melbourne has ever had," and the conviction is deepening that James Blackman is entitled to the place of honour in connection with Melbourne's water supply.

Perhaps a brief reference should be made at this stage to the establishment of the South Yarra Water Works Corporation in 1855. This Company erected a pumping plant at Forest Hill and conveyed the water from the River Yarra by pipes to a standpipe erected at a site where the railway line now crosses Chapel Street, South Yarra. Later, the main was extended to the St. Kildas Junction, where a standpipe was erected for the residents of that district. The charges made by the company for water were considered unreasonably high by the residents of the district concerned, and there were few regrets when some years later these districts were reticulated by extensions from the mains in the city proper.

Water from Yan Yean was turned on in the City of Melbourne on 31st December, 1857, by Major-General McArthur, representing the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly, and judging by the accounts in the Press at the time it was an occasion of great rejoicing. The Yan Yean Reservoir occupies the site of what was once a number of marshy swamps. By the erection of an earthen embankment some 49 chains in length and 30 feet in height, a storage of almost 7,000 million gallons was made possible, the superficial area of the reservoir being 1,360 acres, with a maximum depth of 26 feet and an average of 18 feet. It was fed by the Plenty River and its tributaries and the total cost of the scheme, including the reticulation of the city itself, was 754,206 pounds. The first rate levied for water was 1/- in the pound of the net annual value of all properties served, whilst the charge for water was 4/- per 1,000 gallons. These charges represented a great saving to the inhabitants of the city as, owing to the effect of the gold rush, labour had become very scarce and water carriers were then charging as high as 10/- for delivery by means of a barrel of 120 gallons. In addition, there was a marked improvement in the quality of the water. The population of Melbourne reached the 100,000 mark as the Yan Yean Reservoir was completed. Whilst the work was fully justified by the results achieved there were many occasions during the first fifteen years of the operation of the system when Melbourne found itself threatened with a shortage of water, principally because of the growth of population which by 1875 had reached 245,000. The need for further

supplies in the city was so acute at this stage that additional provision for bringing the water into Melbourne had to be made. The original pipe line from Yan Yean was of 30-inch diameter as far as South Morang, 27-inch from South Morang to Preston, and 24 inch from Preston to the city proper. In 1876 an open aqueduct was constructed from Yan Yean to South Morang with a capacity of 33 million gallons per day, replacing the existing 30-inch pipes which were taken up and relaid alongside the 27-inch pipe to Preston. By 1879 it was recognized that, whilst the provision for bringing water into the city had been improved, the stream flow indicated that further sources of supply would have to be sought.

Mr. William Thwaites, who in later years was the first Engineer-in-Chief of the Board, was instructed in 1879 to investigate and report on the possibility of bringing the waters of the King Parrot Creek and its tributaries to the Yan Yean Reservoir, whilst Mr. J. H. Davies was commissioned to investigate the question of the use of the Watts River and its tributaries. Mr. Thwaites reported that the waters of the Wallaby Creek, a tributary of the King Parrot Creek, could be brought into Yan Yean, and this proposal was adopted as the first step towards the solution of the problem of shortage of supplies. Commenced in 1883, the work was completed in 1886, the water being brought down to Yan Yean by means of an open aqueduct, through the Toorourrong Reservoir, and the average stream flow of 7 million gallons per day proved a most welcome addition to the supplies. An extension of the aqueduct to pick up the head waters of the Silver Creek was then undertaken, when an additional supply of 3 million gallons per day was made available. As soon as the position of the storage had become satisfactory the Water Supply Department, in pursuance of its fundamental policy of refraining from taking water from any area where there was a possibility of pollution, diverted the water from the Bruce Creek, a tributary of the Plenty, outside the catchment area, because this creek traversed a portion of the country which had been settled prior to the construction of the Yan Yean Reservoir.

It is here worthy of note that the water brought from Wallaby and Silver Creeks is the only portion of Melbourne's supply which is not taken from one or other of the tributaries of the River Yarra.

In 1886, and just after the aforementioned works were completed, authority was given for the construction of a weir across the Watts River above Healesville, and an aqueduct some 41 miles in length was ordered to be constructed to bring water to Preston Reservoir to supplement the Yan Yean supply. The work was completed and officially opened by the Governor, the Earl of Hopetoun, on the 18th February, 1891. This ensured an additional flow of 25 million gallons per day, and the increased supply adequately met the needs of the city for 20 years, as it was not until 1911 that any further substantial construction works were found to be necessary.

