THE BAD BIT ACROSS THE RIVER

by

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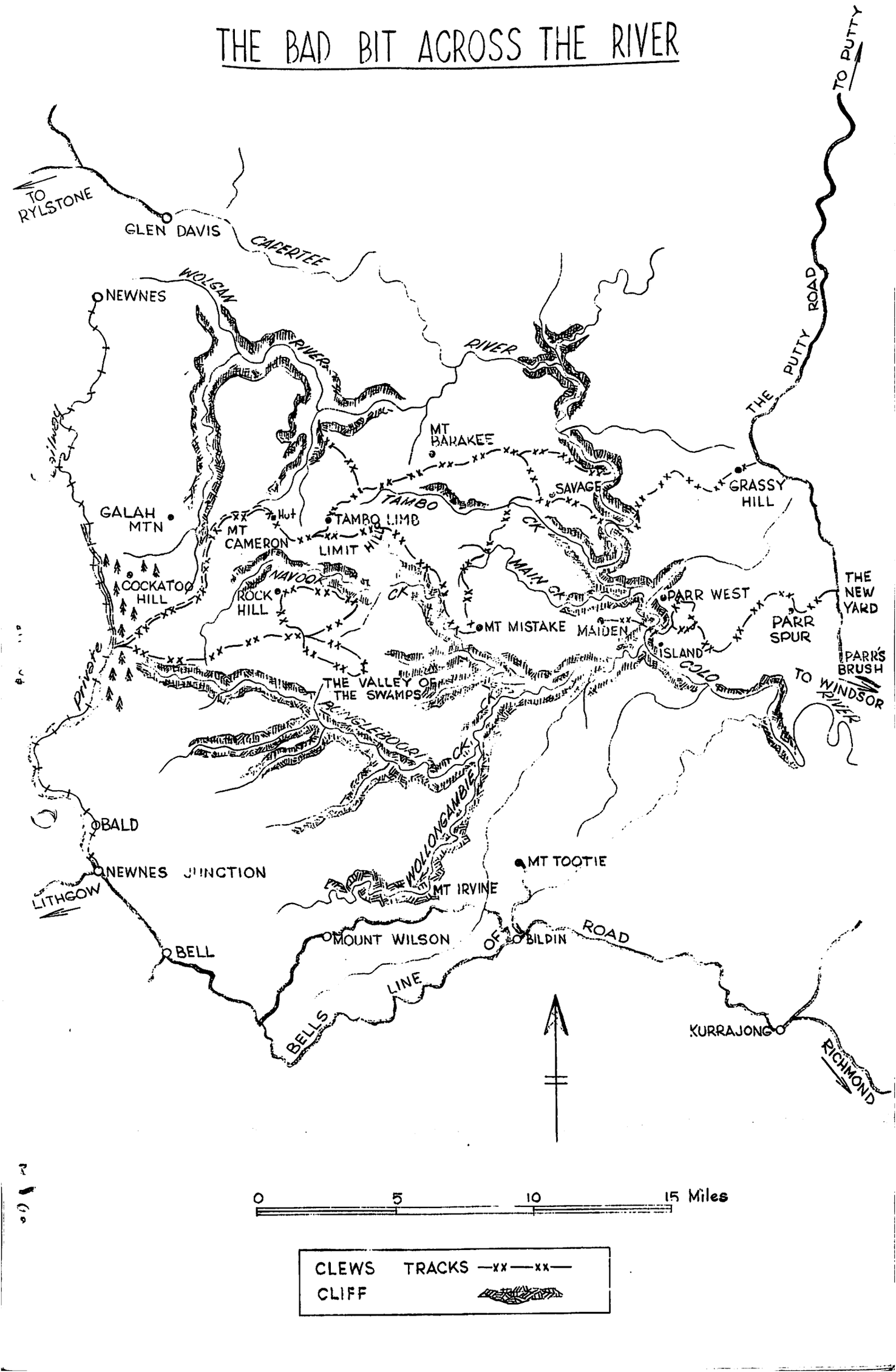

"THE BAD BIT ACROSS THE RIVER"

If you fly in a straight line in a north-westerly direction from the centre of Sydney for about 60 miles, you would find yourself in the middle of a stretch of country least known, least inhabitated and with a rougher terrain than most other places in Australia.

