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MT. EGMONT HANDBOOK

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E. HEAVYNN TAYLOR

*Egmont National Park
History and Information*

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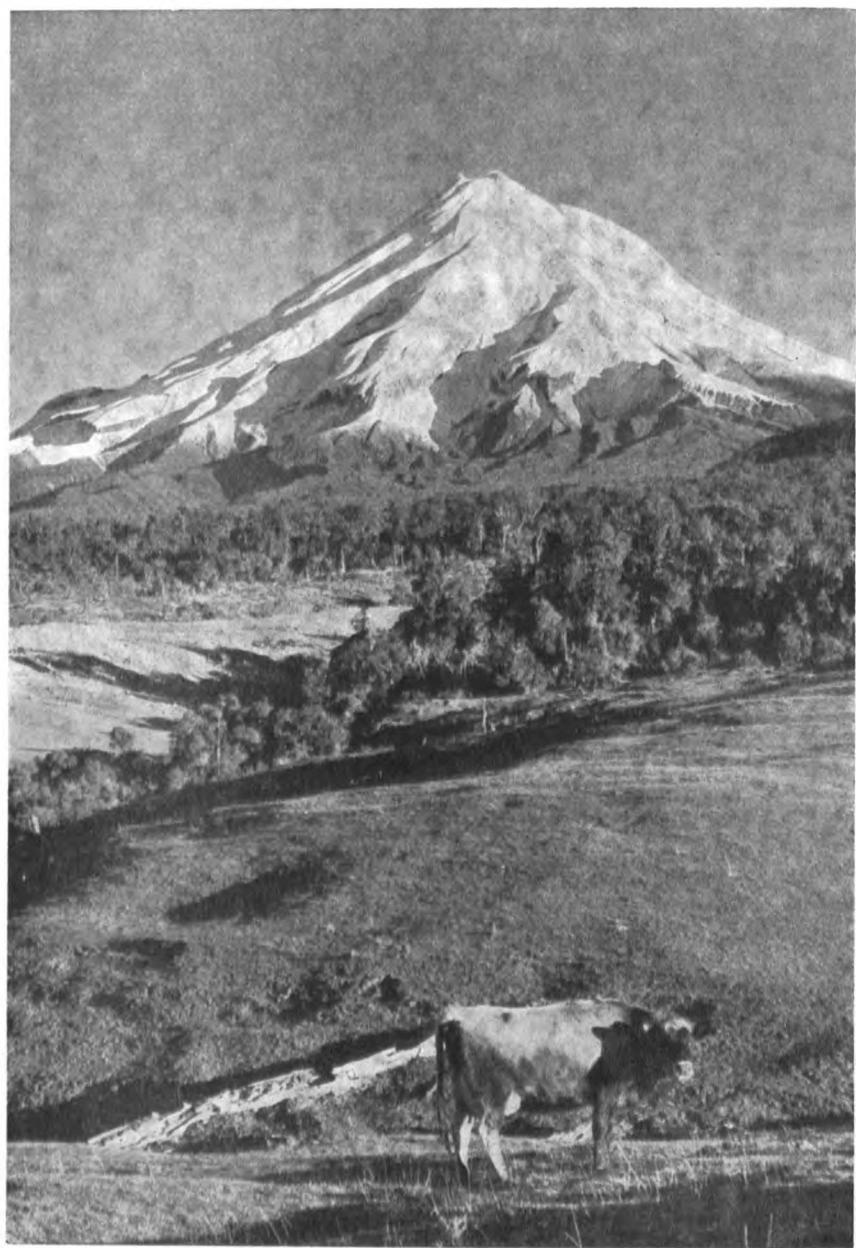


EGMONT



*Elsewhere the mountains have their peers, or stand
Ringed and beset with hedge and press of hills;
But, peerless and superb, great Egmont wills
To dwell apart beside the western strand.
The sweeping outlines of his towering cone
Curve from the shore itself, and steadfast, grave,
Above the endless, earth-engirdling wave,
He stands, colossal, sentinel, alone,
On guard for ever. There at fall of night,
Wrapped in his sombre forest drapery
The giant watches with far-ranging sight
The glory of a greater Titan flee,
As the reluctant Sun's half-sunken might
Drowns in the foam-drift of the Tasman Sea.*

—WILLIAM PEMBER REEVES.



Mt. Egmont, a wintertime view of the northern slopes.

MT. EGMONT HANDBOOK

Edited by
A. B. SCANLAN

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INTRODUCTION

WITH nearly 80,000 acres of snow mountain, sub-tropical bush, adjacent ranges, and alpine scrub and moss zones, the Egmont National Park offers wide scope for pleasure and recreation. Yet the park is much more than a playground.

It is the dominating feature of the province of Taranaki and it looks down upon a rich and fertile land that the mountain itself has raised from beneath the sea and which it nourishes with its many streams and rivers.

The old Maori name of Egmont was Taranaki, and the province is well named. Except for the easternmost areas all Taranaki is virtually part of the slopes of the mountain, the soil came from its volcanic outpourings, the weather pattern is influenced by the mountain, as is also Taranaki's transport, economy and indeed the life of its people.

Thus the early settlers realised how necessary it was that the magnificent virgin forest on the lower slopes of Egmont should be preserved. The axeman's hand was stayed along a radius line six miles from the summit and at a general altitude of 1600 feet. This was the genesis of the national park.

When in 1945 the Government accepted responsibility for the maintenance of the access roads, and entrance to the national park became entirely free, Taranaki did not weaken its sense of responsibility towards the national park. Nearly every local body voluntarily levied itself — and continues to do so today—to assist the national park board to fight the wild goat and opossum pest and to arrest the threat of erosion and denudation.

It is the hope of the publishers that this handbook will encourage visits to a very beautiful national park and will also emphasise the need to preserve the natural features, particularly the flora, of the park.

Thanks are due to those who have contributed articles. Mr. H. W. Insull, a former secretary of the Taranaki Education Board, has devoted years of research to the history of Mt. Egmont. Dr. George Home, C.B.E., a much-loved veteran of

medicine, has a deep life-long affection for the mountain and he writes with particular attention to its botany.

As chief ranger to the park board and organiser of vigorous campaigns against goat and opossum infestations, Mr. G. G. Atkinson is the outstanding authority on the welfare of the forest reserve. Mr. Darcy Cameron is an amateur geologist, whose interest in the vulcanology of Egmont reaches back nearly 40 years and whose field work and research have been enthusiastic and continuous. Mr. D. H. Rawson writes on Tracks and Routes and the Search and Rescue Organisation. With over 150 ascents of Egmont and many years of expeditions he has an intimate knowledge of the topography of the park. He is also president of the Taranaki Alpine Club and the Search Controller of that club.

Special thanks are due to the doyen of Egmont climbers, Mr. Rod Syme, M.B.E., Hawera, for much factual information, suggestions and corrections to proofs. In addition he has contributed the chapter dealing with the history and constitution of the national park. After several years' service on the Egmont National Park Board, Mr. Syme was appointed a member of the first National Parks Authority. He completed his 200th ascent of Egmont in the autumn of 1955. Thanks are also due to Mr. W. Dorflinger (Stratford) for information on the Stratford side of the mountain and to the Lands and Survey Department, New Plymouth, for historical and topographical information.

I acknowledge also the ready co-operation of the Director of Forestry, Mr. A. R. Entrican, in making available for reproduction the excellent woodcuts by E. Mervyn Taylor which appear on the front and back covers.

THE EDITOR.

THE FIRST ASCENT

FOLLOWING their return to Ngamotu after their first unsuccessful attempt to climb Mount Egmont early in December, 1839, Dr. Ernst Dieffenbach, naturalist to the New Zealand Company, and his companions found that during their absence, there had been a period of plenty. His account in "Travels in New Zealand" continues:

"The natives had daily gone out fishing, and the quantity of fish they took was so great that they were enabled to dry large numbers in the sun for store. Pigs and potatoes had also been brought from the southward.

"A Waikato chief with his followers had come on a friendly visit from Kawhia, and there was apparently a good understanding between them and the natives of this place. The abundance of food enabled me to start out again on the 19th, determined at all hazards to accomplish the ascent of the mountain."

The naturalist continues: "I persuaded E Kake, one of the chiefs, to accompany me, who took a slave with him, and sent on before a female slave to one of his plantations which lay in our route, with an order to prepare maize-cakes for us to carry as provisions.

"The companions of my last trip again accompanied me, and our party was joined by Mr. Heberley, a European, who had come with us from Te-Awaiti in Cook Strait, on board the *Tory*. He had lived at Te-Awaiti for several years as a whaler, and was most expert at finding his way through all the difficulties attending such an expedition as this.

AT THE FOOT OF EG蒙T

"Although we took a different route, in order to obtain provisions at the settlements of E Kake, in four days we reached our last halting-place at the foot of the mountain. We had to walk for some distance along the rocky bed and through the icy water of the Waiwakaiho, but notwithstanding the force of its rapid current, which often threatened to throw us down, we heeded not the difficulty as we had the gratification of seeing the summit of the mountain directly before us.

"We climbed at last up a ridge rising on the left bank of the river, and running in a north-east direction from Mount Egmont. This ridge is very narrow, and forms towards the river, a sharp escarpment; nor was it without much difficulty that we reached its crest.

"Higher up is a frightful precipice close to the edge of which we had to walk. Lying down, we

looked over into the deep gorge which appeared to have been split asunder by volcanic agency, and to have been hollowed out more and more by the action of the river.

"This ridge was still covered with wood; but as we ascended, the trees gradually became less lofty, and soon gave way to stunted shrubs. Low and crooked pines especially totara and miro, and the manuka, gave a character to the vegetation as affiliated kinds of trees do to the mountain-crests of Europe. I found one plant of a new pine two feet high, and very much resembling the *Taxus baccata* of Europe.

CAMPED FOR THE NIGHT

"The thermometer rose during this day to 76deg., and when we halted in the evening shortly before sunset, it stood at 61deg., but fell back immediately afterwards to 51deg., and the cold became very severe; our altitude was about 5500 feet.

"We prepared to rest amidst the stunted and dwarfish shrubs. We were able to obtain sufficient firewood a little way down the sides of the ridge, where we found many bleak and dry stems of large dimensions.

"The escarpment which I have mentioned consisted of a blue basaltic lava, overlaid to the depth of from ten to fifteen feet by a formation of fragmentary rocks, boulders and pebbles, which, however, I could not accurately examine.

"Scarcely any birds were to be seen at this height; the cry however, of the parrots (kaka) re-echoed from the woody gorges; and a little bird, which is peculiar to these heights, busied itself in our neighbourhood; it is related in shape and habits to our Sitta, but is much smaller, and of a dark-green plumage. It is called piwauwau by the natives.

"Not far from this point the ridge forms a platform from which rises the pyramidal summit. We reached the platform by descending into a deep gorge which an arm of the Waiwakaiho river has scooped out of the blue lava.

"We walked with ease in the rocky channel thus formed, and soon came to

the source of this arm, which took its rise from under a frozen mass of snow which filled up the ravine and remained unmelted, although it was now in the middle of summer.

"We now began to ascend the cone which consisted of cinders, or slags of scoriae lava, of various colours—white, red, or brown, and had been reduced almost to a gravel, so as to offer no resistance to our feet.

"We soon came to the snow, at a point of about 1500 feet below the summit. The limits of perpetual congelation in New Zealand correspond nearly with the result obtained by calculation according to Kirwan's formula, which, taking 59deg. as the mean annual temperature of New Zealand, would give the limit of perpetual snow 7204 feet; deducting this number from 8839 feet, which is about the height of Mount Egmont, we have 1635 feet below its summit as the lowest point at which snow is perpetual. Vegetation had long ceased, not from the great elevation, but from the entire absence of even a patch of soil where plants might take root. In the ravines as I have already mentioned, the snow was found much lower down.

MAORIS BEGIN TO PRAY

"As soon as we reached the limits of perpetual snow, my two native attendants (the third had been left behind at the last night's halting place) squatted down, took out their books and began to pray.

"No native had ever before been so high, and in addition to that awe which the grand scenes of nature and the solemn silence reigning on such heights produce in every mind, the savage views such scenes with superstitious dread.

"To them the mountains are peopled with mysterious and misshapen animals; the black points which he sees from afar in the dazzling snow, are fierce and monstrous birds; a supernatural spirit breathes on him in the evening breeze, or is heard in the rolling of a loose stone.

"It is this imaginative superstition which gives birth to the poetry of infant nations, as we see in the old tales of the Germans, which evidently have their origin in the earliest ages of the race, and bear the impress of the ethics and religion of a people not yet emerged from barbarism; but with the Polynesians these fears lead to gross superstition, witchcraft and the worship of demons.

WOULD GO NO FURTHER

"My native attendants would not go any farther, not only on account of their superstitious fears, but because, from the intensity of the cold their

uncovered feet had already suffered severely. I started, therefore, for the summit accompanied by Heberley alone.

"The slope of the snow was very steep and we had to cut steps in it, as it was frozen on the surface.

"Higher up we found some support in large pieces of rugged scoriae, which, however increased the danger of the ascent, as they obstructed our path, which lay along a narrow ridge, while on both sides yawned an abyss filled with snow.

"However, we at length reached the summit and found that it consisted of a field of snow about a square mile in extent. Some protruding blocks of scoriae, of a reddish-brown colour, and here and there slightly vitrified on the surface, indicated the former existence of an active volcano.

VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT

"A most extensive view opened before us, and our eye followed the line of coast towards Kawhia and Waikato. The country over which we looked was but slightly elevated; here and there broken, or with irregular ramifications of low hills, towards the snowy group of the Ruapehu in the interior.

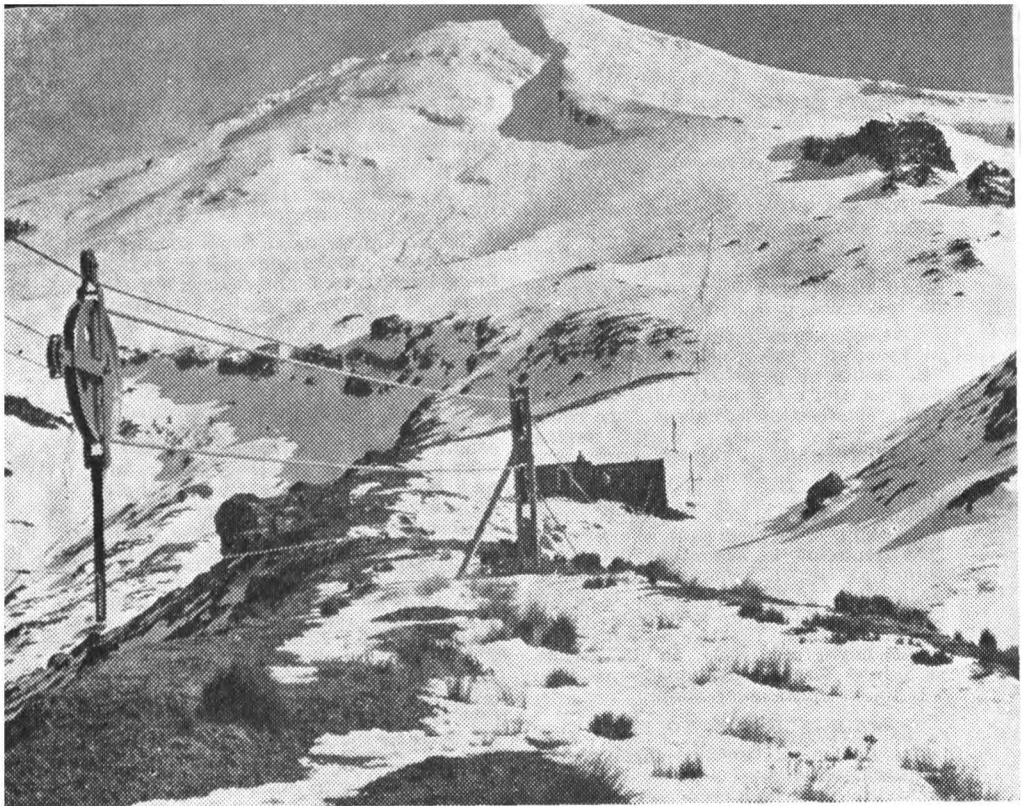
"I had just time to look towards Cook's Straits and distinguish Entry Island, when a dense fog enveloped us and prevented all further view.

"Whilst waiting in the hope that the fog would disperse, I tried the temperature of boiling water with one of Newmann's thermometers, and found it to be 197deg., the temperature of the air being 49deg., which taking 55deg. as the mean of the temperatures at the summit and base, would give 8839 feet as the height of Mount Egmont.

"I have already mentioned that the cone forming the summit of Mount Egmont, rises from a platform. The cone of cinders and scoriae lava is separated from this platform by a deep saddle which descends laterally towards the side of the mountain. The high rocky walls, near the source of the Waiwakaiho, show the composition of the exterior cone to be a hard lava of bluish-grey colour, which sounds to the hammer like phonolite or clink-stone, and breaks into large tabular fragments. The wall where this rock is seen is fissured in a perpendicular direction. There seems to be a great scarcity of simple minerals in the principal rock of this mountain consists.

SKELETON OF RAT FOUND

"The natives have no historical account of any eruption of Mount Egmont, and maintain that the



The two ski tows of the Stratford Mountain Club on the Manganui ski slopes, with the engine shed in between. The top tow reaches to the Policeman (5500 feet), the black outcrop on the right. East Ridge is seen culminating in Shark's Tooth.

country at its base is less subject to movements of the earth than any other parts of the islands especially those which are the most mountainous. On the summit of the mountain I found the entire skeleton of a rat, carried there no doubt by a hawk.

"After staying for some time on the summit, in the vain hope that the clouds which enveloped us would disperse, we retraced our steps and accomplished the descent with comparative ease. The natives expressed their joy at seeing us again, as they had already given us up as lost.

"We encamped on the bank of the left branch of the Waiwakaiho which was the utmost limit of the excursions of the natives. At this spot they obtain the best sort of kokowai in the bed of

the river, which after due preparation they use as a paint for their houses, canoes, faces and bodies. It is also considered a good defence against the troublesome sandflies and mosquitoes.

"The Waiwakaiho was at this point confined between high walls overshadowed by trees. Here and there large masses of the cliffs had fallen into the bed of the river. In future times this picturesque valley, as well as Mount Egmont and the smiling open land at its base will become as celebrated for their beauty as the Bay of Naples, and will attract travellers from all parts of the globe.

"On the 28th of December we again reached the beach without accident, and with somewhat better reason to be satisfied with our success than on our last return."