Within a month of the Watts River water being made available, an important change in the control of the undertaking took place. The works indicated herein had thus far been controlled by a special department of Government, but, with the adoption of a proposal to introduce a sewerage system for Melbourne, the Government passed an Act in 1890, constituting the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, with a membership of 39 Commissioners and a Chairman to be appointed by the members, to take over the control of the existing water supply undertaking and to institute a sewerage system at the earliest possible moment. This Board met for the first time on the 18th March, 1891. The members were elected by 24 Councils which at last time administered for local government purposes the area being served with water and sewerage, and they gave their services in an honorary capacity. The Chairman was to be paid a salary, but it was stipulated that he must devote the whole of his time to the Board's affairs. The immediate problem of the newly constituted Board was



to proceed with the sewerage of Melbourne, with which aspect of the Board's activities this survey is not concerned. Whilst no major construction of water works or new storage schemes was undertaken from 1891 to 1911, much work was done during that period. Water from Donnelly's Creek was diverted into the Watts River aqueduct in 1893; the Coranderrk Creek flow was turned into the same stream in 1909; many service reservoirs were constructed, and mains were extended into the outer suburban areas. In 1908 the Board decided that it was necessary to supplement the existing supplies of water, and turned its attention to the watershed of the O'Shannassy River, a tributary of the River Yarra joining that river above Warburton, an application being made to the Government to vest in the Board this area and the Upper Yarra Watershed. Considerable delays were experienced in the settlement of this matter, political interests being averse to granting further areas to the Board while the Watts River Watershed was not being utilized to its capacity, and the Member of Parliament for Healesville district submitted a demand that instead of going to the O'Shannassy Watershed the Board should immediately construct a large dam on the Watts River. Considerable bitterness was aroused over these matters. The Government appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the relative merits of the Maroondah (or Watts River) and the O'Shannassy schemes, and its finding supported the Board's proposal to adopt the O'Shannassy scheme. It was recognized that Melbourne was rapidly expanding eastwards and considerable difficulty would be experienced in giving satisfactory service in these relatively high localities, which could be commanded by gravitation from the O'Shannassy River but not from Maroondah.

In 1910 the O'Shannassy Catchment was vested in the Board, the Government refusing to hand over the Upper Yarra area at that time, and at that time, and the Board proceeded with a scheme to obtain water from the O'Shannassy River. In 1911 the first contract for the necessary works was let, and by October, 1914, the scheme was in operation. A weir was built across the O'Shannassy River about two miles above its confluence with the River Yarra and by means of an open aqueduct 20 million gallons per day were delivered to the Surrey Hills Reservoir. The O'Shannassy was no sooner harnessed than attention was given to the provision of a storage reservoir on the Watts River. In 1918 plans were prepared for a concrete dam of a height of 135 feet and a length of 946 feet, and this work was completed in 1927. The storage capacity of the Maroondah Reservoir as it is now called is 6,274 million gallons.

Coincident with the building of the Maroondah Dam the Board turned to the construction of a dam on the O'Shannassy. This was commenced in 1923 and completed in 1928. Whilst of relatively small storage capacity, 930 million gallons, the principal function of this reservoir is to give a greater measure of control over the stream flows to ensure the maximum possible use being made of the water from this watershed. The necessity for still further storage was manifest before the Maroondah and O'Shannassy Dams were completed, and in 1927 a commencement was made with the construction of a large reservoir at Silvan wherein the waters of the O'Shannassy River, and later the Coranderrk Creek, were to be stored. This reservoir was completed in 1932. The wall is 2,100 feet long and 140 feet high, and the reservoir holds, when full, 8,853 million gallons. The Board then had available a storage capacity of 23,351 million gallons of water.

At 30th June, 1950, the total cost of all these undertakings has amounted to 13,746,980 pounds, supplying an estimated population of 1,363,000 people, whilst the total number of tenements served was 342,742.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of Melbourne's water has been the steadily increasing per capita consumption of water. Mr. Blackburn estimated that the average daily demand would be 40 gallons per head, and

his evidence on that point before the Select Committee makes very interesting reading. Details of the actual consumption year by year to 1891 are not available, but complete figures have been recorded from that date. These show that the average daily consumption in 1891 was 53.50 gallons per head, but this had grown by 1945 to 79.24 gallons per head, (the highest yet recorded), an increase of 49 per cent. In planning for future requirements it will at once be apparent that the Board has a difficult twofold problem to solve, firstly, to estimate the future increase in the population, and, secondly, to estimate the steadily increasing per capita daily consumption, and it will also be appreciated that, if it takes from 5 to 10 years to complete a major storage reservoir, the Board has to think in terms of the requirements of at least 10 years ahead if adequate supplies are to be always available.