The boundaries of this country can be roughly stated as bounded on the east and north, by the Colo River, on the west by the private railway from Newnes Junction (the Western Railway) to the old Newnes Shale Mine and on the south by Bells Line of Road. These boundaries are only approximate as indicating where movement into the area becomes difficult. Actually on the east the uninhabited country continues some 25 miles across the Colo River and the Putty Road to settlements in the St. Albans area. To the north the country is also uninhabited across the country lately used by the Army for manoeuvres, to the Putty and Howes Valley settlements. On the west and south little habitation can be found for many miles.

Until mapped by the Army from air photos in the early 1930's, this country was practically unknown. There was however one Cadastral position surveyed on a basalt outcrop area at Mount Cameron. It would be interesting to have the Lands story of this survey. Also the Colo River had been traversed in quite early days with a view to siting the railway from Sydney to the west up the valley instead of the mountain route finally adopted. This survey would also make an interesting story. It is the intention now to describe the difficulties encountered by myself and party in getting into this country. Inter alia, it is surprising that this area appears to be outside the ambit of all the walking clubs.

I first encountered the difficulties of this area when obtaining control for the St. Albans map which included a few miles to the west of the Colo River. Please remember that air photos were not in use at this time, and all information as to terrain was by the old method of walk in and look about. From the Putty Road at the New Yard we worked along the main spur to the west towards the Colo River, and surprisingly found the spur rose to the river. Put in three control points Parr Spur, Parr West and Island. From the last two we had our first look into the Colo Gorge, but no way down from this side could be found, although the other side appeared to be passible.

So one day Roberts took our vehicle to Mount Tootie to the north of Bell's Line of Road near Bilpin, and self and Fegan (my survey hand) wandered down the ridge towards the junction of the Wollangambe Creek with the Colo River. I think we got into the river that night, but may have taken another day. Anyway we camped on the river one night, first of many times I slept in the river ravine. Next morning we walked up the river inspecting the eastern cliffs for a possible route up. Most of the creeks seemed to come over the cliffs in a waterfall, but one did not, and while it did not look good it seemed the best bet so far. In walking up the river we had noted vestigas of the disused pack track for the old railway survey.

So up the creek we went and kept on going. Bit of climbing and had to keep in the creek bed and get wet, but no impassable cliff and eventually came out in the saddle between Island Trig and Par West Trig. We knew the way now - or thought we did. Of course the short cut across the creek to the ridge was not known at the time, so we had to go around via Parr West. Now about 1½ miles from New Yard the main ridge splits into 4 minor spurs. I dashed down the left hand one - no good - then back and for some reason left number two and went down number three. Also no good. By this time it was getting dark, so made a fire and went to sleep. Up before sunrise, back to number two and were at the car at the New Yard in half an hour to find Roberts asleep in the back of the vehicle with his feet on the tucker box outside. So ended my first trip into the Colo Gorge.

I had selected from the eastern side two high points on the western side as control points. No intention of taking the instrument (a 5" TS Micro in 2 boxes about 100 lbs.) across, but would intersect from stations this side. But I required beacons even if only minor ones. The lower one was now no trouble. In from New Yard to river first day, up other side and put up beacon and clear few trees and back to river second day, and out to New Yard third day. Two men and self. Lot of time required for two or three hours work but that was how it had to be. Only incident was coming back from the point. It was getting dark and Fegan shot out in front. After nearly sliding over a cliff, he was pulled back by us and was content to remain in rear rest of way.

The next point was not so simple - this was the one we eventually called "Savage". After constructing Grassy Hill Trig we later on went in from it making towards the river. First night got to a point overlooking the river and camped in a cave. We always afterwards referred to this as the "flour" cave. The sandy floor was extremely fine sand, which was impossible to get out of our blankets and great care had to be taken to keep it out of the tucker. Next day down towards the river. First minor creek ended in a cliff - no good. Starting to climb back it occurred to us to try and work sideways along a steep slope with cliffs above and beneath us. This hunch paid off; the next creek was one we could get down, and we landed in the river. But about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile above where we wanted to go in the other side up a creek. So down the river we went. Very bad going but better than going up the river as floods had caused the vegetation to point downstream. That night we camped opposite the creek we wanted and at the end of a spur on our side - good camping place. Falling rocks and debris were prevalent in the river but not down a spur.