THE LEGENDS

(by A. B. SCANLAN)

The ancient Maori endowed Egmont, as he did all mountains, with powers of speech, feeling and locomotion. This is the chief legend: Taranaki (Egmont) stood with the central mountains of Taupo but fell in love with graceful, bushclad Pihanga, wife of Tongariro. In the resultant violent quarrel Taranaki was forcibly ejected, he travelled westward and in his passage formed the deep valley of the Wanganui River. The place whence he departed became Lake Rotoaira. Taranaki rested awhile at Ngaere, causing an extensive swamp. Then before day broke he reached his present position and the Pouakai Ranges put out a spur to hold him down. Taranaki's guide was the Rock of Rauhotu, a carved block now seen near Cape Egmont. This sacred female rock, the legend says, awoke with the morning and turned to see if Taranaki were still following her. When she saw that the mountain was a prisoner she stayed too, still looking upon her old friend and follower with longing eyes. Once, the story goes, seventy Ngati-Hama tribesmen dug up the rock with great labour and removed it, but the same night it returned to its old resting place, while all the 70 tribesmen died for their breaking of the rock's tapu. Only when this rock itself moves from its site will the mountain resume his wanderings.

Around Taranaki's journey other legends have gathered. When Egmont's summit is shrouded in mist or rain the Maori declares that he is weeping for his lost love Pihanga. Ngauruhoe's smoking and eruptions on the flank of Tongariro are evidence of the jealous husband's undying anger towards Taranaki.

A depression on the south-east side of Egmont under Fantham's Peak is declared to have been caused by the blow or kick given Taranaki by Tongariro.

Legends also surround the first Maori ascent of Egmont. The name Taranaki is said to have come from Rua-Taranaki of the Kahui-Maunga tribe, the first person to climb the mountain. Tahu-rangi of the Taranaki tribe, who was believed by S. Percy Smith to have climbed about 1420 soon after the arrival of the Kurahaupo canoe, is also credited with the first Maori ascent. His purpose was to claim the mountain from the Te Atiawa tribe, so from the summit he lit a fire as a sign that he had taken

possession. When wisps of smoke-like cloud cling to the summit this is known as "the fire of Tahu-rangi."

By legend the upper slopes of Egmont are tapu, or forbidden territory, to the Maori. In 1847 the second pakeha expedition after Dieffenbach's journeys discovered another superstition. The stones and shrubs they had brought from the mountain were taken from them by Maoris and returned to the mountain. The stones, according to the natives, were the skull of the mountain and the shrubs part of its hair. Only a tohunga (priest) of high standing could cut the hair of a tapu person and even the priest himself would then be in a condition of helpless tapu, unable to free himself. In this manner the ancient Maori regarded any violation of the higher slopes of Egmont as serious as the touching of a tapu person.

Early climbers often observed aged Maoris sitting alone above the bushline as if communing with the spirits of their ancestors.

The sacredness of the mountain was probably due to the practice of depositing bones of the dead in caves and secret places on the mountain. Few Maoris climb high on Egmont.

Even the lower bushclad slopes of Egmont were peopled by supernatural beings, the "Maero," wild, shaggy men of the woods ready to ambush and eat the unwary traveller. There were the "Patupalarehe," little fairy people of the mists, whose plaintive nose-flute music could bewitch human beings. Others feared the "Ngarara," crocodiles or giant lizards.

The Karaka Tonga pa, situated not far below the site of North Egmont Hostel, is declared to have been the scene of a fierce battle when Te Atiawa tribesmen sought to expel the Taranaki tribe and so strengthen their claim to the territory right up to the summit of the mountain. The Atiawas were defeated, the defenders using stone fishing-net sinkers as missiles so that the battle is known as Kurukuru-mahe (pounded with sinkers). On another occasion when the Taranakis invaded Te Atiawa territory, winning decisive battles, legend declared that Egmont, their mountain, swelled with pride and grew quite visibly in height.

EGMONT NATIONAL PARK

(By R. SYME)

AS far as can be ascertained the bush country about Mt. Egmont was set apart during the time of the Provincial Government, although it has not been possible to establish the exact date. According to the first annual report (1901-02) of the Egmont National Park Board, "the Provincial Government of Taranaki, about the year 1875-76, spent a considerable sum in making a bridle-track over the ranges to the swamp, between the Pouakai Ranges and the mountain."

This suggests that the original reservation was made about this time. This track evidently fell into disuse when, in 1884, Peters discovered the better route from Kalmiro which is substantially the same as the present road to North Egmont resort.

By notice in the "New Zealand Gazette" No. 41 of May 26, 1881, the summit of Mount Egmont was reserved temporarily under the provisions of section 144 of the Land Act, 1877. The description was "All that area in the Provincial District of Taranaki, comprised within a circle formed with a radius of six miles around the summit of Mount Egmont, containing 72,382 acres, for the growth and preservation of timber."

This area was reserved permanently by notice in the "New Zealand Gazette" No. 61, of July 28, 1881. The management and control of this reservation was entrusted to a "Board of Conservators" consisting of four district committees, known as the North, East, South and West Committees. The Commissioner of Crown Lands at New Plymouth was an ex officio member of each body.

Each committee was responsible for a defined segment of the circular reservation and was subordinate to the Taranaki Land Board. Each of the committees had a local outlook and their main activities were concerned with the promotion of their individual sections of the reserve for which the members worked diligently in the pioneering development of the mountain. They erected huts and formed tracks. Sometimes they were backed by public-spirited residents of their districts but usually the work was done by the members themselves.

On the abolition of the Provincial Governments the Mount Egmont Forest Reserve did not, like so many other similar reserves, become National Endowment land, but became the direct responsibility of the Taranaki Land Board. About the close of the last century the original Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society began to feel apprehensive regarding the future of the forest reserve. They feared that as settlement encroached upon the mountain pressure would be brought to bear on the Land Board to throw large portions of the reserve open for selection. The prime mover was C. W. Govett, who drafted a Bill which was accepted as a

Government measure and in due course passed into law as the Egmont National Park Act, 1900. The Act provided for control by a Park Board and retained the four local committees, subordinate to and deriving authority from the Board.

In 1901-02 the general administration work of the park became the responsibility of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts which for many years financed the Board by means of annual grants which averaged about £200. During the period from 1901-24, when roads and tracks were formed and tourist accommodation was provided on the mountain, less than £7000 of public money from Government grants was expended. At that stage the Egmont National Park as a national tourist asset had cost the State and public less to develop than any other major attraction in New Zealand.

Most of the money expended by the local committees on buildings and road and track maintenance came from the system of toll charges levied on all vehicles entering the park and daily park fees charged on all visitors. It was not until 1945 when the roads within the park were taken over by the Main Highways Board and the tolls and park fees abolished, that a more generous measure of Government financial assistance became available to the Board, based mainly on the subsidising of annual grants made by the Local Bodies of Taranaki for the work of the Board.

With the passing of the National Parks Act of 1952 there was established a National Parks Authority for New Zealand and a more stable system for the financing of all national parks.

It is of interest to note that over a period of seventy-five years there have been but minor changes in the original basis of the control of the park with its Board and the four regional committees. Under the 1952 Act the constitution of the Board is as follows: The Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Taranaki Land District; one person to be appointed by each of the four Local Committees; one representing the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand; one representing the Taranaki Local Bodies. Two persons to be appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the Authority.

The Local Committees consist of two representatives of each of the local authorities in the committee areas.

PLACE NAMES

(By H. W. INSULL)

EGMONT'S NAMES

MOUNT EGMONT: So named by Captain Cook on January 2, 1770, and so marked in his map, published January, 1772, of his voyages round New Zealand. The Earl of Egmont was First Lord of the Admiralty.

PUKE HAUPAPA: the name used by the tangata-whenua probably 1,000 years ago. The crew of the Matahura, Kupe's canoe on his first visit to New Zealand, knew the mountain by this name, and translated it to mean, "Ice-clad peak."

PUKE O NAKE or PUKE ANAKE: the name used by distant tribes, referring maybe to its graceful slope, or "a peak by itself," i.e., alone.

TARANAKI: Named after Rua Taranaki of the Kahui maunga tribe who is believed to have lived in this district. Tradition says he was the first man to ascend the mountain.

LE PIC DE MASCARIN: So named by the French navigator, Marlon du Fresne on March 25, 1772, from the name of his ship.

Old Maoris of the Ngatiraukawa tribe in 1870 declared with some semblance of truth that ancestors knew it, to their sorrow, as Maunga Haupapa, meaning the mountain of ambush. Other names: "The cloud piercer," "the shining spear-point," "matua" (parent, of divine ancestor).

FACTS ABOUT EGMONT

HEIGHT: 8260 feet. First estimated in 1840 by Dr. Dieffenbach, by thermometer, to be 8839 feet. Second estimate by H.M.S.S. Acheron in 1850 by trigonometrical measurement to be 8270ft.

AREA: Six-mile radius from top, equalling about 73,611 acres. Sixteen acres at top. Fantham's Peak, including Rangitoto Flat, 25 acres. Area above 4,000 feet, about 5,000 acres. Kaitake Range, 5500 acres. The radius line is generally at 1600 feet altitude.

DISTANCES FROM SUMMIT: Ruapehu, 80 miles. Ngauruhoe, 85 miles. Pirongia mountain, 105 miles. Nelson mountains, about 140 miles. Kalkouras, about 180 miles. New Plymouth (Paritutu), 161 miles. Hawera, about 25 miles. Waitara, 22 miles.

RIVERS: Thirty-one fully fledged rivers (excluding their tributaries) flow direct from the national park to the sea and are named on the survey maps. There are about 360 streams.

TEMPERATURE: Usually reduces by about one degree F. per 300 feet up. The velocity of sound on the top is 17 chains per second.

FLORA: About 50 varieties of ferns. Mountain primulas (*ourisia*), koromikos, veronicas, ranunculus, wahlenbergia, coprosmas, etc. The leather leaf so abundant above the forest line is *senezia eleagnifolium*, really a groundsel, often called old man's beard. Trees: rata, rimu, totara, horopito, etc.

The first survey map of the mountain was drawn by J. Homan in 1879, a topographical plan by H. M. Skeet in 1900 and additions by Deverell and W. Gordon in 1903.

AMBURY BLUFFS

On the south-east side at the bottom of the Lizard above and west of Humphies Castle. Named after A. H. Ambury who, on June 3, 1918, was killed when he and W. E. Gourlay, whom he attempted to save in a bad ice slide, both fell over the precipice.

AHUKAWAKAWA

The name of the sphagnum moss swamp which drains over Bell's Falls, lying between Egmont and the Pouakai ranges. It was here the Taranaki tribes had their headquarters while awaiting the onslaught of the Waikato tribes in 1834.

BEEHIVE

At 3145 feet, with trig station. Presumably this hill is so named because of its resemblance to one of the old-fashioned beehives. There are several smaller-sized lahas, as these hills are called by geologists. The one called the Beehive is about 115 feet above the level of Lake Dive, which is a quarter of a mile due north of it.

BELL'S FALLS

Te Rere a Tahurangi, at 2730 feet altitude. Drop of about 100 feet. Originally named Te Rere a Tahurangi after Tahurangi who, according to tradition, left Karaka Tonga Pa, on the Waitakaho, and ascended to the top of Egmont to light a fire to establish the tribe's claim to the mountain. Rediscovered by Wellington Carrington, brother of Frederick Alonso Carrington, and Minarapa on February 13, 1848. Later they brought F. Dillon Bell

to see the falls and it is probable on the suggestion of Dr. Peter Wilson that the falls were named Bell's Falls.

Minarapa was a famous warrior and counsellor of the Taranaki tribe. He fought against the pakehas in the wars of the 60's.

The expedition resulted (a) in the discovery of Bell's Falls to the pakehas, though the falls were well-known to the Maoris and (b) in giving Minarapa the honour of being the first authentic Maori to reach the top of Egmont (i.e., if we consider Tahurangi's ascent from Kara-ka Tonga Pa somewhat mythical).

Minarapa's name was given to a stream tributary of the Stony River and later to a road. Wellington Carrington senior's name was given to the ridge they traversed to the top. F. Dillon Bell's name was attached to the falls.

BLUNDELL TRACK

Along the spur down from the Tahurangi Bluff on the south-east side of the Ngatoro to the North Egmont hostel. It is named after the Rev. O. Blundell, a great lover of the mountain, who lost his life during a storm in November, 1925.

The Rev. Arthur Oscar Blundell was born on January 20, 1873, and educated at Mill Hill school, London. He was minister at Warkworth, Te Aroha and New Plymouth, a skilled astronomer and botanist, and enthusiastic mountaineer

He started out with Mr. H. C. Morgan for a tramp over the Pouakai ranges up the Kiri Stream track. They spent the first night at the Mangorei Hut clearing, as intended. The next day they started for North Egmont Hostel. The weather was wet with a cold wind blowing off the snow. They had a hard, wet struggle through the scrub, and reached Bell's Falls track six miles from the house, in the afternoon. They were cold, wet and weary, and decided not to pull in at the comfortless Holly Hut but push on to North Egmont along a fair track.

About two miles further on Mr. Blundell collapsed and became delirious. Mr. Morgan did what he could to make Mr. Blundell warm and comfortable, and set off for the North Egmont house for help. Guide Haldane returned with two others, but they found Mr. Blundell too far gone and exhausted. Guide Haldane went back, a distance of four miles, and telephoned Constable Longbottom at Inglewood. At nine o'clock they reached Mr. Blundell, but because of the difficulties of carrying the stretcher along broken tracks they did not arrive at the hostel until five a.m. Mr. Blundell died soon after midnight.

BOBS BLUFF

The steep bluff at 6,372 feet altitude, west of Fantham's Peak. This is the termination of the ridge leading down to

the west near the southern route from the summit.

Lord Roberts of Kandahar was the successful commander-in-chief in the South African War and was responsible for the relief of Kimberley, Ladysmith and Mafeking. On his return to England he received great ovations and was popularly known as "Bobs."

BOOMERANG SLIP

Name given to the slip over the head of the Walwakaiho on the Bell's Falls track. It has always been an unpleasant crossing, and impossible to keep in repair because of the heavy slips coming down from above. In September, 1952, hundreds of tons of boulders, loosened by weathering of the rocks above, came 500 feet down the face of the slip and the boom was heard at the hostel. The name derived from the shape of the slip—curved like a boomerang.

BRAME'S FALLS

At 3015 feet altitude. Drop of about 60 feet, but not a great volume of water normally. The track from Ihala Road near Opunake is now overgrown.

John Wagstaff Brame, born in Birmingham in 1859, died in 1940. He came to New Zealand with his parents as a boy in 1865. He was the son of John Brame, a journalist in Auckland, and a nephew of William Brame, one of the Albertland pioneers. He was educated in private schools in Auckland and in 1872 entered the telegraph department at Coromandel. After a succession of transfers, he took charge of the Opunake Post Office, and from there went to Kumara and Balclutha. He was musical, an enthusiastic student of New Zealand flora and had an excellent collection of specimens. He was constantly exploring the country around Mt. Egmont in search of specimens of New Zealand ferns.

On April 5, 1897, in company with J. J. Peacock and F. Guy, he discovered the falls at the head of the Waiau stream. In his account of the discovery, he describes the surrounding dense bush as being alive with 20 varieties of birds. The editor of the Opunake Times, M. J. Brennan, named the falls after Mr. Brame.

BRYANT'S ROCKS

At the top of Snow Valley near the east side of the Lizard, at about 7,000 feet altitude. L. V. Bryant was an active mountaineer on Egmont and in the New Zealand Alps and was selected for the Everest reconnaissance expedition in 1935. He took an active part in the formation of the Taranaki Alpine Club and was its first club captain. He has been described by the English climber Eric

Shipton as "a delightful companion, cheerful, humorous and supremely competent."

THE CAKE

At 4,000 feet altitude, above the Koko-wai Gorge, which is below the Bell's Falls track where it crosses the Wai-wakaiho. Is so named because it looks like an iced cake when covered with snow.

CARRINGTON RIDGE

Named after Wellington Carrington, brother of F. A. and O. Carrington, who, with Minarapa, climbed along this ridge to the summit of Egmont on February 15, 1848. Wellington Carrington surveyed parts of Wellington and Wanganui. Later, he was attached to the Native Office, and was member for Omata on the Provincial Council from 1872 to 1873. He was born in 1814, and married a daughter of Captain Mace. He died in 1890. His son was called Wellington.

CRATER VALLEY

The north-west side coming down from the crater. The winter climber from North Egmont crosses over the Lizard lower down to complete his climb by zig-zags up the steep slopes of Crater Valley.

CURTIS RIDGE AND HUT

G. N. Curtis was chairman of the Stratford Town Board in 1882, his brother, C. S. Curtis held the same position in 1884 and there was another brother, O. M. Curtis. They had the first general store and butchery at Stratford and Inglewood.

On March 25, 1888, T. H. Penn and Chas. S. Curtis explored a route to the Plateau from Stratford. At frequent intervals in 1888 and 1889 these pioneers, with the assistance of various settlers, worked on the track until in January, 1890, it was a first-class bridle track as far as the Plateau, with a small cleared camping ground known later as Ladyshoe Camp.

About five or six years later a track was completed across the Plateau and a corrugated iron hut built in the little depression on the south side of the ridge dividing it from Manganui Gorge, just above a spring which is the source of the Waingongoro. The hut was built under the direction of Oswald Curtis in 1890. It collapsed on April 25, 1928. The material was sledged up by bullocks and is now incorporated in the Manganui Hut. One door, with the names of visitors on it, went to Dawson Falls hostel.

CURTIS FALLS

At 3200 feet, altitude, north-north-west of the Stratford hostel. On Christmas Eve, 1888, Messrs. Curtis, Penn and Frank Arden commenced a five-day circuit trip of Egmont at about 3000 feet. It was on the approach of evening on the first day that Curtis Falls were discovered. The three brothers gave their names to the falls. On Sunday, March 17, 1889, several persons made the ascent, including Mrs. E. C. Curtis, who was the first woman to reach the east peak via the Stratford track. This was also the first summit climb via Fembroke Road.

DAWSON FALLS

The first known pakeha to discover these falls was Thomas Dawson, "a queer mixture" of a man. He was a Sunday School teacher, a bit of a musician, acted as a minister in case of need, popular, generous, and a doer of good deeds in his own quiet way. A great hunter, he had an uncanny control over animals, particularly dogs and horses, and also of tuis.

His name is frequently mentioned as a telegraphist and postmaster. He was postmaster at Manaia in 1880 and his favourite pastime was to tramp on the mountain. Frequently he and a companion lost their way in the forest. Early in 1886 he was wandering alone through the mountain forest and, hearing a roaring sound, decided to investigate, and discovered the falls. Later, he built a shack of sheet iron as a depot for climbers. He would go up after work at night on his horse, carrying two sheets of iron with only a candle in a bottle to light him through the forest. And when he had built the shack, larrkins went up, tore it down and threw it over the waterfall. Three years later, in 1899, he was drowned in the Wanganui River.

The falls, not far below the hostel, have a drop of 60 feet.

DAWSON FALLS HOSTEL

The first building at an altitude of 2960 feet was commenced in January, 1894. Messrs. Elliott and King of Stratford provided the labour and the Mt. Egmont Board supplied a man to help.

Mr. G. Hollard and Mr. R. Anderson helped in the supervision of the work of building from 1894 to 1896. Mr. Hart Hollard told me he helped to carry wire-netting up to the house for the bunks. The track was just a rough one through the bush as far as the falls.