In this connection, the Board, in 1940, determined that the time had arrived when further storage or storages would have to be provided to meet the increasing demands and agreed to the construction of a dam on the River Yarra. However, these plans for the utilization of the Upper Yarra catchment had to be deferred owing to the exigencies of the war, but in 1946 the Board finally approved of the construction by day labour of an earth and rock fill dam immediately upstream from the confluence of Doctor's Creek and the river. The dam will be 260 feet high, the crest 1,900 feet long, and will impound 30,000 million gallons of water. The embankment will contain nearly 7 million cubic yards of fill whilst the area at full supply will be 2.5 miles. When completed this reservoir will more than double the Board's present storage capacity. This work, together with the construction of a conduit comprising 23 miles of 68-inch diameter pipe and 1.25 miles of tunnel which will deliver water at the rate of 75 million gallons daily from the existing Upper Yarra Aqueduct to Silvan Reservoir, is now under way. The total estimated cost of these projects is 10,500,000 pounds.

In this somewhat sketchy history of Melbourne's water supply considerable attention has been given to what may be termed the vital period from 1835 to 1853, and, in particular, the years 1849-1853. The troubles to which the inhabitants of Melbourne were subject prior to the introduction of a pure and adequate water supply have been pictured to throw into greater relief the relatively happy position that exists to-day.

The purity of the supply is primarily due to the foresight and tenacity of Mr. James Blackburn, but thanks are also due to those who in subsequent years have never deviated from the principle that the gathering grounds from which the water is drawn must be kept free as far as is humanly possible from all sources of pollution. To this end no human being is permitted to reside within the catchment areas and domestic animals are excluded, whilst any afforestation work that has to be carried out therein is performed by a specially selected group of men who have been blood tested to ensure they are not carriers of an water borne diseases and operate under the most rigid sanitary conditions.

The adequacy of the supply depends in no small measure on the retention of the pristine characteristics of the watersheds, the greatest menace to which is fire. The bitter lessons of the tragic bushfires of 1939 have not passed unheeded and it is now accepted that, if these areas are to continue to yield abundant supplies of water, greater protection from such fires will have to be afforded. The Board however, is mindful of the fact that only a relatively small portion of the forests of this State is under its control, and realizes that if any fire control policy is to be effective co-operation with the Forests Commission is essential. It is gratifying to be able to record that the Commission and the Board in collaboration have carried out many important works for fire protection, such as the construction of firebreaks, fire patrol tracks, and spotting towers, and these, supplemented by a well equipped fire-fighting

organization, should enable future fires to be restricted to the locality of the outbreak. Recent experiences in America have demonstrated that given adequate funds, this result can be attained and as the preservation of the forests is so essential to the wellbeing of the community of this State, it may be stated with confidence that sufficient funds for work of such importance will be made available by the Forests Commission and the Board.

In conclusion it may be suggested that the finest investment ever made by the inhabitants of Melbourne is represented by the 16,000,000 pounds which has secured for them a water supply that ranks exceedingly high, judged by the most rigid standards known in the world in 1950.

#### The Future.

Every National Park changes as time goes by. In the next 20 to 50 years I see the size of the park increasing by several thousands of hectares and many areas that have previously been off limits to the public being opened to supervised access.

The areas that I see being added to the National Park include the Cement Creek, Armstrong Creek, Starvation Creek, Big Pats Creek, McMahons Creek and numerous other Yarra River tributary catchments up river from Millgrove.

Many of these catchments should have been included in the original National Park boundary. You only have to look at the map showing the current boundary of the park to realise how stupid the original selection was. Some of these areas, such as Armstrong Creek and a number of others, have been closed to the bushwalker for a number of years yet have been open to the huge wood demands of the timber industry. There has been ample opportunity for people involved in the timber industry to purchase their own land and plant and harvest their own trees and they should realise that this cheap source of publicly subsidized timber will soon dry up. The water the forests in the National Parks produce is far more valuable than the timber. The trees and forests of these areas which are now part of the Yarra State forest are notionally under the control of the State Government. These areas belong to everyone and that is everyone in the world and not a few vested interests. I have seen the destruction caused by all this logging by air and by satellite. Why aren't the public allowed to look at these areas, by walking through them, has the government something to hide?