Next day spent the whole time trying to find a way through the cliffs, and were a very disappointed and weary team when we returned at night to the same camping place. Decided we would have to get out and try elsewhere. At first light I studied the opposite side, and decided that if we went up a small creek just after the junction of the main creek, and got on a scree ledge between the upper and lower cliffs we could perhaps work our way round to the top of the waterfall which had blocked us the day before. O.K. we'd give it a go. And we won. Once on top of the waterfall it was just a steep climb to our point. It was timbered heavier than I hoped, but we did the best we could all day and camped there that night. I would liked to have put in another day up there, but tucker was running short, so next day we started back. It took one whole day to climb down into the river and up the other side, and there we were back in our "flour" cave. And the final day out to the car and home to Windsor. And was informed when I poked my nose in the door that "my family and I were going camping at the beach"!!

Six days for 4 or 5 hours work. Conditions getting worse. For the time being that finished my experiences of the country that by this time I thought of as "the bad bit across the river". After completing the control for St. Albans I handed it over to the plane tablers - Roberts and Johnson. In one of their trips in from the New Yard Fegan got pneumonia and although straightway brought out to Windsor Hospital unfortunately died a few days later. It was the custom for a plane tabler to be accompanied by a survey hand in bad country. I had had a row with Melbourne over refusing to take responsibility for plane tablers in that class of country unless accompanied.

The Plane Tablers decided that they could not handle the country across the river, and although not very happy about it could not altogether blame them. But this led to my next two experiences of "the bad bit across the river". Melbourne wanted to publish leaving a blank space. I opposed this, pointing out that it would be a bad advertisement for our surveyors if we stated that an area was too rough for them to map. Anyway St. Albans was held in abeyance for some years.

My next encounter with "the bad bit across the river" was much later. By this time I was working in the Nowra area. Thinking over the unmapped area in St. Albans, I had the idea that I could probably get at it from the other side i.e. the Lithgow-Lidsdale side. At that time I had no knowledge of the country on the other side except from the Lands Department County Maps.

So one January Glanville and I, and I think there was a third member in the party, found ourselves at Lidsdale, looking for a horse team. We located a team together with two men - both named Bird. So an imposing cavalcade set off up the ranges, 5 mounted men plus a few pack horses. Up to the Newnes Railway and crossed ir and down the horse track to Mount Cameron. Lunch at the appropriately named Dinner Creek and then on across the "Natural Bridge" - a very low saddle and onto the plateau the other side. Here we ran into bush fires. But it was travelling slowly and the good horsemen pushed their horses through the front and the rest of us followed.

Now we were in burnt out country all ash and charcoal. At Mount Cameron it was all black and burnt but found a camp site alongside a creek. Unloaded the horses which immediately started back much faster than they had come. We laid a tent fly flat on the burnt ground, made a rule that boots had to be taken off at the edge of the fly and settled down for the night.

Next day we investigated forwards to the east of Mount Cameron and out of the burnt country. Found a much better camp place with good water under the only feature we knew Tambo Limb - a very sharp pointed knob. Didn't get much further and next day when the horsemen came out we moved to the new camp. It must be remembered that there were no air photos, and the Lands Department maps made a bad mistake by putting Main Creek as the main drainage area, whereas all the inside water ran into the Wollangambe, although of course this was not known until much later.

So the first full day of investigation forward got us exactly nowhere, in and out of creeks and gullies but no main ridge. The second day produced the same result, and the name "Limit Hill" on the final map shows what a short distance we moved towards the Colo River. Actually we were on the main ridge to Maiden, but the forward ridge was disguised by leaving the Limit Hill halfway up the approach spur. By this time I realised that my idea of getting any work done in my "bad bit across the river" was hopeless, and so abandoned the scheme. Did a little more investigation while waiting for the horses to get us out, but of course no good. So back to Lidsdale, picked up vehicle and back to Nowra, stopping to shave and clean up at a very poor creek along the way. A decided win for the "bad bit across the river".

My next attempt was again much later - I think during my early days in Bathurst, where the centre of the Topo work had moved. I decided that I'd go in to Maiden and continue up the ridge and see where I came out. I still had no photos, but was beginning to have suspicions about the extent of this Main Creek of the Lands Department. So this time Glanville deposited self, Tom Harris and a man I only remember as Pearce at New Yard. We started into the river while Glanville was to go round to the forestry centre on the Newnes Railway and wait for us.