The log book of the Kaponga school records: "On February 28, 1896, a school holiday was granted to the children to



In the Okahu Gorge on the western slopes. A view looking down at the bluff known as the "Maru," the scene of a Maori tribal massacre.

observe the opening of the mountain house at Dawson Falls. Kaponga school has always honoured events of national importance."

A large number attended a picnic, concert and dance at the new house which was formally opened by Mr. Richard Dingle.

A telephone office was opened on March 16, 1910.

The Government wanted to use the name Tahutimali, but strong protests resulted in adherence to the name Dawson Falls. The first manager of the falls house was Mr. Harry Graham.

There was a household school there from 1927 to 1930 for Mr. and Mrs. Murphy's children. It was the most frequently inspected school with most charming pupils.

DIEFFENBACH BLUFFS

These are the big cliffs the track to Bell's Falls passes under about 1000 yards from the main track and west of Humphries Castle. Dr. Ernst Dieffenbach, F.R.S. (Eng.) was the New Zealand Company's naturalist. He was a German by birth.

Dr. Dieffenbach, James Heberley and E. Kake-a, a Maori chief, reached these bluffs in December, 1839, and then worked their way to the summit, leaving E. Kake below the snowline to await their return. This was the first authenticated ascent of Egmont. On the centenary of the climb a plaque subscribed by all Taranaki Alpine Clubs was placed on the summit rocks.

LAKE DIVE

On the southern slopes, at 3000 feet, it is named after Mr. Bradshaw Dive. In early March, 1887, a party of 18, including Miss Fantham, later Mrs. F. Bayley, and Bradshaw Dive, from Hawera, visited Egmont. Miss Fantham was the first woman to reach the top of the peak which now bears her name, and Bradshaw Dive, on descending, saw the lake which now bears his name, but he did not visit it.

Tom Dawson visited the lake in April, 1837, being the first man to do so. With Miss Maggie Hunter, later Mrs. Stoddard, and a party from Auroa Road, he blazed his way through the bush to reach the lake.

Bradshaw Dive successfully contested the parliamentary seat for Egmont.

THE DOME

At 3439 feet, lies between Holly Hut and Bell's Falls, about half a mile from either. The Maori name Te umu o Taomanawa means "the oven of your heart." I have not yet been able to learn the story of the name.

DRAGON'S JAWS

Dragon's Jaws, Maws and Teeth are all points at the head of the Kapuni Gorge and near the Priest's Fingers on Curtis Ridge. The source of the Kapuni Stream is nearby.

DRINKING ROCK

Drinking Rock is at 5700 feet on the northern slope on the scoria above Tahu-rangi Hut and two miles five chains from the old mountain house.

It was so named by H. Peters about 1889 on account of there being dew water in a hollow on top of this rock.

Mr. Haldane's version of the origin of the name is, "Some climbers protected themselves from cold by drinking a lot of whisky there."

Some time about 1949 it was shattered by a rock falling down from above.

FANTHAM'S PEAK

The highest point of Fantham's Peak is West peak, at 6438 feet, bordering Pani-tahi. The area of Fantham's on top is 16 acres. Named after Francis Louisa Fantham. In 1885, at the age of 19 years, she was a member of a party which visited Mt. Egmont and was the first woman to reach Panitahi. She married Mr. Fred Bayly, of Manaia, in 1885. During the First World War she worked in a munitions factory and nursed in a hospital at Walton-on-Thames. She died in New Plymouth in September, 1948, leaving 26 grand and 14 great-grandchildren.

Her father, Mr. A. A. Fantham, settled in the Hawera district from Canterbury. He was an original member of the Road Board, of the A. and P. Association and later a member of the borough council. In 1884 he opposed Sir Harry Atkinson in the Parliamentary elections.

GUIDES IN EARLIER YEARS

AARON COAD, who lived 11 miles up the Mangorei Road is believed to have been the first accepted pakeha guide. His house was the starting-off place for trips up the ranges.

STEPHEN COAD, son of Aaron, succeeded his father and acted as guide to many parties, usually up the ranges and across the swamp to the mountain. He assisted Charles Oliver and H. Honor to clear a track over the ranges to Bell's Falls which was surveyed in 1875 by Thos. Humphries. Stephen Coad was born at Poverty Flat, New Plymouth, in 1854 and died at the age of 90 in November, 1944.

THOMAS JULIAN, pioneered tourist tracks under Engineer G. T. Murray, and at times had 70 men working on tracks

between Kahui Hut, Bell's Falls and Dawson Falls. He was born at Okato in 1855 and died in November, 1941, at the age of 86 years.

ANDREW HALDANE, son of a Southland pioneer, was at the North Egmont old house for 16 years and the Stratford house for five years. His daughters, Hilda (married V. Williams, who was a guide at the Hermitage) and Molly (Mrs. Sam Taggart), also acted as guides in Egmont. Mr. Haldane died in 1935 as a delayed result of being caught in a blizzard following an accident to W. G. Hall in 1930.

JAMES PATRICK MURPHY, was born in Westland and died in June, 1948. He was gold mining, flax milling, bridge building and guide at the Hermitage, Mt. Cook, for five years. He was at the North Egmont hostel in 1912, managed Dawson Falls Hostel 1913-1936 and farmed at Riverlea from 1937 to 1948. He was a director of the Joll dairy company and a member of the Riverlea branch of Federated Farmers.

HENRY PETERS, a sailor, who lived at Inglewood in 1876, then at Egmont Village and later took up land at Kaimiro. He discovered the route from Kaimiro to the summit in 1884. This route lay along the present road to the hostel and was surveyed in 1885. He and L. Patterson cut a track through to the site of the present hostel. He suggested the name, Humphries Castle, and was guide and caretaker at the first North Egmont house. Not a single accident befel a member of any party under his care. He took a prominent part in search and relief parties on the mountain.

A. C. UPSON, who died at the age of 76 in August, 1947. He was caretaker and guide for many years at the North Egmont old house. An enthusiastic alpinist and popular mountaineer, he was entirely dependable, careful and capable, and a tower of strength in a trying experience.

THE HAMMER

At the top of Carrington Ridge, about 6,000 ft. Shaped like a hammer head with the business end facing upwards.

HANGATAHUA (STONY RIVER)

In the early days of the New Plymouth settlement from 1841 to 1865 the seaward and southern portion of the district was known as the Stony River district. Tom Healey, an ex-sailor and pioneer who came out on the Oriental, was a "tough guy" and a determined character. With John Johnson, Sam Oliver and Richard Langman, he swagged the mail around the coast to Waimate (Manala).

They reckoned the Hangatahua was their most unsafe and roughest crossing. Those who had to ford it or cross it during the early days of the war considered Tom's description very suitable.

The true river bearing the name of Hangatahua starts in the gorge west of the Carrington Ridge, being joined lower down by the Waiweraiti stream as it flows from Bell's Falls. The swamp branch goes over Bell's Falls. The mountain branch bubbles out of the ground beside Hook Hill. The ancient name of the Stony was Waiweraiti, rising in the spur thrown out south-east from the ranges. Legend has it that this spur was thrown out to tie down the Taranaki mountain when he rushed overland from Tongariro.

HASTIE'S HILL

At 3267 ft. about three-quarters of a mile west of Dawson Falls. Probably the hill was named after a member of the Hastie family which settled in Hawera, the father becoming a prominent member of the borough council, the first Waimate Road Board and other organisations.

He insisted on ploughing 60 acres of his farm adjoining the road and between 300 and 400 Maoris assembled at the gate of his property in protest and to stop him. This was called the Battle of Hastie's Farm, though the only real fighting was verbal abuse and backchat. The incident took place on Sunday, July 18, 1886.

Thomas Hastie, son of the well-known Hawera settler, with others ascended Egmont in April, 1891, from Dawson Falls. Just below the crater they heard a voice, twice they believed and also a noise like a stone falling on the other side of the peak. It was suggested that it was Mr. Southwood's voice they heard, but Hastie's party could not get over the last 50 yards of ice. They saw no one. Southwood, the first to die on Egmont, was found preserved in the ice on January 8, 1892.

HEBERLEY RIDGE

The ridge leading to the summit between the Cake and Dieffenbach Bluffs. Heberley, a European whaler from Te awa Iti, accompanied Dr. Dieffenbach on the historic first ascent of the mountain in Christmas week, 1839. It took them nine days to reach the top and return to Moturoa.

HEN AND CHICKENS

A group of rocks at 5000 feet resting on the tussock ridge immediately east of the west branch of Maketawa Valley. In certain conditions the group looks like a Black Orpington and her chicks.

HOLLY FLAT AND HUT

The New Zealand holly (*Olearia ilicifolia*) has prickly leaves—white underneath—similar to English holly. It grows on Mt. Egmont as far up as 4000 feet. It seems that someone came upon the holly on the site and dubbed the site Holly Flat. At about 3200 feet, the flat is close to the Dome on the route from North Egmont to Bell's Falls.

Holly Hut was built on the camp site that was always used in earlier days. The original material for the hut was taken by horse up the Okato (or Punihou) track, and round to the site in 1900. The Okato track was specially cut for the purpose. The timber was sawn locally, there being some suitable totara trees there. Mr. John Dickie built the first hut. This was rebuilt by Mr. Norman Gibson in 1936.

HONGI'S BLUFF

Hongi's Bluff (or Hongi's Leap) is about 300 feet above the Tahuang! Hut on the northern slopes. It is at the bottom of Snow Valley—a wide valley that narrows into Maketawa Valley—and at certain times during the winter the snow above the bluff is steep and treacherous. It was here that the disaster of July, 1953, occurred. It lies between the Second and Third Staircases about the level of the foot of Scoria Ridge, which is the usual summer route to the summit.

The name is modern and probably came into being between 1940 and 1946. No one seems to know the reason for the name or the story associated with it.

HOOKER HUT

Hooker Hut is at an altitude of 3740 feet about a mile north-west of Dawson Falls on the route to Kapuni Lodge, Fantham's Peak and the southern ski grounds. It is used as a depot by the Mt. Egmont Alpine Club. A ski run has been cut in the scrub near the hut.

The hut was named after Leonard Owen Hooker, who was active in assisting the formation of the Federation of Mountain Clubs in 1930. He was president and publicity officer of the Mt. Egmont Alpine Club and secretary of the South Committee of the Egmont National Park board. He was an exceptionally gifted organiser. He died on January 4, 1950, at the age of 77.

The hut is in two sections, one owned by the club and one used by the public. It was built about 1933 of old iron and saplings from the bush by members of the Mt. Egmont Alpine Club. The second section was erected by Mr. F. W. Pettit, who used material from a dismantled house in Hawera. The hut was presented to the club by Mr. Hooker.

HOOK HILL

At 3690 feet and half a mile south of Holly Flat. The origin of the name is not known. The hill is honeycombed on top with caves, probably of volcanic origin. Tradition has it that the bones of many Taranaki chiefs were lowered in reverence into the deep volcanic shafts.

HUGHSON'S LEDGE

At about 5200 feet, it is on the higher part of the Okahu Gorge on the western side of the mountain. This ledge is the only convenient way to cross the gorge in summertime. It is on the summer route from Kahui Hut to Bobs Bluff and the ridge to Fantham's Peak and Syme Hut.

The ledge is named after Mr. Magnus Hughson, of New Plymouth, who was the first pakeha known to cross the gorge this way. When he was a boy of 12 he made his first ascent with a 17-year-old companion. They went right up the Okahu to the top of the mountain and returned safely. The Hughson family were noted mountaineers on the western side of the mountain in the early years of this century and took many large parties from Opunake and Rahotu to Kahui Hut when horses were used to pack up supplies from the top of Kahui Road.

HUMPHRIES CASTLE

At 5250 feet, about two miles from North Egmont Hostel, on the north-west side of the main track leading to Tahuang! Hut and the Lizard route to the summit. A monstrous "blob" of lava that ages ago cooled into a mass of greyish trachyte and has since been so split by wind and weather that it now bristles with up-ended fragments.

Named after Larwill Humphries, son of the chief surveyor of Taranaki, in January, 1885, Thomas Humphries. The story goes thus: Henry Peters, guide, when conducting L. Humphries, a cadet, in O'Donahoo's survey party on their way up the mountain, came abreast the rock marked by Larwill's father on the original survey map as Castle Rock. Young Humphries remarked that it looked like a castle. Peters replied, "It has no name or owner. We'll give it to you." Thus it became known and marked on subsequent survey maps as Humphries Castle.

JACKSON'S LOOKOUT

A trig station at 3714 feet near the Stratford Plateau and just off the track leading to Dawson Falls. No one seems to know whose name the lookout perpetuates. There was a Henry Jackson who was chief surveyor in Wellington, 1865-1879.

KAHUI HUT

Due west of the Summit at 2680 feet. The site on which the hut is erected was cleared originally by the Taranaki Maoris in 1826 at the time of "Maru"—shelter or place of or for protection—where all the Taranaki tribes were to assemble when it became obvious they would have to protect themselves or fight against the invading Waikato tribes. The Ngati Kaikaha, probably a branch of the Kahui Maungas, the aboriginal owners, were here exterminated by the Taranaki tribes.

Kahui means cluster or flock. Many of the ancestry in their genealogies of the tangata whenua prior to 1350 use the word as a prefix to their hapu.

Kahui hut was completely built in October, 1903. The track from Kahui Road to the hut site was commenced on April 4, 1901, by Frethey and Stonnex. D. Rotheray sledged up the material by bullocks. Miss Berry, Miss Drummond and E. Maxwell made the first successful ascent to the summit from here in February, 1900.

In 1955 the Kahui Alpine Club began reconstruction of the hut.

KAPUNI LODGE

At 4800 feet, 1½ miles from Dawson Falls. On the lower slopes of Fantham's Peak, facing east and overlooking the headwaters of the Kapuni River. On an ideal site and painted in conspicuous colours, the lodge can been seen from the summit, from Fantham's Peak and from Dawson Falls.

The lodge was officially opened on November 9, 1952, by T. E. Drake, Hawera. It was built by members of the Mt. Egmont Alpine Club between February, 1948, and November, 1952, on an excavated site and constructed with the best materials—iron roof, wooden walls and hardboard lining—at a cost of £1500. Contains five rooms, including a common room, kitchen-servery, men's and women's bunk rooms, with 18 bunks, and an enclosed porch. One of the most modern mountain huts in New Zealand. Is handy to the Kaupokonui ski slopes.

KARAKA TONGA PA

Now obliterated by slips. About 1420, the pa was situated on a bank of the Waiwakaiho at about 2175 feet, north-west of the present mountain road to the hostel. The purpose of this pa was to be near the kokowai deposits further up the river and to the fine-grained stone, found here, which was suitable for making axes.

At that time kakas, wekas, tuis, kiwis and other birds were plentiful and the pa was occupied by a large number of Maoris. The pa was established by

Karaka Tonga during the time of Auhipapa a fourth descendant of Hataura, who came to New Zealand in the Kura-haupo canoe. The whare Karu was named Kai Mitu Mitu; the marae was named Ra Paki, a fine day plaza.

The pa was apparently overwhelmed by a landslide and no trace has since been found of it. It was from here that Tahurangi made his ascent to the top and lit his fire there to let all the world know that he claimed all the land he could see. S. Percy Smith relates the outcome of the great battle fought here when the Ngatiawas were repulsed by the Taranaki tribe.

KOKOWAI GORGE

At 3600 feet, below the Boomerang crossing over the Waiwakaiho headwaters on the Bell's Falls track and close to the junction of the Kokowai Stream with the Waiwakaiho. The red ochre after it was burnt and powdered became the Kokowai. Here the Maoris used to get the ochre for painting purposes.

THE LIZARD

The Lizard is the fine rock ridge that commences near the N.E. lip of the crater at 8075 feet and reaches downwards for 2000 feet towards Humphries Castle.

When it is sticking out of the snow in the spring it is similar to a lizard, and can be picked out from New Ply-mouth.

It is a popular summer highway to the summit from the north.

MACKAY ROCKS

Running down from the crater for about 500 feet towards the Kapuni Gorge along the east side of the scoria run to Panitahi. It is named after Mr. T. V. Mackay of New Plymouth who with Mr. Upson was climbing over it during a search for missing climbers, and had a narrow escape when he slipped after losing his alpenstock. However he managed to stop himself, and the search continued.

MANGANUI HUT

As a result of the death of Mr. Lance V. Gibson from exposure whilst a member of a rescue party in 1930, and the dreadful suffering of others, it was realised that a shelter hut was most essential on the north side of Manganui Gorge at a height of 4300 feet.

Mr. T. R. Anderson was deputed to select a site for a hut between the gorge and the Ngarara—primarily for an emergency shelter.

Concrete piles were made on the site, and the building material was brought up and dumped about a quarter of a

mile up the Plateau Road which was then under construction. It was a long trying haul to carry the sheets of corrugated iron, scantling, etc., to the site. But under the able direction of Mr. Anderson, Dr. W. P. P. Gordon, Mr. J. L. O. Rowe, and many other willing helpers, the hut rapidly assumed shape, and by the first snowfall in 1931 a building 12 feet x 12 feet was erected—suitable for day use. Soon after four wooden bunks were installed.

However this single room was soon found inadequate for the increasing number of Stratford Mountain Club members, and in 1934 it was decided to extend the building.

Another 12 feet x 12 feet room was added on the north side. Several more bunks and a small stove were installed. In 1936 two outer rooms (for cooking and storage) and a verandah were added and other conveniences improved; by 1938 a water pump, a 44-gallon tank, and a well for water supply were established.

Skiing was now becoming popular and more suitable accommodation was necessary.

In 1939 the 24 feet x 12 feet addition on the west side was decided on. The material was dumped on the plateau and members worked many days (and nights) getting it over the gorge. The building was completed in about five weeks, in time for the winter sports. Later a stove (1945) and hot shower (1947) were installed and the main room was lined, and a 100-gallon tank (1950) was provided. And in 1953 a 32-volt electric lighting plant installed.

The first hut was connected by telephone with the Stratford House in 1932 and has given very good service over the years. This line assumes major importance during times of emergency.

MARU PA

Maru was the war god of the Taranaki tribe brought over by Turi in the Aotea canoe. An evil god but very particular as to behaviour.

The name Maru was given to the series of mountain settlements prepared by the Taranaki tribes in preparedness for the incursions of the Waikato and other tribes who were raiding the whole district.

The general position extended from the Oaonui stream across the Okahu Gorge to the site of the present Kahui Hut and right through to the Swamp and the Pouakals—generally above the bush and scrub.

Houses were erected and the bush felled to start cultivation. Foundations of the old whares (between the Okahu and Oaonui) are marked on Survey

maps about 1 mile south of the Kahui Hut—over the gorge.

Pakihere was a fortified place on the side of the Okahu opposite the perpendicular cliff 300-500ft.

Pukekokako lay S.W. of Pakihere.

Te puna o Okahu was a specially secret place selected as a retreat for the women and children when the Walkatos arrived. This place was deep in the gorges of the Okahu.

It was in 1826 that the dreadful massacre by the Waikato invaders took place in North Taranaki. And this was followed by their invasion of the Taranaki tribal areas on Mt. Egmont. The Walkatos were armed with muskets and guns. The Taranaki had only their native weapons.

Te Kahui said in his evidence before the Land Court: "Their guns did the work so effectively that our people were quite aepelia tae watea" (gathered up as crops of potatoes are in a field.).

The Walkatos hunted for many days on the mountain for the escapees and gathered up hundreds, and then they at last returned to their own country taking some of the prisoners with them.

NISSEN HUT

On the round the mountain track below Taurangitoti Hut has been erected the Taranaki Alpine Club's war memorial hut. The exterior was completed in March, 1953, but was wrecked by a storm soon after and the materials scattered. However, the club completed the exterior reconstruction by May 4, 1953. Measuring 30 feet by 16 feet, it is built on the lines of Nissen huts used so extensively during the war and much of the material was imported direct from Britain.

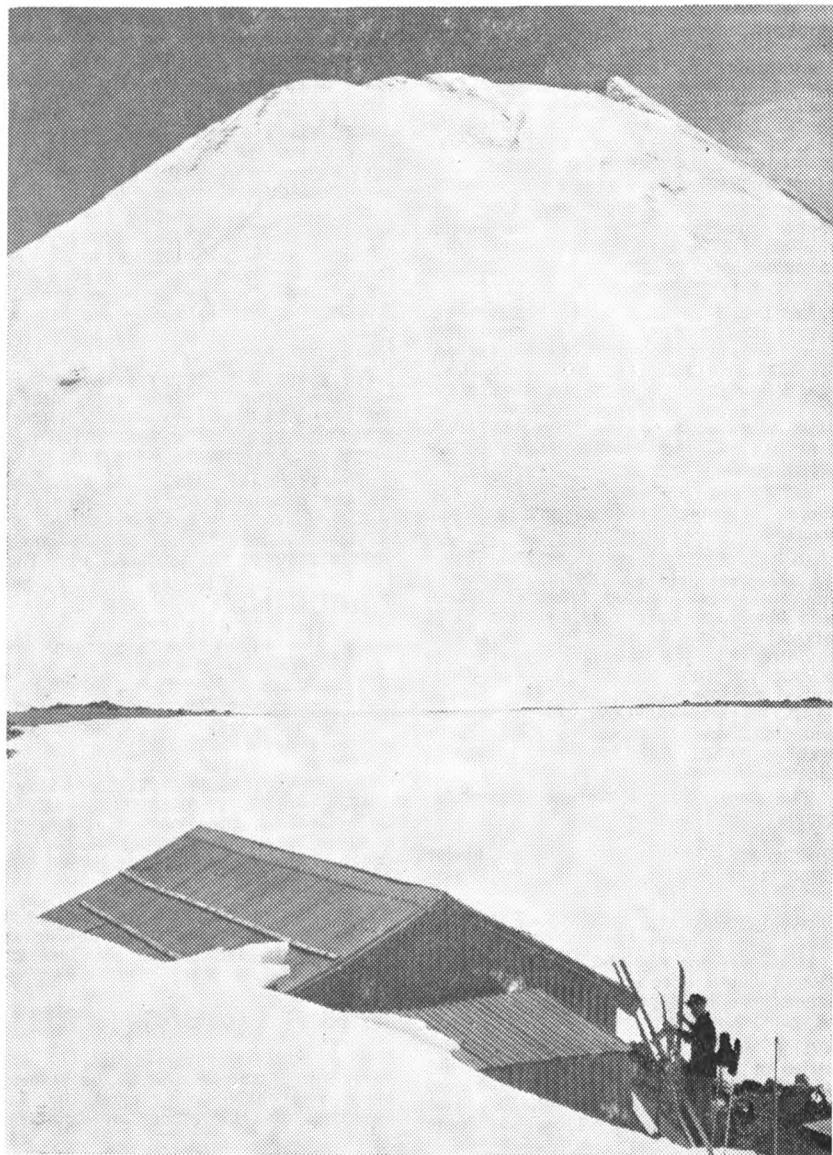
The injured were brought to the uncompleted hut on the night of the accident in July, 1953, when six lives were lost in a fall on ice.

NORTH EGMONT HOSTEL

The North Egmont Hostel, 19 miles from New Plymouth and at the 3140-foot level, was officially opened by Lord Islington, the Governor, on October 4, 1912.

On January 15th, 1911, Messrs. King and Burgess formed an association to build a hostel. A ground lease and approval were obtained from the Egmont National Park Board on August 23, 1911.

The hostel was built and equipped for £5000 and operated from July 1, 1913, under management of Mr. H. Graham (who was later in charge of Dawson Falls and the Hermitage).



Syme Hut (6400 feet) on Fantham's Peak. This springtime view shows the narrow strip of scoria across the lip of Fantham's Peak and the main peak rising beyond with Shark's Tooth on the right-hand side of the crater.

On December 3, 1926, Messrs. King and Burgess formed the North Egmont Hostelry Ltd., capital £10,000, of which £6250 was called up. In 1929 Mr. Newton King left a legacy of £3000, and extensive additions and improvements to the new lounge, bathrooms, etc., were carried out.

In June, 1932, the hostelry company was in financial difficulties and the hostel was handed over to the North Committee for £1200, and the company went into liquidation in October, 1937, the shareholders losing 12/6 in the £ per share.

In subsequent years the hostel has been managed by lessees and in 1954 a "motel" or self-help system was introduced along with board by arrangement.

THE OLD MOUNTAIN HOUSE

1884: Mr. Henry Peters discovered the northern route through the bush from Kaimiro to the summit.

1885: This track was surveyed.

1886: Peters and Louis Patterson cut the track through to the present hostel site; and erected a semi-permanent tent there—for the convenience of tourists.

1887-1904: Repairs and improvements were constantly being made to the road formation.

1892: Mountain house opened.

1904: The road was metalled.

1929: The road was widened, and in parts bitumenised.

Henry Peters' semi-permanent tent can claim to be the first tourist resort on the northern slope of Mt. Egmont. It was constantly blown down and its contents ruined; and many visitors considered they had a better right to it than Mr. Peters.

In 1891 the old Military Barracks on Marsland Hill were demolished and part of the material was sold by auction. The material allotted to the Scenic Society (about one-third of the whole) was sledged up to the mountain via Egmont Village, and erected on the present site.

The transport (by sledges) must have been a strenuous task. The track, particularly through the bush, was so bad that the builders, Messrs. G. Turner and Sons, could not get the material up quick enough to carry on the job of erection, and lost £30 on the contract.

The first house was unlined, one large room, and two side rooms. The roof was of corrugated iron (but not made, as today, by machinery); and the old timber walls contained several of the portholes used at the barracks.

When partly completed it was officially opened by Messrs. Wheetman, Robinson and Archdeacon Govett on January 28,

1892. A church service was held there on February 1.

In 1896 the interior rooms were lined, and the building painted, and in 1905 the verandah was added.

Subsequent additions which have been made include additions for the caretaker, outbuildings and, later still, installation of hot water, showers, etc.

The cottage near the Old House was built in 1905 for letting to parties as required.

It is interesting in these days of telephones to note that carrier pigeons were originally used as messengers from North Egmont.

THE POLICEMAN

This rock bulge at 5500 feet is near the top end of the Ngaranra Ridge on the north side of the Manganui skiing ground. The top ski tow now reaches close to the Policeman, which is a starting point for championship events.

PRIEST'S FINGERS

A narrow rock ridge at 5200 feet on the Curtis Ridge toward the top of the Kapuni Gorge. The old summit track from Curtis Hut lay partly through and to the south of the Priest's Fingers.

From some angles the ridge looks like the fingers of a priest upraised in a blessing, hence the name.

POUAKAI RANGES

The name of the Ranges north of Mt. Egmont comes from Pouakai 4590ft. which is the highest peak.

Pou a kal is the name of a man-devouring bird in Maori mythology. It is also a name given by the ancient Maori (the tangata whenua) to the Moa.

Williams' Dictionary interprets Pouakai as a fabulous monster. There is undoubtedly evidence of the Moa's existence around Mt. Egmont; and it is reasonable to presume that the Pouakai Ranges may have been a haunt of the bird.

S. P. Smith pages 27-32 History of the Taranaki Coast tells the Maori tradition concerning the Pouakai Ranges. They were the barrier which prevented Taranaki (Mt. Egmont) going out to sea on his flight from Tongariro—probably under the spell of Rua Tupua and Rua Tawhito who were the mythological ancestors of Rua Taranaki.

In the early days a usual route to the mountain from New Plymouth was up the Carrington Road. The Rev. H. H. Brown's home (Welburn) was near the present junction with the Frankley Road. Here friends were hospitably received.

Thence there was a track along the Carrington Road to the Plymouth Road, and near the Kiri Stream the climbers worked their way up the spur, due south, for about two miles, to meet the Mangorei Road track. Several clearings have been made from time to time on the Ranges. One of New Plymouth's early school teachers spent his honeymoon up there in 1863.

From the Mangorei Hut the track follows a general southerly direction round the base of The Hump (4255ft.) and down to the Swamp. From here there is now a good track to Holly Hut, round the base of The Dome to Bell's Falls.

Most of the peaks and prominences on the Pouakai Ranges appear to be unnamed. HENRY (3696ft.) a cone east of the swamp was probably so named by Messrs. J. Buchanan, H. Richmond, Hursthause and Dr. J. D. Hooker, who were guided by Henry (a nurseryman). They travelled from New Plymouth via Carrington Road to Coad's Hut (now called Wood Hut) where their horses were left. Another prominent cone 3995 ft.) is called Maude by the Maude Road people. There are about a dozen peaks over 4000 feet.

THE PYRAMIDS

These shapely mounds are at 4787 feet and 4000 feet east of the Kahui-Holly Hut track. Turn east along the track over tussock to the Little Pyramid and thence quarter of a mile up to the Big Pyramid.

These are on the summer route on the 5000-foot level to Tahurangi Hut from the west.

The two pyramids form the base line of two good equilateral triangles with Skinner Hill the apex on the north and Turehu Hill the apex on the south.

The mounds are well named on account of their similarity to pyramids.

On the top of the large Pyramid is a stone called Cheops.

RANGITOTO FLAT

The Rangitoto trig station at 6438 feet is marked on the Lands and Survey map.

The whole of the top area of Fantham's Peak is about 25 acres, including about seven acres of Rangitoto Flat and 16 acres of Panitahi.

The Rangitoto Flat is the western part lying between the slope of the mountain and the upward slope of Fantham's Peak. Rangitoto Peak is the most southerly of the peaks. Fantham's Peak is not a trig but is pegged as are also two others—Lodestone Peak and Copestone Peak.

Rangitoto means scoria, or black lava.

According to Maori mythology, Tama Atua, on reaching the summit of the mountain, took a tremendous leap and landed plonk on Panitahi and flattened out the ground called Rangitoto.

Rangitoto Flat is the finishing point for the annual ski race from the summit, held usually in November.

THE SAW

This rock feature at 6000ft. is at the top end of the Cake ridge on the north side of the mountain. When approached from the north-east side (along a high summer route from Tahurangi Hut to Kahui Hut) it has the appearance of the tooth of a saw, vertical facing towards the top of the mountain.

SHARK'S TOOTH

Shark's Tooth or East Peak is the most prominent feature of the top of Egmont. As seen from New Plymouth it is the sharp prominence on the east skyline, and from some aspects appears to be the highest point but is actually 30 feet lower than the summit, which is on the western side of the crater.

The height of Shark's Tooth above the floor of the crater varies of course according to snow conditions, but when the tooth is bare it might be 100 feet

SKINNER HILL

This hill at 4300 feet is east of the track about half-way between Holly Hut and Kahui Hut. It is named after Mr. W. H. Skinner, who was a cadet under Thomas Humphries who made his first survey of Bell's Falls in 1875. The naming was by Bernard Horner on a private map he prepared—but without Lands and Survey authority.

W. H. Skinner was born on February 26, 1857 in New Plymouth, a son of T. K. Skinner, who came in the ship Oriental on November 7, 1841 and married Miss Prudence Veale. W. H. Skinner was educated at private schools in New Plymouth and was a survey cadet from 1872 to 1876 under an excellent chief, T. Humphries, who had marked all the historic spots connected with Maoris and which inspired much of W. H. Skinner's subsequent historical interest. He was closely associated with S. Percy Smith and was secretary of the Polynesian Society and author and historian. He died on October 24, 1946.

SKEET RIDGE

This ridge leads down to the western side of Fantham's Peak from near the summit of Egmont. It is separated from Bobs Ridge by a tributary of the Taungataura Stream.

The ridge was named after Harry May Skeet, surveyor, of New Plymouth, who made the first topographical survey of the mountain. Skeet was a son of Captain H. L. Skeet, a surveyor, and spent his boyhood at Tauranga. He was a cadet under his father, and from 1875-1901 he carried out efficiently a tremendous amount of survey work in Taranaki extending over the whole province.

He was a man of astonishing stamina and strength and frequently carried a pack of 60-80lb. up and down steep ranges, or across creeks and swamps.

After 30 years' field work he was appointed chief draughtsman in Westland and the Commissioner of Crown Lands at Invercargill and Auckland. He retired in 1923 and died at Auckland in 1943 at the age of 85 years.

SNOW VALLEY

This is the broad valley filled with snow in winter at the head of the Maketawa above Tahurangi Hut. Under good conditions Snow Valley is an excellent ski-ing ground and is the scene of championship contests. It is often used for winter climbs as a route to the Lizard.

STRATFORD MOUNTAIN HOUSE

The Stratford Mountain House at 2785 feet is 9 miles from Stratford and is served by a good motor road.

The first site selected for a house on the Stratford side of the mountain was on the Plateau, a delightful situation in fine calm weather but too exposed.

Messrs. Curtis and Penn, both well-known citizens of Stratford, had the first house built on the Plateau by February 16, 1899. It was an iron roof, canvas-sided hut. A year later they had covered the sides with corrugated iron. Later they gave the job to Elliott, King, J. Polson and J. T. Goodrich, who transformed the hut into a pleasant looking two-roomed cottage with a fenced area.

But it was too exposed and showed signs of the effect of wind, storms and snow, and it was then decided to move it down to the shelter of the bush to its present site. Later Mr. Haldane became a popular custodian.

On September 4, 1913, a telephone office was opened at the Stratford house under the name of Potaema, meaning "White Cap."

Since then many improvements have been effected and additional buildings have been erected for visitors, especially visiting clubs. Electric power was brought up from Pembroke Road and a motor road was constructed to the Plateau at 3720 feet.

STRATFORD PLATEAU

(See previous article.)

THE STAIRCASES

Three series of rock bluffs comprise the First, Second and Third Staircases, stretching across the usual climbing route from North Egmont. Tahurangi Hut is built just to the east of the First Staircase. The Second Staircase, above the hut, leads to Khyber Pass, a summer route to the lowest point of the Lizard. The Third Staircase leads to the main climbing ridge used both in the summer and winter.

SURREY ROAD ROUTE

A summer and winter route to the crater lying between Snow Valley and East Ridge. Takes its name from old track from top of Surrey Road as marked on W. Gordon's Lands and Survey Map 1901.

SYME HUT

Syme Hut, on Fantham's Peak at 6400 feet, is just below the highest point.

Syme Hut is named after Mr. Rod Syme, Hawera, who completed his 200th ascent of Egmont in 1955. He has probably a more intimate knowledge of the topography of the mountain, and a more practical experience of its tracks, crags, bluffs, gorges, barriers and snags—and the moods, atmospheric conditions and signs, than anyone today. Syme Ridge on Mt. Tasman in the Southern Alps was named after him. He used this route for the first time in 1931 in the company of L. V. Bryant.

Mr. Syme by his unbounded enthusiasm and wonderful organisation, plus remarkable sustained efforts, has done much to promote the safety of climbers and help in the rescue of those afflicted in accidents.

In 1928 the Mount Egmont Alpine Club came into being, and was received sympathetically by the National Park Board when representatives applied for a grant to build a hut on Fantham's Peak. The club gave liberally of time and labour of its members, many of whom devoted months of holiday time preparing the site and carrying the material to the 6300ft. altitude.

However, despite all difficulties, the building material was carried up and the building erected in 1930. The walls and roof are of corrugated iron. There are 9 bunks. The original size was 20ft. x 10ft., with two rooms. The actual cost was £350 and the value is £600. The hut was prefabricated in Hawera by F. W. Pettett. The official opening was at Easter, 1930. A telephone link was installed during the summer of 1955.



Tahurangi Hut (5400 feet), headquarters of the Taranaki Alpine Club and on the route from North Egmont to the summit.

TAHURANGI

The literal meanings of Tahurangi are:
(1) A race of fairies, imaginary beings;
(2) to perform rites involving the use of fire.

This name appears several times on the mountain. Tahurangi was a descendant of Hatauirua of the Kurahaupo canoe (1350 A.D.). The legend is that he was the first man to ascend the mountain (Taranaki) from the Karaka Tonga Pa. When he got to the top he lit a fire—presumably he took the firewood for this purpose up with him. His object was to show the world that he had taken possession of the mountain on behalf of his tribe.

NOTE.—Whenever the wisps of smoke-like clouds are seen clinging to the summit this is said to be a reminder of

"The fire of Tahurangi—Te Ahi a Tahurangi."

Other uses of the name:

(1) The trig station at 3970ft. on the main track above North Egmont is marked Tahurangi.

(2) Bell's Falls were called Te rere a Tahurangi.

(3) The bluffs on the south side of the Ngatoro headwaters are called Tahurangi.

(4) The hut erected by the Taranaki Alpine Club at the top of the Ngatoro is called Tahurangi.

(5) The Aurora Australis was called by the Maoris: Tahu-nui-a-rangi, "Big fire in the sky."

(6) The Old Mountain House was marked on survey maps, Tahurangi House.

TAHURANGI HUT

This hut at 5400 feet is at the top of the Ngatoro headwaters above the bluffs named Tahurangi Bluffs. It was erected by members of the Taranaki Alpine Club and a building of two rooms was opened on June 2, 1935 with 17 bunks.

In 1938 two additional rooms were constructed. In 1939 the telephone to the hostel was installed.

The hut is owned and maintained by the Taranaki Alpine Club. As this hut is close to the popular summer route to the summit I think it should be constantly emphasised that this hut and all mountain huts are strictly private property. Casual visitors have no more right of entry than a common burglar has of entering your home. Breaking in to these premises is illegal and all rescue equipment is sacrosanct.

THE TURTLE

The Turtle measures about half a mile from the pointed top (7600 feet) to the circular bottom. It is the big excrescence near the top on the north-west side and is probably so named because it frequently has the appearance of a huge turtle.

TUREHU HILL

Turehu Hill at 4500 feet is about two miles due east from Kahui Hut. It can be reached by the ridge track above Kahui Hut or across the moss slopes from the Kahui-Holly Hut round the mountain track.