We went in OK except that I had a blistered heel - too much riding in vehicles. We camped on the short cut before reaching the Island saddle. Late after tea Tom Harris was telling an interminable story about some horses that got away, when he broke off and said "and I'll tell you quite confidentially that it is raining". And it was. So we had a very uncomfortable night, and early next morning moved into a cave under the saddle. And it rained all that day and next night, clearing up early the day after. As soon as we were sure that the rain had ceased we went down into the river. It was in flood but falling. From the flood marks it can rise some 30 or 40 feet, but this was the first time I'd seen it in flood. We camped without moving about much as it was obviously impossible to cross. Had some trouble finding reasonably dry ground.

Next day we first went down the river to the Wollangambe Creek junction. A lot of water coming down it and the river was very wide but not quite so rapid as further upstream. Then went upstream to the Angorawa Creek junction on our side. No possibility of crossing the river anywhere, and the creek also stopped us going further upstream. So we camped that night realizing that unless we could cross next day the trip would have to be abandoned. I lay awake for some time trying to estimate how many cubic feet of water I could displace with a waterproof sheet on a rough framework, and finally thought it might be done.

Next day we made a boat, but when Pearce got in it sank. So we made two and lashed them together with a stick amidships. Now Harris had a good length of sash cord which I think he had included in case of cliff climbing. We tied this to the boats, Pearce balanced between the two with frying pans for paddles in each hand and set off. Quite good for a few yards, but as soon as he met the rapid current he whirled away and our cord led to him had to be pulled in quickly. With his back to us he continued paddling harder than ever but suddenly realised he was back where he started. So that idea was no good.

After another night we first went upstream again to see if the river, which was falling slowly, had exposed a possible crossing but no good and back we came to start back out. I haven't much recollection of the trip out, but we must have camped somewhere along the way and of course had to walk right out to Upper Colo. And we were short of tucker. Before starting we had a discussion whether to eat our last tin of bully beef before we started the climb, or after, and before won. And also a tin of bully beef is not much to eat amohg 3 men. On reaching the top and stopping for a 'blow' I heard one of the men remark "Thank God we're in a place where we can see two stars at once without lying on our backs".

At Upper Colo we got more tucker, and I could ring up the forestry people on the Newnes Railway and ask them to find Glanville and send him back. They very kindly did this and after a considerable wait the truck turned up and we returned to our respective homes. "The bad bit across the river" had won again.

It was considerably later that I became involved in this incredible piece of country. I had work to do from Bathurst and Orange but eventually word came through that Wallerawang and Katoomba were added to our mapping list, and better still that all of Katoomba on the eastern half of Wallerawang would be air photographed. I hastily made sure that the eastern half of Wallerawang would extend to the blank space in the St. Albans map. Anyway the river would give the flyers a firm finishing point. For some time I was concerned with obtaining control for the new work, and nibbled into the edges of the inaccessible piece. Bald trig of course looked well over it, but no outstanding trig possibilities inside the area. I put a station in the pine forest which we called Cockatoo Hill. But we lost that when the pines grew. Also we found a hill, Galah Mountain which was a double hill a couple of hundred yards apart and one had a few feet of basalt on top of the sandstone. A few intersected natural points were fixed Tambo Limb and a bare knob we called Rock Hill.

The photos gave us the first idea of the drainage of the area, and it was noted that all creeks flowing into the Colo River north of the Wollambe Creek ended before reaching Mount Cameron and all creeks reaching the Newnes Railway were Wollongambe waters. So it was determined that for the first trip we would take the vehicle into Mount Cameron and work along the northern edge to Savage, come west until we cleared any cliffs and cross the ridges to Maiden and return to Mount Cameron.

Tom Harris who was a survey hand at the time volunteered to take his car - a four cylinder Chev. into Mount Cameron, which he did and afterwards wrote an article on the trip which was published in the NRMA Journal.

It was decided that the four of us going in - self, Glanville, Harris and another - would each carry his own tucker, blankets and personal gear and a small bit of my technical gear. This technical gear I kept as light as possible to a 4" Aneroid Barometer, an optical rangefinder, a clinometer, a 4" compass, a stereoscope and the air photos. I do not think that any one carried more than 10 lbs of my gear. The individual tucker carried was interesting and Glanville with reluctance abandoned his heavy supply of spuds, tho' I noticed that he still produced odd ones during the trip. I relied as usual on boiled bacon and beans.

There was a rather curious aftermath to this question of how long it was possible to stay out. When working with the Snowy Mountains Authority much later in my life I was introduced to the Duke of Edinburgh. He was most interested to find out how long it was possible to work away from supplies. My opinion that 10 days would be the limit. He had just come down from New Guinea, and said "That is what they told me in New Guinea".