An extraordinary echo can be had from certain points on Turehu in good conditions with four distinct returns of the voice if practised from the right position.

The meaning of turehu is: light skinned ghostly people who inhabit the forest.

WAIPUKU RAIL AND QUARRIES

In 1902 the Railway Department built a branch line from Waipuku station to the mountain to quarry metal ballast for the main line; and for boulders for the New Plymouth foreshore to protect the present railway station.

The system was to run an old shunt engine up with empty trucks and return with full ones back to Waipuku. But the old engine could go only to the stage where the grade became too steep. From there a cable operated—one full truck descending hauled two empty trucks up. Quite all right in theory, but for various reasons the system was not satisfactory. So another quarry was opened at a point the locomotive could reach.

Concrete dams and locks were built to utilise the river water to run a crusher, and a big team of men were employed to quarry, crush and load the trucks, etc. Cottages were built to house the men, and other buildings erected.

Then came the disastrous flood of 1934 which wrecked the workings, and shifted the Mangatui River to a new course. The track lines were taken up and stacked at Waipuku: and in 1952 the Railway Department decided to sell the chain wide strip of land up to the reserve.

WARWICK CASTLE

Warwick Castle or Tahuna a Tutawa at an altitude of 5372ft. is about half a mile north of Nagarara Bluff above the Stratford-North Egmont track.

It was so named by Surveyor H. M. Skeet in 1897 because of its bold ruggedness, which makes it resemble an old English castle.

Tahuna a Tutawa literally may signify the site of Tutawa's battle. It has been described as a dividing point of the Maori tribes.

(See later notes on Paritutu Line).

WILKIE'S POOLS

These lie in the Kapuni River about a mile above Dawson Falls. They are illustrated in the Centennial Publication Making New Zealand, Vol. 1, pg. 26, as excellent examples of a geological stage in stream erosion with formation of potholes.

The brothers W. and F. Wilkie had a farm about a mile below the reserve boundary on the Manaia Road. The evening Tom Dawson discovered the falls which bear his name he called at Wilkie's house. The next day Dawson, F. Wilkie and Grant set out "to see these falls." After their inspection the party went up the river bed and came to the pools, a perfectly delightful spot, to rest awhile. Dawson chipped out Wilkie's name on one of the rocks with his prospecting hammer. The name on the rock has disappeared.

Going up a short distance they came to another beautiful cascade, and presumably a week or so later it was named Kendall's Cascade by a man coming down the stream from higher up.

On their return Dawson got "bushed" and was in the forest from Sunday until Tuesday. He found his way out by following the Otakeho Stream. On hearing that search parties were out looking for him, he immediately set out to relieve their anxiety, arriving with an inch of candle in one hand and a fiddle under his other arm.

LINES AND BOUNDARIES

These were as sacred and important to the olden Maori people as the modern surveyed boundaries are to the present day pakeha. Egmont has frequently been the focus of these lines.

TARANAKI LINE: This is marked on the Survey map—James Mackenzie, C.S., drawn J. Homan with additions by Deverell and W. Gordon, 1903. In 1855 Taranaki natives cut a line 10ft. across round the northern face of the Pouakai Ranges adjoining Mt. Egmont. They called it Irl nga nui. But the Ngatitawas called it Pouakai. Faces were cut on all the prominent trees along the line. "These people were so superstitious as to believe that the retention of these ranges would preserve them from encroachment and dominance of the pakehas," wrote Wells in his history.

The line starts at the intersection of the Okurukuru Line and the Radius Line where the Mangorei River crosses it, and follows a general S.E.E. direction to cross the Kaiawa near the cave, the Walwakaiho near Pikiari, the North Egmont Mountain Road at 1720ft. (about three-quarters of a mile up the track) to the Waingongoro River about three-quarters of a mile inside the Radius Line.

PARITUTU LINE: As a result of discussions before the Land Court, it was decided to draw a line to form a dividing line between the Atiawa and the Taranaki tribes to effect a settlement of their claims, and it was hoped to bring everlasting peace and harmony.

It was decided that Paritutu should be one end of the line, and a protuberance on the skyline slope of Mount Egmont, about halfway down its eastern slope, should be the other end.

I tried from the top of Paritutu to trace this line by following and comparing roads, boundaries, hills, etc. (Brown's Hill, German Hill) and found that the line could NOT terminate at Warwick Castle. So I interviewed Mr. Coleman (Lands and Survey Department) and he brought out H. M. Skeet's survey map of Mt. Egmont, 1901, and we found that this line ends roughly about the position of where the Karaka Tonga Pa was. This is on a slight protuberance on the skyline about a fifth of the way up, so presumably the court modified its decision.

OKURUKURU LINE: This survey line runs parallel to, and about 2.1 miles west of the Paritutu Line. Commencing at the mouth of the Okurukuru Stream (S.W. of Paritutu) it runs, generally, towards the present North Egmont Hostel.

This is a report of a speech by Horomona Toremi, taken from the Maori Messenger Te Kokioi, March 24, 1863, Te Karere Maori, 1860, seven years after he and Matene Te Whiwhi, from Otaki had made a trip through the North Island to lay the foundations of the King Movement at a meeting of 500 men at Taiporowhenua. "We entered the house. Paratene te Kopara arose, with a tomahawk having a twisted handle—the axehead turned one way and the handle another. It was not fixed in the usual way. The handle was carved. Showing us the axe, he said: 'Listen, all tribes assembled! This is Okurukuru.' He then laid the axe before Hori Te Anaua. It was then brought to us. Matene rose, and said: 'What is Okurukuru?' He answered: 'It is the land we have sold to the pakeha. We wish to take possession of it again.'

BIRDS AND INSECTS

Birdlife in the national park was studied by observers of the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society during their summer camp at Dawson Falls in January 1955. The birds noted were fantails (not many), riroriro (grey warblers), pied tits, whiteheads, silver-eyes, bellbirds, tuis, pipits, riflemen, moreporks, pigeons, shining cuckoos, long tailed cuckoos and harrier hawks. Introduced birds noted were: Chaffinches, thrushes, dunnocks, redpolls, blackbirds.

Kiwis are known to exist in the park and some small colonies of kakas have occasionally been seen.

There is prolific insect life on the slopes of Egmont, as Dr. J. T. Salmon reported to the 1955 summer camp. In the scrub and tussock regions there are moths belonging to the genera *Notoreas*,

Dasyurus, *Crambus* and *Xauthorhoe*. Dr. Salmon also reported enormous numbers of grey and black running spiders and numerous flies. *Collembola* were found under stones and scoria up to 7000 feet. On snow pockets about 6500 feet there were minute flies, larger flies, wasps, ichneumons, mason bees, beetles, bugs, moths and butterflies. The late Mr. W. W. Smith placed on record the flight of white butterflies above the summit (8260 feet).

The 1955 summer camp observers located many "vegetable caterpillars," a fungus plants which parasitises the subterranean caterpillars of moths of the genus *Oxycanus*.

Mice have been found inhabiting the summit rocks during the summer.

NATURE ASPECTS

(by DR. GEORGE HOME)

WHEN one looks at the map of the North Island the most noticeable feature of its western coast is a round knob projecting into the Tasman Sea from a somewhat broad base. The sweep of Antarctic currents and the stormy attacks of the western seas have eroded the North Island to produce the North and South Taranaki Bights and the rounded projection owes its existence to the andesite volcanic reefs laid down by Mt. Egmont being stable enough to resist the powers of the ocean waves.

But for this it looks as if the coast line might have run straight north to south from about Pukearuhe to Patea, The Maori name for the White Cliffs is Parininihi—the slipping cliffs. South of Mt. Egmont is a small bay with a slightly curved coast line between the Patea and Kaupokonui Rivers, and its cliffs have receded at its middle near Ohave 20 or 30 yards since the writer was a schoolboy at Hawera.

This part of the coast is directly in the line of attack of a current which runs northward from Cook Strait across the South Taranaki Bight when the fierce south-easters are blowing. And the writer has seen layers of salt encrusted on the trees at Normanby and Okaiawa. It is therefore to Mt. Egmont that we owe the existence of the soil under New Plymouth, Stratford, and Hawera, and the fertile coastal lands around his base, not to mention the exuberant rain-forest that once clothed his slopes.

In his upbuilding Egmont managed to keep his middle and his top-storey reasonably symmetrical with the exception of Fantham's Peak with its six acres of crater at the 6300-foot level. This excrescence is built not of lava but of pumice and scoria ejected from a lateral vent or weakness in the wall of Mt. Egmont's chimney.

THE ALPINE GARDEN

Because of the absence of lava, its more porous structure allowing water seepage, and its southern aspect facing away from the drying and scorching influence of the midday sun the plants of the sub-alpine meadow of Fantham's Peak grow larger flowers—*Euphrasias*, *Forsteras*, *Ourisias*, *Pratias*, *Celmisias*, *Wahlenbergias*, etc., than are found on Egmont's northern slopes.

Egmont provides unique scope for the botanist—vegetation as it varies from sea level to snow-line within a distance of 20 miles or less, and, compared with other mountains, not difficult of access.

At an average elevation of about 1700 feet a circle with a radius of six miles from the mountain centre has been drawn. This contains within its perimeter about 72,000 acres of permanent

forest reserve, to hold Egmont's bounteous rainfall as with a huge sponge. By this the mountain is able to maintain the water-flow of his numerous streams without which this part of Taranaki would not be able to continue with its dominant dairy industry.

DEPOSIT OF MOISTURE

We should think of Egmont as a vast pyramid of earth, a mile and a half high, on a nearly circular base at sea level of about 35 miles in diameter. In some years the rainfall on the upper slopes exceeds 200 inches. This is delivered to the farms below by streams and seepage, a perpetual though fluctuating banked deposit, of moisture, available from radius line to sea level, but kept so only by the protecting trees and other vegetation of which far too much has been destroyed already.

The agents of destruction have been men, goats, and opossums. Since man has been restrained by law and goats greatly diminished in number by the activity set going by the forest ranger, Mr. Gordon Atkinson, the opossum may now be regarded as the forest's worst enemy. Opossums live mainly on the terminal shoots and young leafage of the trees and plants, thus cutting off the renewals of growth by destroying their reproductive parts. Not only this but they destroy the food supply of the birds, our helpers in regeneration of the forest floor.

Mt. Egmont has no plant that is recognised as peculiar to itself, but there is a remarkable natural omission in the absence of all the New Zealand beech trees (*Nothofagus*). They are abundant on Ruapehu and they are found even on the ridges to the eastward within 30 or 40 miles of Egmont's centre. While she was botanist to the Auckland Museum Miss Lucy Cranwell came specially in 1939 to search with a microscope for traces of beech seeds in the large swamp between the Pouakai range and the mountain as well as in other places but could not find any clue.

The different belts on Egmont's sides, according to altitude, make an interesting study from the radius line (1700 feet) to where the moss meadows and

scoria slopes meet and vegetation ceases (between 5000 and 6000 feet).

Just inside the forest reserve the tallest trees still hold their own, the rimu and the giant rata (*Metrosideros Robusta*) being the most lofty. The predatory "gangster" habit of the tall rata is much in evidence.

The seeds of this rata when the capsules burst are like very short lengths of reddish hair, easily blown by the wind. They are thus able to lodge in the huge tufts of epiphytic plants such as the Astelia which look like large bird nests in the higher trees.

From these the rata trunk grows upwards and sends aerial roots downwards to the ground. In the course of centuries these roots grow into big trunks themselves, and by enveloping, like legs of wrestlers, the bole of the victim on which they grow (generally a rimu) they kill it by sheer pressure.

Rata vines of other species are very common climbers on the loftier trees, and quite undeservingly got the credit of being killers, but they started honestly and harmlessly in the earth and only used the grown trees as a ladder to climb up to the sunshine and the sky. Having accomplished this they swung their llanes cleanly and clearly from the helpful tree and so did it no harm whatever. The giant rata's seed can grow from ground level but in this effort its trunk and branches are short and sprawling in comparison.

The totara, miro, and matai are fairly abundant at the radius line level (about 1700 feet), also the towhai and the rewa-rewa (mislabeled honeysuckle). Even that commonest of our larger forest trees, the tawa, though somewhat fastidious about soil, finds places in which it is able to grow.

The forest floor is covered chiefly by a great abundance and variety of ferns and the tree trunks are clothed with filmy ferns and mosses suggestive of fairy land. What is perhaps the world's most beautiful fern for colour, shape and texture, once generally known as the "Prince of Wales feather fern"—its fronds being like large ostrich plumes—was abundant in various localities around the North Egmont Hostel, but tourists could not resist its attractions. They dug it up to take it home to grow in their gardens, but it inevitably died within a few hours in the hands of all but the expert.

The totara (*Podocarpus Totara*) of lower levels becomes largely replaced by the mountain totara (*Podocarpus Hallii*) which has larger and greener leaves than its brownish relative of the plains.

There is an interesting point about the mountain totara as viewed, for instance, in the Ngatoro Gorge, alongside and above the North Egmont

Mountain House. These trees are conspicuously bedecked with a pale cream coloured lichen—"old man's beard" (*Usnea barbata*) and people often ask if they are in flower. This straggly and almost decorative lichen grows on dead parts such as ends of twigs.

The leaves of the totara's terminal shoots form stiff rosettes facing upwards which collect and hold the fallen snow, sometimes for weeks or possibly months on end. This kills the central bud of each tuft thus furnishing for the lichen the dead material on which it can grow. This terminal position makes it look like an inflorescence.

From the radius gate to the mountain hostels the road sides are mostly clothed with the very picturesque drapery of a fern with large pale green and reddish coloured young fronds which used to have the name of Lomaria Patersoni but is now called (much less agreeably) Blechnum Capense. It seems to be universally distributed from Chile to New Zealand and Australia and even on to South Africa, and may be symbolic of a long disappeared continent that sank many geological ages ago under what are now areas of the Pacific and Indian Oceans—Gondwana Land. The word "Capense" is used to denote being "found at the Cape of Good Hope."

Higher up on the northern side, from the Ambury Memorial to the terraces above Humphries Castle, the path clearances have given the smaller ground plants the chance of showing their really beautiful flowers and we begin to admire Euphrasias, Ourisias, and others already mentioned in reference to Fantham's Peak even before we get to the tussocks and mosses of the sub-alpine meadow which in addition to its floral display acquires sufficient warmth and sunshine to take unto itself its attractive gold and brown shades of colour.

The beautiful and bright golden yellow buttercup of Mt. Egmont with flowers—some of them one to one and a half inches in diameter—growing at the 4000-5000 feet level deserves special mention. It also grows on Ruapehu.

This is a very brief and incomplete sketch of Mt. Egmont and his influence, under which we people of Taranaki live, move, and have our being. There is one influence he does not have but still is blamed for—making the south wind cold. Egmont is just about exactly south of New Plymouth so our chilling Antarctic blasts are referred to as the "mountain wind." It is the juxtaposition of these two words that gives people the wrong idea.

Just look at the very insignificant fraction of the skyline occupied by his snowclad peak. What possible recognisable influence could it have on a horizon wide—Dominion wide—movement of the whole atmosphere from the south?

FOREST PROTECTION

(by C. G. ATKINSON)

B~~EYOND~~ any shadow of doubt one of the most pressing problems exercising the minds of many people in high places today, is that of the threat to the continued existence of our remaining forests from introduced animals. Evolved in the entire absence of browsing animals, our indigenous forests have developed little or no resistance to or protection from the terrestrial and arboreal browsers infesting the country from end to end.

When the Egmont National Park was set aside as such at the turn of the present century it was comprised principally of about 70,000 acres of virgin rain forest—although at that time it is fairly certain that local farmers no doubt regarded the forest as their winter haystack and exploited it to some extent, evidence of which in the shape of old wire fences erected at strategic places within the Park have been found during recent years.

About forty or more years ago large numbers of goats were liberated on farms adjacent to the Park for the purpose of controlling blackberry infestation. Their value in this respect is of considerable doubt, but it was not long before numbers of these animals found their way into the Park forest where they multiplied greatly and spread to most parts of the Park. The damage they wrought in the protective undergrowth of the forest soon became evident in the shape of extensive slips and eroded areas which emphasised the need for control of these destructive animals.

About the same time that goats first became firmly established in the Park the Australian opossum was liberated by acclimatisation societies for the purpose of building up a fur industry in New Zealand. Time has proved this to have been one of the most tragic and costly blunders ever made in the introduction of exotic animals. While the depredations of the goat are confined principally to the bottom storey of the forest, the reverse is the case with the opossum. Blessed—or cursed—with the ability to climb to the tops of the highest trees and the ends of the slenderest limbs, there is where he finds his favoured food. By constant browsing of foliage adult trees are soon bereft of the means of procuring vital elements from the atmosphere so necessary to their continued existence, and they slowly wither and die. With the goats steadily browsing off the seedlings as they appear and the opossums slowly but surely destroying the parent trees, the ultimate destruction of the forest is inevitable. While this may appear a somewhat exaggerated claim to the layman, competent observers

throughout the country have no illusions as to the result of the above combination of browsers if left uncontrolled.

Throughout the Egmont National Park there are countless thousands of adult trees destroyed by opossums and, while the damage from goats is limited to the under-storey, they in turn have wrought untold destruction by constant browsing and ring-barking. During the past ten years an intensive campaign has been waged against both opossums and goats by the Egmont National Park Board, with the result that nearly a quarter million opossums and fifteen thousand goats have been destroyed.

It is now certain that goats have been reduced well below the control stage and they are now found in numbers in only a few remote portions of the Park where they are continuously and relentlessly pursued by experienced hunters.

For many years the Board was forced to rely on the operations of the commercial trapper for control of the opossum, and at one time exacted a royalty from the trappers for the privilege of taking opossums from the Park. As time went on—as it does—it became apparent that the opossum must be regarded as a pest, and the outlook of farming the opossum underwent a complete change. From exacting a royalty to paying a royalty to trappers was the first big step toward stepping up the rate of destruction of opossums. The campaign was intensified by subdividing the Park into smaller blocks and putting on more trappers, but still the annual kill showed an upward tendency. It was obvious that drastic steps were necessary. The Board's officers commenced experiments with poison and soon developed a technique that was to supplant trapping. Trappers were quickly converted to the new methods of control which enabled them to cover larger areas with less effort than was the case with trapping, and also brought the hitherto inaccessible portions of the forest within their range. So successful was the new method of destruction that within two years the opossum population was reduced to the stage where it was uneconomic to operate on a commercial



On the track to Bell's Falls from the north. In the background rise the Pouakai Ranges and between them and the mountain is the Swamp, the large moss area which drains over Bell's Falls towards the left.

basis. It then became necessary to reconsider methods of control and it was finally decided that a permanent staff of field workers be employed for the distribution of poison throughout the Park and the destruction of goats wherever they were found.

While it is readily admitted that opossums will never entirely be eliminated from the forest it is quite certain that they have been reduced to the stage where they can be accommodated with comparative safety. It is some encouragement to know that the opossum is a relatively slow breeder, producing one young each year. While twins are not unknown, they are fairly rare. However, the pressure of control must be maintained if the forest of Egmont is to be preserved.

It is estimated that the open slopes of Egmont above the bushline comprise approximately 5000 acres. This area is quite small in relation to the vast expanse of forest but, because of its open nature it is inevitable that there is where the visitor turns his steps. Let it not be forgotten, however, that within the forest lies an almost unexploited field of enjoyment for the observant traveller with an appreciation of natural things, presenting, as it does, a never-ending and ever new story of the struggle for existence.

The Egmont National Park has been created in perpetuity for the enjoyment of the people of New Zealand and every effort is being made to preserve it as such. It remains for the people who visit the Park to tender it the devotion and respect which it deserves.

A GEOLOGICAL OUTLINE

(by D. CAMERON)

NEAR the end of the Pliocene Period, about three to five million years ago, volcanic action on a notable scale broke out at Moturoa and then extended along a fault line running through the Patua (Kaitake) and Pouakai Ranges to Egmont.

The volcano at Moturoa would be the oldest and smallest but wave action has almost demolished it, only the vent plugs or necks remaining to form the Sugarloaves. The next oldest would be the Patua volcano, 2240ft. high, then the Pouakai volcano, 4590ft. in height. Both these, like Moturoa, were multiple vent volcanoes which ceased erupting and became extinct when they reached a height a little greater than at present.

Egmont became dormant when a height of about 5000 feet was reached and would have much the same sprawling appearance as the adjoining Pouakai Range. This dormant stage lasted a long time and activity was not recommenced until the middle of the Pleistocene Period, half a million years ago when a sustained series of moderately violent eruptions, which took place from one vent only, built up the present symmetrical cone with its relatively small crater.

All four volcanoes are composed of andesite. The Patua and Pouakai Ranges are identical in chemical composition and the inner core of Egmont is probably the same but the outer shell, which is much younger, is slightly different. The Sugarloaves, however, differ again, so much so that one of the early geologists placed them in a different class; this on further analysis was corrected.

The build up of Egmont in two stages with a long interval of rest between periods of intensive activity is characteristic of andesite volcanoes, although quite frequently they complete the building of a cone only to blow the top off in a violent final eruption, something Egmont must have come very close to achieving on several occasions.

The last lava flow appears to be the sharp eastern peak known as "Shark's Tooth." The western ridge or summit is a plug or tholoid composed of the lava which Egmont did not have the energy to eject as lava or blow out as fragments. So ends the cone building phase except for a minor recurrence of activity which created the parasitic cone known as Fantham's Peak. It appears that as the main vent was so effectively sealed, thereby preventing any activity in the main crater, Egmont shows what is a common method, to force a way out through a side vent.

The second phase follows the pattern of behaviour of andesite volcanoes. This was the emission of enormous quantities of fragmentary material, particularly a grey sand and finally a brown dust. This grey sand has formed deep deposits on the lower reaches of all the mountain streams and the deposits are usually referred to as "gravel pits" which are extensively worked for road material.

The brown dust forms the familiar clay which overlies the grey sand and is immediately below the black top soil of Taranaki. The ejection of all this sand and dust had interesting results. One was to create lahars which formed the conical hills in the Inglewood-Lepperton and the Okato-Opunake districts. The other and more important result for Taranaki was the conversion by dust showers of what would have been a rocky waste impossible to farm, into the smooth landscape we know today.

As the conical hills were formed before the dust showers rounded them off we will deal with them first. They are not miniature volcanoes; as stated above they are of lahar origin. This is a Javanese term for a volcanic mud-flow, of which Java has had more than any other country, the last big one in 1919 when the crater lake on Mt. Keluit broke out and 5500 people lost their lives.

This term, lahar, has now been adopted by geologists into their own technical lingo and means any flood of water down a mountainside, whether caused by the break-out of a crater-lake like Ruapehu in the Tangiwai disaster on Christmas Eve, 1953, or by torrential rain saturating newly fallen unconsolidated ash and starting a mudflow like Vesuvius did in AD 79 and buried the city of Herculaneum, or thirdly as Egmont did by erupting white-hot material onto the snow causing a quick thaw.

Egmont at this time was covered with snow right down to the base and beyond, the last advance of the Ice Age creating sub-arctic conditions. There was no forest to impede the rushes of water so there was a clear run out onto the flatter land where they came to rest to form the familiar cones, which are also used extensively now as quarries for road metal.

The lahar activity must have gone on for a long time as the cones in some areas are much older than others, for

instance some in the Opunake area are older than some near Inglewood.

When first deposited their appearance would be similar to the terminal moraine of a glacier, a tumbled mass of rocks large and small mixed with mud and sand and as mentioned before, quite useless for farming.

Egmont now entered the final phase of activity, with showers of fine dust which forms the brown clay. Three main showers are recognised; these are the Egmont Shower, the Stratford Shower, and lastly the Burrell Shower.

The Egmont Shower was by far the greatest deposit both in area and depth. It extends from Mokau through Ohura to Wangانui and right around the coast.

The Stratford Shower did not reach the coast anywhere and was a much smaller effort. The Burrell Shower hardly fell beyond the present park boundary. So it is obvious this final phase declined rapidly although it is thought a small pumice shower issued from Fantham's Peak in comparatively recent times.

Andesite volcanoes as landscape forms are geologically shortlived, the very

nature of their construction—lava flows resting on loose fragmentary material—makes their destruction easy for the normal forces of erosion. Well-known landmarks such as Humphries Castle, Warwick Castle, Shark's Tooth, the Turtle, etc., show that erosion has reduced the size of Egmont considerably. All the features just mentioned are lava flows which must have moved in depressions but are now perched up in the air. The material that once controlled their course has since disappeared. There is a vast amount of rock waste spread out around the base of Egmont, in some places it is 600 feet thick. This waste is now hidden by the mantle of ash laid down in the final phase of activity.

Will Egmont erupt again? This is the question most frequently asked and to which no one knows the answer. Vulcanologists consider that activity in New Zealand, in common with other similar areas throughout the world, is on the wane. They quote geysers and mud pools as evidence of entering the final phase of activity. If this is correct, then it is most unlikely that Egmont will again become active.

THE WEATHER

(by A. B. SCANLAN)

THE prevailing wind direction across Taranaki is the westerly, and the usual rain-bringing wind is the north or northwest backing later to the west. A northerly accompanied by a fall in barometric pressure is almost certainly an indication of bad weather with the possibility, except in the middle of summer, of a snowfall as the accompanying cold front reaches the upper slopes of the mountain. If the wind stays in the northwest quarter, backing from north to west and then swinging back to north a long period of unsettled weather may be recorded with unsuitable climbing conditions and bad visibility.

If the wind direction stays in the southeast without gale conditions a long spell of fine weather with good visibility may result. Sometimes the strong south-easterlies follow a pattern, blowing hard for three days and being followed by brilliantly clear weather, sunny if cool. On the other hand strong southerlies between April and December may put the mountain temporarily in a dangerous condition, plastering the slopes with an ice covering which is slow to soften on the southern and southeastern slopes.

In the winter months southwest gales may bring the heaviest snowfalls to the mountain and yet give good snow conditions following gales with the prospect of excellent snow climbing and skiing. A good snow season is usually accompanied by spells of fine weather. A wet northwest winter leaves little snow, much

ice over the rocks and poor changeable weather

Fine weather with an intense anti-cyclone often brings a band of mist, forming about 10 a.m. and gradually rising and thickening and lying between the 4000 and 6500 feet levels. This can be confusing to those who do not have a good topographical knowledge of the mountain as the mist distorts distance and objects. The mist band thins in the late afternoon to disperse entirely towards sunset.

Strong winds are often blowing only at the higher levels of the mountain. Windblown snow or mist should be looked for as a sign of these upper air movements. A windcap on the mountain is almost certainly a sign of bad weather approaching, but if the windcap does not creep down the mountain there is a

possibility that the wind rate will lessen. The first sign of bad weather often is noticed in the black clouds gathered around the summit, and to force a climb under these conditions is most unwise.

A well-tried alpine belief is that two layers of cloud indicate bad weather. Sometimes cloud below the hostel level is noticed with further heavy cloud at or above the summit. These are not good signs. On the other hand early morning cloud from mountain base upwards may be a sign of settled weather and its ceiling can be penetrated at the 6000 foot level and calm, sunny weather experienced for the rest of the day. A telephone call to the meteorological office at New Plymouth airport will bring information on cloud heights.

Naturally, the aspect of the mountain affects local conditions although strong winds can blow up and down and around the peak with inconsequential discomfort for climbers and skiers. Yet conditions at the Stratford and Dawson

Falls sides can be fair when the western and northern slopes are swept by biting westerly squalls. Similarly, walks from North Egmont to Bell's Falls can be sunny and sheltered when the south and southeast slopes are being swept by cold southeasterlies.

There is an old adage that if the weather is going to improve it is better to be on the mountain than off it. It is more important to remember not to climb into worsening weather. Stubbornness in the face of bad conditions is worse than bad judgment; it is suicidal. The chief weather fact about Egmont is that the climber is lucky if he gets any warning at all of a major change in weather. Spare food and spare clothing (including a windbreaker with hood and gloves) are the best safeguards against bad weather at any time of the year. On Egmont climb with the hope of good weather but expect the worst. Discretion is always the better part of alpine valour.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

(by D. H. RAWSON)

IT has been pointed out on numerous occasions that if all the principles of safe climbing are adhered to, there should be very few mountaineering accidents. However, accidents do sometimes occur, and people sometimes become lost. To give assistance on these occasions there are in all parts of New Zealand efficient district Search and Rescue Organisations, co-ordinated in the three district centres, in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. These Rescue Co-ordination Centres have at their immediate disposal all the Services facilities and the facilities made available by non-governmental organisations. They can deal with land searches, sea searches and national calamities.

In Taranaki the main planning of the three local SAR organisations in New Plymouth, Stratford and Hawera, is directed towards giving assistance to people in need of it in the Egmont National Park. It can, however, be extended to deal with any other emergencies which might arise in Taranaki.

In the case of an emergency on Mt. Egmont, the Police are always notified first. The Police in all towns know whom to ring so as to have rescue teams leaving for the scene in the shortest possible times. Usually the first one communicated with by the Police becomes the Search Controller. He works under the Police, but usually with permission to go right ahead as he thinks best.

The Search Controller, in the course of his duties, arranges for the Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Wellington and the Taranaki Search Co-ordinator (Mr.

Rod Syme, Hawera), to be notified, in case further help is required in any form. All likely Search Controllers have in their possession a printed list of their duties set out in detailed chronological order, so that by reading down the list and following the instructions, they can get things moving with the minimum of delay and with no omissions. The Search Controller delegates his various duties to other people as set out in the instructions, and does not himself ring all the people concerned.

He has available the following facilities from local organisations:—

Transport: Army, private buses, taxis.

Medical teams: St. John Ambulance and the Men's Detachment of the Red Cross.

Wireless sets: Army, and Amateur Radio Emergency Corps and Civil Aviation (New Plymouth airport).

Blankets: Army.

Catering facilities Red Cross Society.

Extra manpower: Fire Brigades and Legion of Frontiersmen.

Maps and air mosaics: Army and Lands and Survey Dept.

Binoculars: Army.

Rifles and ammunition (recall purposes): Army.

Slashers: Ministry of Works depots throughout Taranaki.

Arrangements for keeping exchanges open: local postmasters.

He has available from the RCC in Wellington the following:—

Extra service manpower (which can be flown to Taranaki).

Air drops of medical supplies, food, and anything else required. (Twelve medical units, each capable of looking after the injuries of four people, will shortly be available at Ohakea ready for air dropping anywhere in the North Island.)

Catering facilities (available at short notice from Linton and Waipuru.)

Extra communications equipment.

Planes for recall purposes. (These have been used twice in a year on Mt. Egmont).

The RCC does not interfere with the local Search Controller, and unless help is asked for, none is sent. When an emergency occurs, representatives of the various organisations concerned go to the control room and act immediately on requests for assistance. The organisations involved are the Navy, Army, Air Force, Police, Merchant Navy, Civil Aviation, Federated Mountain Clubs and the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps. Representatives of other organisations are called in when required. The Controller of Air Traffic Services is in overall control.

ONES ON EGMONT

The areas of club responsibility on Mt. Egmont are these:—

Mt. Egmont Alpine Club: From the Okahu Bluffs (above Rahotu), around the south side of the mountain to the Waingongoro Gorge.

Strafford Mountain Club: From the Waingongoro Gorge to the Hen and Chickens in the Maketawa Gorge.

Taranaki Alpine Club: From the Hen and Chickens to the Okahu Gorge, including the Pouakai and the Kaitake Ranges.

In the case of a widespread search the Taranaki Search Co-ordinator or his deputy controls the activities of the three clubs.

When the new Kahui Alpine Club has become well established there will probably be a new subdivision of areas of responsibility.

The emphasis in the SAR organisation is placed on speed. As an instance, where an emergency occurs at North Mt. Egmont, it should be possible half an hour after the Police have been notified, to have on the way to the mountain several fully equipped alpine club members, a first aid team, Army "walkie talkie" radio sets with Territorial operators, a ZC1 wireless and a portable wireless from the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps and two SAR radios (TRP's) from the New Plymouth airport. More personnel and equipment would follow if needed.

Telephone communications between huts and the hostels are duplicated by wireless links, as is the telephone line between the hostel and the base at the Army Hall. Thus a wireless message can be sent from the scene of the accident to Tahurangi Hut, another from there to the hostel, and another from the hostel to the Army Hall.

When an emergency occurs, the hostel managers ring the Police. If emergencies occur in a part of the Park where there is no hostel, the Police in the nearest town should be advised direct.

SAFETY ON EG蒙T

(by A. B. SCANLAN)

WITH a deathroll of 29 to August, 1954, Mount Egmont has earned a reputation of danger and even of tragedy. Yet it is one of the most climbed mountains of over 8000 feet in the world, and conducted with the respect due to the peak, expeditions can be carried out with confidence and safety.

Many thousands have climbed to the summit; one alpine club alone has guided more than 1000 people of all ages in open invitation climbs since the end of the Second World War. Thus the deathroll has to be viewed in proportion to the intense climbing and tramping activity that occurs both in the summer and winter.

The greatest number of fatalities have been caused by falls on ice or frozen snow (14), followed by mishaps to solo climbers (4) and straying from safe route (4). Exhaustion following bad weather, and falling rocks have each caused three deaths.

Of the fatal accidents on Egmont half have occurred during the months of April, May and June when the mountain is in a state of transition from summer to winter conditions and when as a rule there is insufficient snow to smooth over rocks and fill minor bluffs and ledges. Early season snow, being a thin covering over scoria or rock, freezes and congeals and is not responsive to the softening effect of sunshine. This dangerous condition often is not realised by those who have been climbing during the early autumn and as it is easier to ascend than descend the inexperienced may climb into danger without realising the risk they are taking. In mid-winter when the days are shortest the sun leaves the slopes early and rapid freezing can occur. The south and south-east slopes see so little of the sun at this time of year that the snow or frozen scoria can remain glassy hard for weeks.

The best advice is not to climb on hard snow or ice unless fully experienced, able to use an ice axe and, if possible, carrying crampons.

Solo climbing should be avoided on Egmont at all times. A simple mishap may incapacitate a solo climber and cause his death if only because neither his plight nor his locality can be known in time.

A knowledge of the route is advisable on Egmont due to the possible loss of visibility through fog (even in settled weather). Objects appear distorted in mist and a sharp look-out should be kept for tracks, cairns and snow poles. If the

way is lost keep together and do not separate. Separation has caused at least one death and many narrow escapes. If the way is lost beyond recovery descent to the scrub or bushline is advisable to gain the advantage of warmer conditions at night. Many people lost on Egmont have followed streams or ridges through the bush to the radius line of the national park where they are never far from a farmhouse. Others when benighted have sought shelter on the lee side of ridges or under rock ledges, knowing that a search will soon be started for them.

Exhaustion follows from an overtaxing of strength or from exposure during bad weather, particularly when insufficient clothing is carried. Spare food and clothing should always be in the knapsack even when weather conditions appear settled and the season is mid-summer. Shorts are ideal for summer climbing, but a pair of long trousers, a windproof jacket and gloves should be in the pack. Bad weather and a drop in temperature are possible at any time of the year on Egmont.

Falling rocks are an unpredictable hazard. Care should be taken never to dislodge rocks, but if they are accidentally set in motion there should be a loud and repeated call of "Rocks!" to warn parties who may be below.

Avalanches have caught climbers and skiers on Egmont but have never caused a loss of life. Unconsolidated powder snow or wet snow following a sudden rise in temperature and humidity can both be dangerous. There have also been small wind slab avalanches on Egmont. As a rule the cohesion of snow can be tested before a climber reaches a dangerous slope. If there is reason to fear avalanches a route on the ridges should be chosen.

Climbers should make sure they sign the log-books at the hostels or huts of their departure, filling in details that will be a guide to searchers if required.

Egmont is a safe, even a genial mountain, so long as those who climb do not underestimate their task in terms of equipment, warm clothing, good strong boots and an eye for the weather.

TRACKS AND ROUTES

(by D. H. RAWSON)

IN this brief summary it is not proposed to give in detail the descriptions of the shorter walks found in the vicinity of every hostel on the mountain—it is proposed rather to describe the longer tramps and climbs on the higher levels. Times are those for a reasonably fit party, without taking long rests into consideration.

TRACKS FROM NORTH MT. EGMONT HOSTEL (3140ft.)

SUMMIT TRACK. This starts immediately above the Old House. After about fifty yards it emerges on a clearing in which is a monument to Mr. A. H. Ambury who, in 1918, lost his life in attempting to save that of Mr. W. E. Gourlay. After 35 chains the track reaches a junction formed with the Old Track, which also leads down to the monument, following a more westerly route. The Old Track is deeply scoured and is not recommended. From this junction the summit track follows a ridge to the look-out at 60 chains, where there is the junction with the Veronica track. Immediately above the look-out there is a trig station (Tahurangi) at 3870ft. A few chains above this where the vegetation changes rather abruptly from trees to scrub, the track passes along a short, narrow ridge known as the Razorback. It then continues along the top of the ridge and 77 chains above the hostel there is a junction with the round-the-mountain track leading to the West in the direction of Bell's Falls. One mile 35 chains above the hostel there is the junction with the round-the-mountain track leading to the East, to Stratford and Dawson Falls Hostels. A continuation also goes to the West, skirting under Humphries Castle, and joining the Bell's Falls track 43 chains from the lower junction. The summit track continues to the top of the ridge at 5300ft., and turns left for 100 yards to Tahurangi Hut at 5400ft., built against the First Staircase. From here the most used route to the summit passes over the Second Staircase (200 yds. above the first), the Third Staircase (200 yds. above the Second), and then up the scoria slopes to the West of Snow Valley until the ridge known as the Lizard is reached at about 7000ft. The Lizard is then followed to the Crater entrance, after which the crater has to be crossed to the bottom of the scoria slope below the summit rock (8260ft.).