So one day we went in to Mount Cameron. We had a long rope and a pulley so that the two vehicles could assist each other. But little trouble was experienced. Harris got his car up the rise out of the natural bridge, and with aid of the rope got our vehicle up. Chief trouble was narrow track necessitating continuing chopping of trees out of the way. But the first day saw us in camp at Mount Cameron. (See Appendix A)

Next day it was packs up and away. Went north of Tambo Limb and got into country heavily timbered with much scrub, but not steep. After lunch we left the new man to clear an area for the night camp and get firewood in, while the rest of us went north. There was an interesting set of cliffs overlooking the Colo which here had turned westwards. We found the cliffs and obtained information. They were the most outstanding cliffs I'd seen in the mountains. Back at our night camp we found our new man had not only cleared the area but had surrounded it with a barricade of bushes and branches about 4 to 5 feet high. It made quite a 'cosy corner in the bush and we later used the same method which was given the name of a 'Boma' - I don't know why. It was winter conditions and cold nights, and the one blanket we carried meant sleeping fairly close to the fire.

Next day was a somewhat monotonous push through mainly thick bush until we came out in the vicinity of a rocky knob Mount Barrakee. So same procedure as previous day ensued. Next day we went on down the ridge now somewhat more open and rocky and left two of our party with the non-technical gear while Glanville and I went down until we could overlook our old friend the Colo River some 2,000 feet below us. More control work, then back to waiting party, and packs up and south across the creek. This was the same creek that we had trouble with when first approaching 'Savage' from the Putty Road, But here while steep it was not rocky. Halfway up a creek west of Savage we made our third night camp.

Following day first up to Savage - from the west this time (quite simple) then back up the ridge until we thought it reasonable to cross the creek southwards. After crossing the creek - another branch of the Tambo Creek we wandered for a day or two among mixed up ridges, with occasional rocky patches and an undue amount of "clothes prop farms". This was the name we had given to the region of young trees very close together. They were hard to walk through as the gear you were carrying kept trying to go round the opposite side of the tree. At other times with horses I had found that it was just possible to ride a horse through - at the cost of bruises and tears. It was impossible to get a packhorse through.

I don't think we got to Maiden as I think we found ourselves on the wrong ridge, but we obtained information at a few points - plus of course barometric heights. Two nights camp incidents may be noted. One night we were all making damper. My way - not very bushmanlike - was to use a frying pan with an enamel plate over it, not very good for pan or plate but easy to do. The others rolled the dough into a lump and after digging a small hole away from the main fire filled it with ashes and put the damper in. Apparently Harris walked on Glanville's but apologised. Next day Glanville stopped eating his lunch and looked closely at his damper; "I'm eating Tom's b—— boot nails". he said.

The other remembered incident was on the last night before reaching the car. We had camped beside a wet slope, water running down it less than $\frac{1}{8}$" thick. So dug a hole so that we could dip the billies. Later at night Glanville decides to put the billy on for a final cup of tea, and stalks away into the dark. Then we hear "Where's this hole you people dug?" Splash! All right I've found it".

Next night we were at the car after 6 nights in the bush. I'd allowed for a possible 8, but we were all tired and bushworn and were glad to get out next day after a wrestle to get the vehicles up the pine forest side of the natural bridge. And so home after 8 days. But we had a win over "the bad bit across the river".

Now although we worked through from the railway to the river there remained over half of the area we had not been in. From the photos we now knew what was there, but heights and some identifications were still required. Just below Bald Mountain we found an old track which wandered in for a few miles. This gave us some information, and also we could look into the area from a few of the high points from Bald around to Mount Irvine. But there still remained the kernel of the whole problem area. A large stretch of very rough country between what were later named the Bungleboori and Nayook Creeks. And there only appeared to be one way into it, a very low saddle in a ravine, the ravine being probably the same old geological fault that caused the natural bridge.

Before proceeding with the story of the last trip in, here is an interlude.

A light plane flying from Mudgee to Sydney was forced down in this area and the pilot was lucky enough to pick one of the upper flatter gullies to land in. As there was often quite a space of gently sloping grass between the creek and the bush, he managed OK, walked out and then started to worry about recovering the plane. I met him at Victoria Barracks, and the problem was set out to me. "How far are you in?". "About 10 to 15 miles". I realised that 10 miles would put the plane in an area he could not have landed in. "How long did it take you to walk out?", I asked. "About 3 hours". "Oh so you'll only be 3 or so miles in, you should be able to get a vehicle in pretty close, by the track under Bald Mountain". I never did hear if he rescued that plane.