An alternative route from Tahurangi Hut is to move towards the West from above the First Staircase on to a fairly well-defined track known as Khyber Pass,

which climbs gradually from above Humphries Castle until it reaches the bottom of the Lizard at about 6000 ft. From here the route is straight up the Lizard to the crater entrance.

In winter, the usual route from Tahu-rangi Hut is up Snow Valley (starting from the East of the Third Staircase) to the Lizard at 7000 ft., then up Crater Valley (West of the Lizard) to the Crater.

Times:—

North Mt. Egmont Hostel to Tahu-rangi Hut	1 hr. 15 min.
Tahurangi Hut to Summit	2 hr. 45 min.
Total	4 Hours

BLUNDELL TRACK (North Mt. Egmont to Eastern Round-the-Mountain track via Ngatoro Valley). Immediately to the East of the Old House a wide track goes down to the bottom of the Ngatoro gorge, where there is a foot bridge. From here the track climbs up to the ridge to the East of the Gorge and carries on up the ridge to Tahurangi Bluff at 4600 ft. It then skirts around the bottom of the bluffs towards the East and eventually emerges on the moss slopes on the West side of the Hen and Chickens Valley, about 200 yds. below the round-the-mountain track.

Time:— 1 hr. 30 min.

VERONICA OR (RAM) TRACK. To the west of the Old House, and slightly below it, a track enters the bush and follows the pipe line to the edge of a steep wooded cliff immediately above the ram in the Waiwakaiho Gorge. The distance is about half a mile. From the top of the cliff a steep but easy track goes down to the bottom of the gorge, while the main track continues up the mountain for nearly a mile, coming out on the main summit track a few yards below the trig at 3870ft.

Times:—

Hostel to Ram	20 minutes
Ram to Trig	45 minutes

NORTH MT. EGMONT TO DAWSON FALLS. From the junction one mile 35 chains above the hostel, the round-the-mountain track climbs gradually for four hundred yards until it reaches the Nissen Hut at 5100 ft. It then descends gradually for the rest of the distance. A few hundred yards past the Nissen Hut is the Hen and Chickens Valley (the East fork of the Maketawa), on the East side of which is the ridge on which are many large rocks known as the Hen and Chickens. After skirting the bottom of some vertical cliffs the track crosses the East fork of the Maketawa, and continues on below Warwick Castle (5372 ft.) and the Ngarara ridge to Manganui Hut (4300 ft.). From the Manganui Hut it enters the Manganui gorge, and then goes down to the Plateau, above the Stratford Hostel. From the Plateau the Round-the-mountain track forks in a Southerly direction past and above Jackson's Lookout (3714 ft.) to the Kapuni stream below Wilkie's Pools, before leading down to the Dawson Falls Hostel at 3070 ft.

Times:—

Nth. Mt. Egmont	to RTM track	1 m. 35 ch.	1 hour
RTM track to			
Manganui Hut	2 m. 4 ch.	1 hour	
Manganui Hut to			
Dawson Falls	2 m. 58 ch.	1 hour	
Total	6m. 17 ch.	3 hours	

Note—for the return journey one hour should be added to the time, because of the long uphill climb.

TRACKS FROM HOLLY HUT

POUAKAI RANGES:—From Holly Hut the round the mountain track goes ten chains to the East before it reaches the junction with the one going across the Swamp. The Swamp track is not well defined, but it leads in a NW direction to a crossing of the Swamp branch of the Stony (Hangatahua) River. A spur from the ranges comes down here close to the river on the Western end of the Swamp, and the track leads up this spur to a saddle on the top of the Ranges between the Hump and point 4387. The track is very much scoured out and progress is difficult, as the scrub has in many places grown over the top of the track to meet, forming a sort of tunnel. It is known as the Sewer.

Times:—

Holly Hut to river		40min.
River to Saddle	1hr. 30min.	
Total	2hr. 10min.	

BELL'S FALLS. From Holly Hut a good track leads in a Westerly direction. After 23 chains it comes to a junction

NORTH MT. EGMONT TO HOLLY HUT. From the track junction 77 chains above the hostel, the round the mountain track climbs gradually until it reaches the junction with the track leading up towards Humphries Castle after 43 chains. After another 10 chains the track reaches its highest point at 4440ft. and then starts a gradual descent which continues for the rest of the distance. Soon after the descent starts the track crosses a wide slip beneath the Dieffenbach Cliffs, and then reaches the bottom of the main branch of the Walwakaiho. It then passes a slip known as the Boomerang slip (from its shape), and enters the Kokowai Gorge, at the bottom of which can be seen deposits of Red Ochre. (Kokowai is the Maori name for red ochre). It passes beneath a big mass of outcrop rock known as the Cake and then skirts above the Swamp, which fills the flat between the mountain and the Pouakai Ranges. On the West side of the Swamp the track comes to the junction with the one which crosses the Swamp, and then crosses the Minarapa stream a few yards before coming to Holly Hut (3200ft.).

Times:—

Nth Egmont	to R.T.M.		
track		77ch.	40min.
Junction to			
Holly hut	4m. 3ch.	2hr.	

Total 5m. 2hr. 40min.

with a track leading to the left, to Kahui Hut. From the junction the track to Bell's Falls goes straight on, and then skirts to the right beneath the Dome (te Umu Taomanawa) at 3439ft., until it reaches Bell's Falls (2730 feet) one mile 10 chains from Holly Hut. The falls are 96ft. high, and are formed by the Swamp branch of the Stony River falling over a cliff between the Dome and a spur of the Pouakai Ranges.

Time—30 minutes.

HOLLY HUT TO KAHUI HUT:—From the junction 23 chains to the West of Holly Hut the track goes in a Southerly direction for 200 yards until it reaches a steep face of clay leading down to a small tributary of the mountain branch of the Stony River, 100ft. below. The track goes along this tributary for 100 yards until it reaches the mountain branch of the river, which gushes out of the gorge at its source only 300 yards above, below a prominent volcanic hill known as Hook Hill (3690ft.). The track continues around the mountain beneath

the rounded Skinner Hill (4300ft.), rising gradually all the time until it reaches at 3500ft. a wide tongue of moss two miles from the Stony River, at the Pyramid Stream. The track then descends gradually across the moss slopes for nearly a mile. It is ill defined, but has now been poled, so that it is easy to follow. At the Southern edge of the Moss Slopes the track enters the scrub again, and after crossing the dry bed of the Maero Stream, passes the junction with the Punihou track going down to the top of the Punihou Road. This is sometimes known as the Okato

track. After another mile the track reaches Kahui Hut (2680ft.).

Times:—

Holly Hut to Stony River	40 ch.	20 min.
Stony River to Moss	1 m. 70 ch.	1 hr.
Nth. edge of Moss to Kahui	1 m. 47 ch.	1 hr.
Total	3m. 77 ch.	2 hr. 20 min.

TRACKS FROM DAWSON FALLS HOSTEL (2960ft.)

SUMMIT.—From the Hostel clearing the summit track leads towards Fantham's Peak until it reaches Hooker Hut (3740ft.) in the scrub line, after one mile. It then carries on up through the scrub for half a mile passing the junction with the track leading to the right to the Kapuni Lodge (4800ft.), 200 yards towards the Kapuni Gorge. Above this junction the track climbs over steep tussock slopes and then passes the junction with the Lake Dive track, which goes to the left. The route from here lies over moss slopes to the Knoll (5500 ft.) and then up steep scoria slopes right to the Summit of Fantham's Peak (Panitahi), at 6438ft. Syme Hut is situated just below the rim of the crater on the Western side. From Syme Hut the route (no longer defined), goes down to Rangitoto Flat between Fantham's Peak and the main peak, and carries on up the scoria, reaching the crater to the west of Mackay Rocks. It crosses the crater and then goes up the final summit peak.

Time:—

Dawson Falls to Kapuni Hut, 1½ Miles	1hr. 15min.
Kapuni Hut to Fantham Peak (1 Mile)	1hr. 30min.
Fantham Peak to Summit	1hr. 30min.
Total	4hr. 15min.

LAKE DIVE.—From the junction with the summit track above the Kapuni Lodge, the Lake Dive track descends gradually as it goes round the moss slopes on the lower part of Fantham's Peak to the West. After a mile it turns abruptly to go straight down to Lake Dive (3000ft.), which it reaches after another mile of track usually overgrown.

Time:—

Dawson Falls to Junction	1 mile 50 ch	1½ hr.
Junction to turn off	1 mile	½ hr.

Turn off to Lake Dive	1 mile	½ hr.
Total	3m. 50ch.	2½ hr.

HASTIE'S HILL.—From Dawson Falls the route is first of all up the summit track for 20 chains, where the summit route turns right at a junction with the track leading to the West, to Hastie's Hill. After half a mile it reaches the hill at a height of 3267ft.

Time:—

Hostel to Junction	20 ch.	10 min.
Junction to Hastie's Hill	30 ch.	20 min.
Total	50 ch.	30 min.

JACKSON'S LOOK-OUT.—The round the mountain track goes from the top of the clearing at Dawson Falls and crosses the Kapuni River below Wilkie's Pools after half a mile. It climbs gradually towards the Plateau, and 1 mile 50 chains from the hostel it reaches the junction with the track to Jackson's Look-out. The track goes down the mountain for 200 yards and reaches Jackson's Look-out on the top of a hill at 3714ft.

Time:—

Dawson Falls to Wilkie's Pools	½ m.	15 min.
Wilkie's Pools to Junction	1 m.	10 ch.
Junction to Jackson's Look-out	10 ch.	30 min.
Total	1 m. 60 ch.	5 min.

SHORTER WALKS.—Leading from Dawson Falls Hostel there are a number of tracks leading to the Kapuni River both above and below Dawson Falls, and to the Kaupokonui River. The Ridge Track is the longest of these and provides an interesting round trip from the Dawson Falls-Stratford Plateau track. Small maps showing all these tracks are available at Dawson Falls.

TRACKS FROM STRATFORD MOUNTAIN HOUSE (2785ft.)

MANGANUI HUT.—The route lies first of all up the road to the Plateau at an altitude of 3720ft., two miles above the house. From the top of the Plateau the track goes up the mountain to the entrance to the Manganui Gorge. It follows first of all the southern edge of the gorge and then crosses the gorge after a few chains. It climbs the northern bank along the face of a steep cliff, and comes out just below the Manganui Hut (4300ft.).

Time:—

Plateau to hut (68 chains) 20 min.

SUMMIT.—From the Manganui Hut the route lies up past the lower ski grounds along the track which has been cleared of scrub, and then branches to the right just below the notice warning people not to go further without an experienced leader. From this junction the track continues up a small valley and then on to the upper ski-ing ground. After climbing a steep moss slope it reaches the ridge below the Policeman (a big outcrop of rocks on the ridge to the north of the ski ground at a height of 5500ft.). The route is to the right of the Policeman and eventually it crosses over the southern Maketawa Gorge to the East Ridge. This ridge is followed for several hundreds of feet. Some distance below the top of this ridge it is necessary to cross to the right, and to enter the crater immediately to the right of the summit of the ridge. (The Shark's Tooth.)

Time:—

Manganui Hut to Summit 4 hr.

HIGH LEVEL

ROUND-THE-MOUNTAIN ROUTE

There is, as has been described, a round-the-mountain track from Dawson Falls, past Manganui, the Nissen and Holly Huts to Kahui Hut. There is not, however, a track from Kahui Hut to Dawson Falls. There used to be one taking the following route:—Kahui Hut, Okahu Gorge, Skeet Slide, Oaonui Gorge, Brame's Falls, Bobs Ridge (at about 4500ft.), the top of the Lake Dive track, to the summit track above Dawson Falls. Skeet Slide is now not negotiable, and below Hughson's Ledge the first practicable route across the Okahu is half a mile below the level of Kahui Hut. From here it is possible to go to Dawson Falls through the bush, but there is no track. Although the track from Dawson Falls via the northern slopes to Kahui can be used for a round-the-mountain trip, the rest of the journey must be made by using the high level route from Hughson's Ledge to Fantham's Peak.

CURTIS FALLS.—The track to the Curtis Falls starts three chains above the hostel on the road leading to the Plateau. It branches to the right, and eventually enters the Manganui River Gorge. This gorge is followed up until the falls are reached at a height of 3200ft. The falls are 15ft. in height.

Distance:—

2 Miles. Time: 1hr 15min.

ENCHANTED WALK.—The track leads off to the south of the mountain house and climbs up a ridge, coming out on the Round-the-Mountain track a short distance from the Plateau on the Dawson Falls side.

Distance:—

2 miles 30 chains. Time: 2hr. 45min.

CURTIS RIDGE.—Ill-defined and in places overgrown track leads off upper part of Plateau, past site of old Curtis Hut, crosses small gully to left and emerges on to crest of Curtis Ridge. Priest's Fingers (rock outcrop) are passed to the left. Here scree slope leads down to source of Kapuni River and permits round trip down to Wilkie's Pools.

Time: Back to Plateau via round the mountain track, 3 hours.

Curtis Ridge can also be used for summit climb, linking up with usual southern route above Fantham's Peak.

Starting from Tahurangi Hut, the route is first to the Lizard via Khyber Pass, then up the Lizard to about 6500 ft. From here there is a gradual ascent to the top of the Saw, above the Cake. An alternative route to the Saw is via the round the mountain track and then up the main Waiwakaio Gorge. From the Saw there is a very steep descent of rock and scoria to the Minarapa Gorge, and a gradual rise on the other side of the gorge to the bottom of the Hammer Head on the Carrington Ridge. On the other side of this gorge a gradual descent over scoria leads to the Big Pyramid (4787ft.) Passing above the Big Pyramid and along beneath a long line of bluffs above the Kahui moss slopes, the route goes above Turehu Hill and into the Okahu Gorge below Hughson's Ledge (5200ft.). This is a tussock covered ledge on the south side of the gorge, leading up to a gap in the top of the bluffs on that side. A gradual climb from



Holly Hut (3200 feet) on the route between North Egmont and Bell's Falls and on the round the mountain track between Kahui Hut and North Egmont.

here eventually leads to Bobs Ridge above Bobs Bluff (6372ft.). If conditions are good it is possible to go from this point on a gradual descent crossing Skeet Ridge to the top of Fantham's Peak. Alternatively the route can lie down to the bottom of Bobs Bluff and then down the ledge to the Taungatara Gorge, and across to Fantham's Peak. If both of these routes are impracticable owing to icy conditions or frozen scoria, the only alternative is to follow Bobs Ridge down past Bobs Knob to a height of about 4500ft., to where the old track from Brame's Falls to Dawson Falls used to go. It is easy here to get off the ridge into the Taungatara Gorge. From the place where the Taungatara is entered it is necessary to keep fairly level until the Punehu Gorge is crossed. After that, a gradual descent will lead to the turn off down to Lake Dive. It is better not to descend too steeply, as an error on the high side will in any case lead to that part of the track to

Lake Dive which comes round from the Dawson Falls summit track.

From the top of Fantham's Peak it is necessary to climb slightly across the head of the Kapuni Gorge, and then to descend gradually to the Policeman above Warwick Castle until the round the mountain track is joined in the southern fork of the Maketawa Gorge.

This high level round-the-mountain route is best undertaken in the months from December to March. In December and January some of the deeper gorges still have a depth of snow sufficient to ease the crossings. After March, however, the scoria on the southern side of the mountain is very liable to be frozen, making conditions dangerous even for experienced climbers.

Time: In good conditions the trip will take at least 12 hours, but is not likely to take less than 18 hours. The record, using the round the mountain track where there is one, is about 8½ hours. However, climbers are not encouraged to break records.

TRACKS FROM KAHUI HUT

PUNIHO TRACK TO PUNIHO ROAD. From Kahui Hut the Round-the-mountain track goes North round the mountain until the junction with the Punihio track is reached after 1 mile. The Punihio track goes down the SW bank of the Maero Stream until the stream joins the Stony River. It then goes down the south bank of the Stony River until the reserve line is reached. From here there is no defined track, but a half left turn will lead across open country to the top of the Punihio Road after $\frac{1}{4}$ mile.

Time:—

Kahui to track junction	1 m.	30 min.
Junction to Reserve line	4 m. 40 ch.	2 hr.
Reserve line to Punihio Road	60 ch.	20 min.
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Total	6 m. 20 ch.	2 hr. 50 min.

KAHUI HUT TO KAHUI ROAD. From Kahui Hut, the track goes straight down the mountain, passing after 100 yds. the junction with the track going down to the bottom of the Okahu Gorge. After two miles it passes the junction with a track going to the left, which gradually descends, crosses the Okahu and the Oaonui Gorges to come out at the top of the Ihala Road. The Kahui track from the junction continues down to the reserve line, half a mile above the top of the Kahui Road.

Time:—

Kahui Hut to top of road	4 m. 30 ch.	2 hrs.
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KAHUI HUT TO BOTTOM OF OKAHU GORGE.—From the junction 100 yards below the hut, the track winds down to a look-out immediately above the deep gorge. From here it goes down via Jacob's Ladder (the remains of a fixed wooden ladder), to a steep clay slope and then down to the river. There is no defined track from here, but a trip can be made up the gorge to a shelf a mile above, and level with Skeet's slide on the southern side of the gorge.

SUMMIT.—From Kahui Hut the track goes straight up through the bush and scrub to the Black Rock (one mile). From here the route, which is not de-

fined, lies up the moss slopes to the south of Turehu Hill, which is 40 chains above the Black Rock. It enters the Okahu gorge at about 5000ft., approximately level with the top of Hughson's Ledge, which is on the south side of the gorge. In snow conditions the gorge can be followed up to the crater entrance. If there is no snow, however, it is better, instead of entering the gorge, to follow the ridge to the north all the way. In each case the entrance to the crater is at the top of the Okahu Gorge, between the summit peak and the top of Bobs ridge.

Time:—

Kahui to Black Rock	45 min.
Black rock to level with Hughson's Ledge	1hr.
This level to summit	3hr.
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Total	4hr. 45min.

TRACK TO BRAME'S FALLS

From the top of the Ihala Road above Opunake, the route is firstly to go a few hundred yards to the reserve line, and then along the edge of the bush in a southerly direction until the Waiaua River is reached after two hundred yards. The track starts immediately inside the boundary fence at an altitude of about 1000 feet and goes along the northern bank of the Waiaua for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It then crosses the Waiaua and goes up the southern bank for two miles until the falls are reached at 3015ft. The track is ill defined and very much overgrown with supplejack, necessitating the use of a small slasher or machet. In some cases the track becomes a series of parallel ones. But although the track itself is hard to follow, the route can be followed easily by keeping the noise of the river constantly in the right or the left ear as the case might be. The exact place to cross the river is not important, although the best place is just above a sizable tributary with steep banks coming in from the north-west at about 2000ft. At this place the southern bank is more easy to negotiate and without steep cliffs.