So we had what was to be our final trip in. Only 3 of us I think, self, Glanville and Harris. Took the vehicle to the back of the pine forest until we were on the edge of the ravine in which our approach saddle was situated. Then packs up and down the side of the ravine for a few hundred feet and were not far from the very flat saddle. Up the other side of the ravine, and we were in the unknown country. Worked along the ridges to the east quite all right and as it began to darken, went down a creek looking for a cave to make our temporary depot in. Also it didn't look to favourable a night to be sleeping under the stars - or in this case threatening clouds. We were heading for some isolated rocks we could see on the north side of the creek and down a bit, when I was stopped by a small cliff about 15 feet or so stretching across the creek, going round it to get down I found a really beautiful cave in the cliff, the best I've ever seen, and I've camped in a lot of caves while in the Blue Mountains area. It was 40 to 50 feet wide

and about 10 or 12 feet deep at deepest point, good level coarse sand floor, and the small creek running over the edge one end, so that the billy could be filled without leaving cave. And when we lit a fire we found another advantage. The smoke did not come in at all, but drifted along the front and out. So we settled in for the night very contented.

Our first objective next day was Rock Hill a very high bare hill which had previously been seen easily from anywhere in the area and even from as far as The Six Brothers on the Putty Road. After obtaining information there, on down the ridges returning to base late in the afternoon. Next day our wanderings took us south of the cave to the swampy valley we named afterwards "The Valley of the Swamps" and then about and back to our cave.

During this trip we encountered and investigated the problem of the lazy V profiles. Many of the creeks looked 'odd' on the air photos, but as use of these was relatively new, it was difficult to say what was implied. When investigated it was found that many of the rocky creeks instead of having a bottom profile of a V or U shape had a profile similar to a V tilted at an angle of 45 degrees with the upper limit lengthened. They were impossible to cross without ropes although the upper limb often overlapped the lower limit so that it would not be necessary to go into the creek at all if crossing from an upper to a lower limb. We managed to go into one of these creeks at a point where the profile was more normal, and went down the creek for a short distance until stopped by deep water across from wall to wall. It was an eerie shadowy place and I don't think anyone was really comfortable in it. Anyhow we now knew what those creeks looked like.

After a few hours more investigation we returned to vehicle and out of the area next day. The job was now complete. A few day trips in at odd places to tidy up. There was one place I have always regretted not visiting. At a point on the southern edge about 5 or 6 miles north of Bell, was an object on the air photos which looked like a meteorite crater. But it did drain through a break in the walls.

Remained now the contouring and plotting. For the first time (I think) air photos were plotted in run traverses and the run traverses joined together by control points to make up the map detail. Portions of this were reduced by photostat to the 1/31680 scale we were working on and traced onto the field sheets. The contouring was then sketched into the drainage systems. And so finally the St. Albans sheet was published complete with "the bad bit across the river". And also the Wallerawang sheet with a large area of similar country.

A final anecdote. After completing the map the field sheets were taken to the Lands Department and names for the main features requested. "Oh yes" said the officer I contacted, "but this creek does not go there" pointing to Main Creek that had given us so much trouble earlier. "What authority have you for it?", I asked. Some minutes of fumbling with old records then "Oh so and so in 1848". "Well" I said, "What are you going to take so and so's in 1848 or air photos in 1932?". "We'll have to accept the air photos". Finality.

APPENDIX A

PUBLISHED IN "THE OPEN ROAD" - NRMA - (ISSUE OF 13th AUGUST, 1931)

Our surveying party of four, in lorry and car, recently found it necessary to ascend Mt. Cameron, on the edge of the Colo River. Leaving Newnes Junction we proceeded through "Eight-mile Forest" and then "Twelve-mile Forest", over a very rough bush track, until we came to a natural rock bridge, and then commenced the six-mile ascent to the summit of Mt. Cameron. At the beginning it was necessary to pull the lorry for 100 yards by a block and tackle, but after two hours made the top.

The mountain itself is 2,300 feet above sea level, and the only habitation is a small house belonging to Mr. Shepherd, of Lithgow, who has a cattle and horse run there. At the top we left the vehicles, and proceeded on foot, spending eight days surveying the river. In many places one side of the track fell away to a 15-foot drop, and the country was heavily timbered and particularly rough. Colo River, which is little known, is 100 ft. deep in parts and over 200 ft. across. On the return journey it was again necessary to use the block and tackle on the lorry in places. The car got through both times on its own power.