Time:—

5 miles	6 hours.
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Kapuni Lodge (4800 feet), the new hut of the Mt. Egmont Alpine Club on the slopes of Fantham's Peak. A portable ski tow is operated from the hut. The left-hand slope of the main peak leads down to Fantham's Peak. East Ridge forms the right-hand slope, ending in Shark's Tooth.

TRACKS ON POUAKAI RANGES

MANGOREI ROAD.—From the top of Mangorei Road a wide track, which used to carry a tram line, leads up for two miles to a hut known as Wood Hut (Privately owned). From here a wide track used for hauling out logs continues up the ranges and after a short distance turns west along the Reserve line. The track to the top of the Ranges leads off to the left at right angles and after about two miles reaches the junction with the Plymouth Road track. It continues on and reaches Grayling's Clearing on a spur just before the scrub line is reached. At the top of the clearing there is a junction with a track which, after 50 yards, comes to the Mangorei Hut at 3300 ft. From the junction, the track

goes straight up the ridge for about one hundred yards, and then turns to the left around the side of a low peak, along a saddle, and then arrives at the top of the ranges near the Hump (4255 ft.).

Time:—Mangorei Road

to Wood Hut 40 mins.

Wood hut to top of

ranges 3 hrs.

Total 3 hrs. 40 mins.

TOP OF MANGOREI TRACK TO POINT 3995.—From the top of the track the route (undefined) leads across the tussock plateau to the East for about one mile, passing two small lakes on the way. Point 3995 is a prominent feature at the end of the Plateau, and offers no

climbing difficulties. To the south (towards Mt. Egmont) lies a ridge on which are points 4000 and 3696 (Henry Peak). The ridge is covered in scrub and there is no track.

Time:—Top of Mangorei track to point 3995 (1 mile) $\frac{1}{2}$ hr.

TOP OF MANGOREI TRACK TO POUAKAI (Trig., 4590ft.).—The track goes to the west around the bottom of the Hump on the north side. After 400 yards it passes the junction of the track going down to the swamp, and then climbs to Point 4387. From here there is no defined track, but the route is in a westerly direction for about one mile to the trig. Pouakai. This route should not be undertaken in misty weather.

Time:—To pt. 4590 $\frac{1}{2}$ hr.
Pte. 4590 to trig. Pouakai 1 hr.

Total $\underline{\quad \quad \quad}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ hr.

PLYMOUTH ROAD TRACK.—At the top of the Plymouth Road the track leads up a grass ridge to the bush, and continues a short way to a fork. The right fork leads to the Kiri stream. The left fork leads up a wide track to a small clearing containing exotic pines (Lawsoniana) and then after about half a mile to the Reserve Line (a clearing several feet wide going round this part of the perimeter of the Park). After another half mile the track joins the Mangorei road track. The Plymouth Road track is the better route to use to the top of the Pouakai Ranges.

Time:—Plymouth Road to Mangorei track 2 hrs.
Mangorei junction to top of ranges $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

Total $\underline{\quad \quad \quad}$ $\frac{3}{2}$ hrs.

DOVER ROAD TRACK.—From the junction of the Dover and the Carrington roads (1424ft.), the track goes up a ridge through heavy bush, and after a mile, crosses the reserve line. It con-

tinues up the ridge and after leading over several rock outcrops near the top, comes to the Trig. Pouakai.

Time:—Dover Road to Trig Pouakai $\underline{\quad \quad \quad}$ $\frac{2}{3}$ hrs.

MAUDE ROAD TRACK.—From the top of the Maude Road the route is to follow up the grass spur to the perimeter of the park. The track commences where the grass spur reaches the bush at the perimeter, and has been recently cut to within half a mile of Point 3995. One and a half miles in from the perimeter another cut track branches off to the left to the Mangakotukutuku Falls, 200 yards from the junction. On the main track, quarter of a mile above the fork, are the remains of an old Maori habitation. Two ovens have been unearthed. The track will shortly be completely re-cut to Point 3995, completing an alternative route to the Plateau at the top of the ranges.

TRACKS ON THE KAITAKE RANGES

The highest point is trig Patua, 2240ft. Most of the tracks on the Kaitake ranges are overgrown. It is expected that they will be re-cut in the near future, but until that is done, nothing much can be written about them. However, the main track to the summit (Davies Track) commences just above McAlpine's mill on the Surrey Hill road. It eventually leads out to the Blackley farm at the head of the Weld Road. This track is not recommended to the novice as a number of subsidiary tracks run off at intervals and could cause trouble. Alternative routes to the summit are those following up the spur at the head of the Wairau road, the Sefton ridge above the old Radar site, and any of the spurs accessible from the main road between the Wairau and the Weld roads. It is advisable to keep to the seaward side of the ranges and to travel downhill if trouble is encountered.

HUTS AND HOSTELS

SOUTHERN ASPECT

DAWSON FALLS HOSTEL (2960ft.) under control of South Committee of Egmont Park Board. Excellent accommodation and full board. Tariff 30/- per day. Hot and cold running water in bedrooms. Afternoon tea and casual refreshments served in cafeteria. Equipment for hire. Telephone "Dawson Falls" toll station. Lessees, Mr. and Mrs. D. De Castro.

Dawson Falls can be reached from Stratford railway station by taxi, a distance of 14 miles. Distance from Hawera 27 miles.

ROBSON LODGE CAMPHOUSE (at same altitude) under control Dawson Falls lessee. Thirty-two bunks, shower baths. Fee per night, 5/- (Alpine club members 4/-).

COTTAGE (at same altitude) under control of Dawson Falls lessee. Sixteen bunks with shower bath. Fee per night 5/- (Alpine club members 4/-).

HOOKER HUT (3740ft.) at Hooker ski run and on track to summit. Used for storage of Mt. Egmont Alpine Club equipment.



Stratford Mountain House (2785 feet altitude), nine miles by motor road from Stratford. In this midsummer view the east face of Egmont is seen in the background. Full board or camp accommodation is available.

KAPUNI LODGE (4800ft.) on slopes Fantham's Peak. A modern well-appointed hut with 18 bunks erected and controlled by the Mt. Egmont Alpine Club. Linked by telephone with Dawson Falls Hostel and Syme Hut.

SYME HUT (6400 feet) on Fantham's Peak, the highest hut on Egmont. Has nine bunks. This hut is under snow in midwinter. Is linked by telephone with Kapuni Lodge and Dawson Falls Hostel.

EASTERN ASPECT

STRATFORD MOUNTAIN HOUSE (2785ft.) controlled by East Committee of Egmont Park Board. Fifty-six beds and bunks. Equipment for hire. Meals and afternoon tea can be served. Fees for full board £1 per day (blankets only), 22/6 per day (linen supplied). Managers, Mr. and Mrs. J. Hennessy. Telephone "Stratford Mountain House" toll station.

Stratford Mountain House is 9 miles from Stratford and can be reached by taxi.

MANGANUI HUT (4300ft.) headquarters of the Stratford Mountain Club at the Manganui ski field. Nine bunks. Linked by telephone with Stratford Mountain House.

NORTHERN ASPECT

NORTH EG蒙T HOSTEL (3140ft.) controlled by North Committee of Egmont Park Board. Motel accommodation with single and double rooms or full board if preferred (30/6 per day). community kitchen. Motel accommodation 15/- per night plus 2/6 cleaning fee for period of stay. Morning and afternoon teas and light luncheons available. Lessees, Mr. and Mrs. R. Walker. Telephone "North Mount Egmont" toll station.

North Egmont can be reached by taxi from Inglewood or New Plymouth. Bus service from New Plymouth if sufficient inducement. Distance 19 miles.

OLD MOUNTAIN HOUSE (at same altitude) under control of North Egmont lessees. Thirty-two bunks with shower baths. Fee per night 4/- (Alpine club members 3/6). Extra for blankets and hot showers.

NISSEN HUT (5100ft.), war memorial hut of Taranaki Alpine Club. Close to Hen and Chickens on round the mountain track from North Egmont to Managanui ski fields. Linked by phone with North Egmont Hostel and Tahurangi Hut.

TAHURANGI HUT (5400ft.) close to route to summit. Headquarters of Tara-

naki Alpine Club. Ten bunks. Linked by telephone with Nissen Hut and North Egmont Hostel.

HOLLY HUT (3200ft.) under control of Egmont Park Board. Four bunks. On Bell's Falls track half an hour from falls.

WESTERN ASPECT

KAHUI HUT (2680ft.) Can be reached by tracks via Kahui or Puniho Roads. Reconstructed and improved by the Kahui Alpine Club, in 1955.

POUAKAI RANGES

MANGOREI HUT (3300ft.) also known as Pouakai Hut. Is close to route from Mangorei Road to top of ranges.

SOME RECORDS

(by A. B. SCANLAN)

The fastest time for a summit climb and return was set by G. H. Herbert on February 25, 1894, when he reached the summit from the North Egmont House and returned to that point in a total time of 1 hour, 50 minutes, 4 seconds. The climb was carefully checked and there is no doubt about its authenticity. In his reminiscences in 1929 Harry Peters, the well-known North Egmont guide, stated that he was one of three time-keepers checking the climb and that Herbert brought back articles that had been placed on the summit and left in turn other articles he had carried up.

Mr. Peters also recalled that the slowest time on record was made by a former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Sir William Fox who at the age of 72 took 18 hours to climb from the site of the North Egmont Hostel and return. This was on February 27, 1890, and the tent site was reached at midnight only after a relief party had met Sir William's party and sustained them with food and hot drinks.

The fastest ascent, without taking into account the time for the return, was claimed by Mr. John Lehrke who at the age of 28 on February 12, 1910, climbed from the Old House at North Egmont to the summit in 1 hour 24 minutes. He reached the Bell's Falls track turn-off in 13 minutes and the Stratford track turn-off in 23 minutes. He left North Egmont at 6.57 a.m. and reached the summit at 8.21. There is no record of the time taken by Mr. Herbert for his ascent in 1894, but it is believed that he must have made the ascent in shorter time than Mr. Lehrke.

A physical feat of a different kind was accomplished by Messrs. W. P. Griffith, F. H. Clapham and W. G. Harding on November 17, 1907. They left New

Plymouth on foot at 3 a.m., reached the mountain house at 7.30 a.m., left for the summit at 10 a.m., found they could not get around the lip of the crater because of ice, and returned to the mountain house at 4.30 p.m. They left for New Plymouth at 6.15 p.m. and arrived at 10.45 p.m. They had walked a total distance of 44 miles and climbed to approximately 8000 feet.

The same three on another occasion walked all the way from New Plymouth to North Egmont and thence to Bell's Falls and returned on foot to New Plymouth in one day, a distance of over 53 miles and an altitude climb to 4440 feet. Harding and Griffith once tramped from North Egmont to Dawson Falls Hostel in 1 hour 20 minutes. Spurred on by a wager of new hats from the guide at Dawsons (who declared they would not break 2 hours 20 minutes against wind and sleet) they did the return trip in 1 hour 40 minutes.

Triple traverses carried out in one day have been attempted when the days are long. Recognition of these traverses required that the climbs should be made from the hostels and not from intermediate points such as huts or the Stratford Plateau.

On December 28, 1935, G. F. J. Bourke and R. Griffiths left Dawson Falls Hostel for the summit, descended to the Stratford Mountain House, climbed again to the summit, descended the western slopes to Kahui Hut, climbed again to the summit and returned to Dawson Falls by their original route. The climbs took 17 hours from Dawson Falls back to Syme Hut on the last descent. A two-hour rest was taken at the hut and the pair returned to the hostel at 9 p.m. The total vertical height climbed in the one day was 16,355 feet.



North Egmont Hostel (3140 feet altitude) on the northern slopes 19 miles by motor road from New Plymouth. The hostel provides full board or motel accommodation.

THE ALPINE CLUBS

ALTHOUGH climbing on Egmont reaches back 80 years the alpine club movement dates from 1928-1930. There are four clubs which control six huts used by climbers or skiers. The clubs hold instructional courses, arrange lectures and foster the social side as well as encouraging activity on the mountain.

THE MT. EG蒙T ALPINE CLUB (headquarters at Hawera) was formed in 1928 on a provincial basis, but later with the formation of clubs at Stratford and New Plymouth its activities became centred on Dawson Falls and the south side of the mountain. The initial interest in climbing and tramping was soon modified when the club cut a ski-run above the Stratford Plateau and later opened up the Manganui skiing area. In 1933 a ski-track was prepared on the lower slopes of Fantham's Peak and the Hooker Hut for day shelter was erected, but in the meantime a more ambitious building scheme had resulted in the building in 1930, of Syme Hut, at an altitude of 6400 feet on the summit of Fantham's Peak. Apart from being well sited for climbing and rescue work, this hut has become a popular base for late spring skiing.

In 1939 the club built its own club-room and ski store at Dawson Falls and in 1952 completed Kapuni Lodge at 4800

feet on the slopes of Fantham's Peak. This well appointed hut has electricity and hot showers. In 1953 the club installed a ski-tow in the vicinity of Kapuni Lodge. This is portable and has a length of 900 feet. In 1954 Kapuni was connected by telephone with Dawson Falls and in 1955 this was extended to give a link with Syme Hut.

THE STRATFORD MOUNTAIN CLUB (headquarters at Stratford) was formed in 1929, and in 1931 Manganui Hut, at an altitude of 4300 feet and situated between the Manganui and Ngarara Gorges, was completed. The site proved ideal when skiing became popular. The first ski tow of 400 yards was erected in 1947 and the second of 780 yards was in operation for the winter of 1952. This latter tow was made possible largely through an anonymous gift by a club member of £500. Together the two tows give an altitude lift of 1300ft. to the Policeman at a height of 5500 feet.



Dawson Falls Hostel (2960 feet altitude), 27 miles by motor road from Hawera and 14 miles from Stratford. Full board is available at this hostel on the south-east slopes of the mountain.

The club is the foremost ski club on Egmont, but climbing has also been fostered. A junior section has been formed at St. Mary's Diocesan School.

Numerous additions have been made to Manganui Hut which is linked by telephone with the Stratford Mountain House.

THE TARANAKI ALPINE CLUB (headquarters at New Plymouth) was formed in 1930. The club's first hut, Tahurangi Hut, was completed in 1935 on the northern slopes at a height of 5400 feet. Three years later two more rooms were added and in 1939 a telephone was installed between the hut and North Egmont Hostel.

After the Second World War it was decided to build a second hut near the Hen and Chickens, about 300 feet below Tahurangi Hut, as a memorial to club members who had lost their lives in the war. This hut, after being severely damaged by a gale while under construction,

was externally completed in 1953. It is popularly known as the Nissen Hut.

By means of open invitation climbs, organised by members, the club took more than 1000 persons to the top of the mountain between the Second World War and 1952. A branch of the club, the High School Mountain Club, fostered climbing at the Boys' High School. The Nurses' Tramping Club has also been sponsored and assisted.

KAHUI ALPINE CLUB (headquarters at Rahotu) was formed in July, 1954, with the object of encouraging activities on the western slopes based on Kahui Hut. This hut was reconstructed and improved during 1955.

NEW ZEALAND ALPINE CLUB. The Taranaki section of this club was formed in March, 1953. Periodic meetings followed by climbs are held at the Dawson Falls, Stratford and North Egmont hostels.

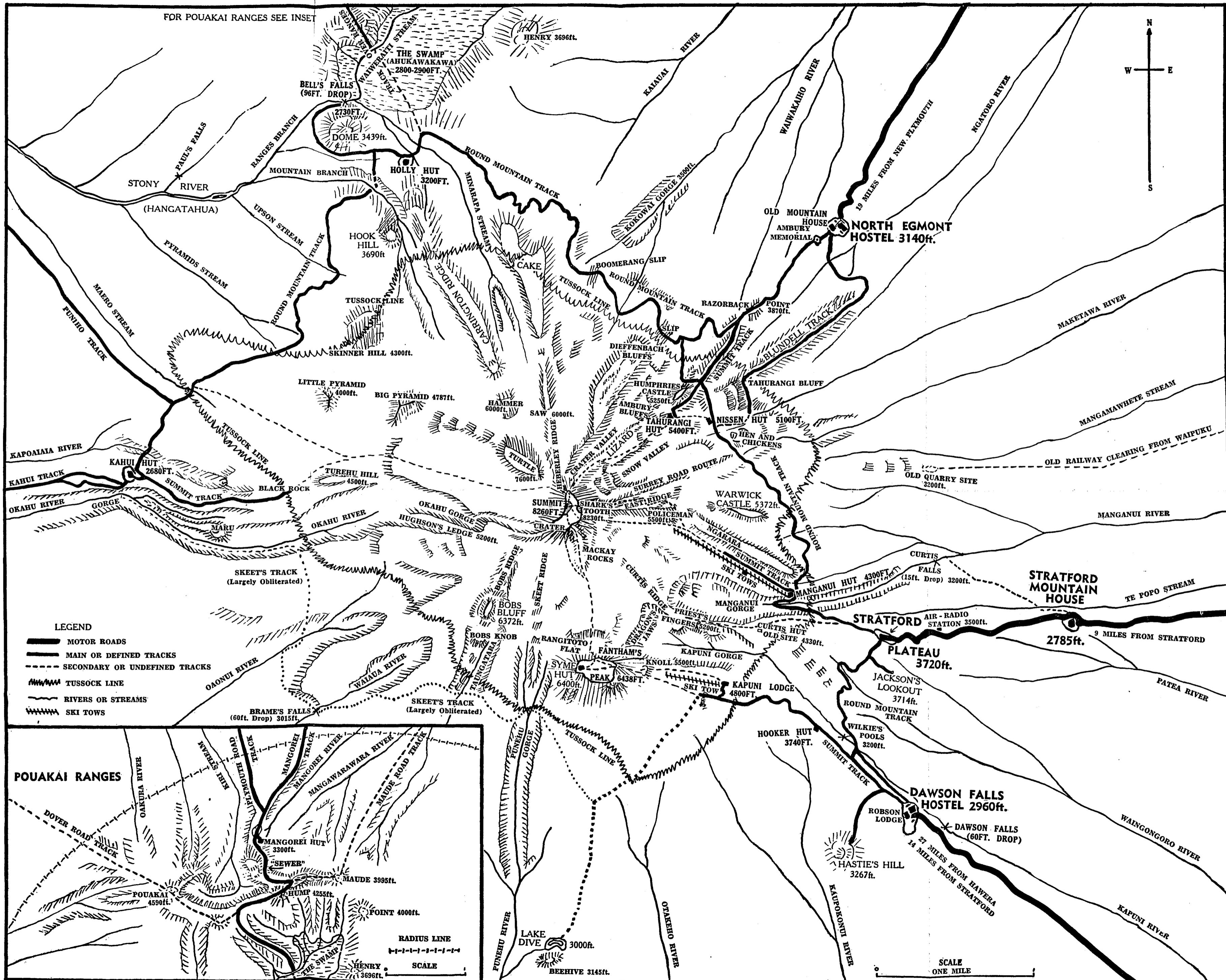
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THE APPROACHES TO MT. EGMONT



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FOR POUAKAI RANGES SEE INSET





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