This is claimed to be the first time a motor vehicle has been through this section of the country which, although only 107 miles from Sydney, I consider to be the roughest country I have been in in N.S.W. The trip was certainly not a pleasure jaunt.

T. Harris (Concord)

APPENDIX B

MOUNT CAMERON

This was the only Cadastral Survey in the rough area, and was surveyed by Mr. Surveyor E.A. Harris in November 1890. He had some trouble in fixing his position, and on the County plan the Survey is out of position. Mr. Harris was not quite sure of the Parish he was in and states tentatively that it was Govett South?

He had bearings to Tambo Limb a few miles to his East, but probably this only fixed the hill to his survey. He also had bearings to Tayas Pic which is near Rylestone, and also to Rock Hill (not then co-ordinated) and to Bald Hill, this latter being uncertain.

The Surveyor described the country as volcanic and well grassed. Most of the Hawkesbury Sandstone was at the geological period overlain with basalt although this now remains in very few of the higher hills.

My thanks to the Lands Department for the above information.

APPENDIX C

TRIAL SURVEY - PENRITH TO DUBBO-COLO VALLEY SECTION

A petition signed by 491 persons in the Penrith-Kurrajong fruit growing areas was forwarded to the Minister for Railways on 20th March 1883 asking that the trial survey of a railway line from Penrith to Dubbo proceed as early as possible with a view to early construction of the line for the carriage of fruit etc. both to Sydney and to the West.

Apparently the Minister on his own authority instructed Surveyor Townsend to make this Trial Survey and prepare estimates for construction.

Survey was carried out in 1883-4, as papers dealing with Railway Costs show on 1.11.84 - Cost of Trial Survey - Colo Valley - £3794.19.11.

Townsend was a railway surveyor with previous experience in India. He sent in a number of plans - long sections and cross sections (?) and locality maps. These are in three rolls, the long section plan being about 40ft long.

It crosses the River several times and provides for bridges or viaducts over every creek (for double line) and also some 21 miles of tunnelling and gallery tunnels for single line. Apparently he had some difference of opinion with the Engineer in Chief and although he sent in his plans there are no records of field books or reports in the archives as he left the Railways and went to Water Conservation Branch soon after completion of plans.

He appeared before a Select Committee composed of Government members to enquire into Construction of the Line in 1894 (see questions and answers - 1884 to 2007).

He stated he had made an estimate some 6 to 8 years before and allowing for all bridges to be double line and tunnels single line the amount was £2,695,000 (apparently for the section Penrith to Mudgee) and £3,500,000 to Dubbo. Whitton (Engineer in Chief) estimated £6,148,000 for a double line over the whole distance to Dubbo (from existing line). Townsend supported the Colo Valley location on account of the limiting grade being only 1 in 100 whereas the other locations went down as low as 1 in 30 over long distances. He considered that the Colo Line would pay for itself in something over 20 years. It was also stated that the distance from Sydney to Mudgee via the Mountains was 143 miles but via the Colo Valley was only 137 miles.

From reading the report it was gathered that Townsend was a rather unwilling witness still 'standing on his dignity'.

Plan of long. sections is numbered 'T.29'.

APPENDIX D

THE NEWNES PRIVATE RAILWAY

Newnes Railway was first opened on 27.11.1906 to old Newnes Junction, but was altered to present on 16.10.1910. At this time Newnes was trading in coke to the smelters at Cobar. Its use was apparently intermittent as it closed down in 1912 and was re-opened in 1914, and could have run till 1923-24. It was re-opened again at the request of the Government in 1932 for the purpose of obtaining petrol from the shale but this was later found to be uneconomic and the line was closed again for keeps about 1933-34.

It is understood that the locomotives used on this line were geared like a car in order to negotiate the steep grades. The line was well constructed but the rails were chained in contradiction to the usual Australian method of spiking.

Forestry Department (Resources Branch) have plans of State Forest No. 748 which notes the first plantings were made in 1923 at the Eight Mile. The only access to the Forest was along the Railway Line there being no roads out then, later plantings extend for some 8 to 10 miles along the Line. These are shown on the Wallerawang Sheet. Plantings generally are confined to basalt 'blows' in this area.