

FROM OMEO TO MOUNT KOSCIUSKO AND BACK

by Mitta Brumley,
(LARRY)

Friday 22nd Dec.
1905.

Have just obtained fathers consent to go to Mount Kosciusko with Bindi people, Stoakley and Larry. I am looking forward to a glorious time. We are taking with us two tents, each a blanket and overcoat, and no other except what we stand in. We are all riding astride so there will be no horses with sore backs. In the way of eatables we are taking 15 large loaves of bread, 1 ham, 5 german sausages, a loin of mutton, 8 1lb tins of jam, 5 lbs butter, 2 fowls ready for eating, a Xmas cake and pudding, 1 lb tea, 2 lb sugar, a little salt, a couple of boxes of figs. Cutlery, 2 knives, 1 spoon, 3 tin plates and each of us will carry our own mug on our saddle, and a bill (I nearly forgot it) the most important thing for those who take tea.

Saturday Dec, 23.
1905

Larry and I left about eleven so that we could get his pony shod at Benambra. The Blacksmith did not take as long as usual so we got to Omeo Station long before the others, where we were all to meet. The rest of the party came along about 4p.m. all riding, except Stoakley, who was driving with all the luggage. We pulled up here to have tea and then go on in the cool of the evening having 8 more miles to ride before pitching camp for the night. Started again about 6p.m. Having a bit of climbing to do we could not make much pace, but reached what is called the upper swamps where we could get a good paddock for our horses. About $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8, having past Mount Leinster a mile or so back on our right, and McFarlane's lookout on our left. The tents were pitched on a nice piece of level ground a short distance from the pretty little Nevango Creek which rises at Mount Leinster, and only has a short course to the Morass. While the boys were hobbling the horses and securing them for the night, we girls unpacked the buggy, lit the fire and pitched our tents, never thought it was so hard to cut pegs with a blunt axe and nothing but a candle wavering in the night air to light the surroundings. It now being about 9,30pm. we got supper while the boys pitched their tents. They pitched it on the buggy pole, putting the opening at the wrong end, and had to crawl the whole length of the buggy to get in. None of us slept well, not having ridden far enough to be tired and we were not used to so much

nday Dec 24.
05.

the full assurance that we could get to Grogin that evening and that Dirmat Creek was only 3 or 4 miles further on. Our late friends must have thought us a lot of softies. From Hope Creek we started on an upgrade with a clear blazed track. So far there has been no pretty scenery worth mentioning, and we had been expecting it and felt a bit disappointed. Between Millar and Hope Creeks we could get glimpses of Mount Murphy in the distance, where the Wolfram country lies. It was to this spot a few months ago that a small rush from Omeo was made, but nothing seems to have come of it. The country was so rough, making it so hard to get the stone away to a civilized part of the country. Some of the men at the present day are seeking for gold and hope to open it up as a Gold field in the near future. As we climbed Mount Hope we could see thick smoke in front of us, but did not dream that it was very near, but a little further on we had to plunge through about two hundred yards of burning grass and timber as it swept across the track, we then had it burning on either side for some time. It was hot. After reaching the summit of Mount Hope we gradually dropped again into Dirmat Creek, only to rise again higher than before, and then again another big fall onto the comparatively low country around about Grogin. Grogin being as low as the Omeo plains although only being sixteen miles from the top of Kosciusko. Another hour and we were at the Murrumbidgee River rather, as that part is called, "The INDI". We crossed over as we could see a good paddock for the horses on the other side and we were in N.S.W. for the first time in my life. It was just 7.30pm. when we reached the river and we had done forty miles in 11½ hours counting the 1½ hours we rested for dinner. We pitched our tents on a little where the old Grogin homestead used to stand, only a few old trees mark the spot now. While some of us were doing the tents the rest were washing down the horses backs (although none of them were in any way sore) and hobbling and letting them go to grass. Then when all our camp arranged and our tea laid out, we went to the river to freshen ourselves up, and it was just delightful after all the dust and heat of the day. We had tea somewhere about 10pm. and had a good laugh at our Grogin Creek friends who thought we could never do Grogin in the day.

Sunday Dec 24.
1905.

We rose at 4am. a glorious morning, a pity one does not get up more often to see and feel the glory of it. Soon got breakfast and we were ready to start before seven, but waited until 8 to see if Mr. Pitt would come. He did not so we went on still taking the buggy. We simply crawled along for about 10 miles, hoping Mr. Pitt would come along, but he made no appearance and we were all feeling very bitter against him for making us lose so much time, but most fortunately for us the delay just saw us into the arms, so to speak, of three friends who treated and helped us most generously. We were just on the bank of Millar Creek when we met them, and they advised us not to take the buggy and further, but to get all the things onto the pack horses and they would lend a hand. Which meant that they would do it all for us, we discovered. We had two pack horses, one for the tents and blankets and other for the provisions. The tents and blankets had only to be strapped on to the horses without a saddle. That was soon done, but when they came to the other load they shook their heads at our pack-saddle and told us our bread would all be crumbs if we used it and that we would never keep our things on. We do not know whether our faces expressed our feelings, but they straight way said they would lend us their pack-saddle and they would take ours as they only had a short distance to go. How relieved we all felt as we saw our pack slowly but evenly being balanced on the back of the horse and knew that it would not move until it was taken off, so well was it packed. While the men were finishing the packs, we girls lit a fire and boiled the billy and had lunch ready by the time they were finished, but we were very doleful as they said we could not possibly reach Grogan, the place we had made up our minds to camp at that night. But that said, it would be just a nice ride for us to go far as Winnat Creek. They did not think that we could possibly manage to go any further. And when a little later they were bidding us good-bye they wished us every success, but we were sure they thought we would never come back safe and sound. Finding the track good and fairly level we made the pace for about 5 miles winding in and out of gullies and crossing many small creeks, and then we saw a lovely little flat of very green grass, and at the far end we saw a little hut, and we guessed we must be at Bucanbar. Bucanbar it was, for we met the owner of the hut, and as he told us the track for the next mile or so was not very clear, and offered to show us that way, we were only too glad to accept his escort. He left at the foot of Mount Hope on the lovely little clear stream called after the Mount, and with

Christmas day. We decided that we should rest the horses all Christmas day
Dec. 25th. and ourselves, so we did not move, from our beds until
1905. 8:15am. having slept very much better than we did the first
night, although our tents were right over an ant track and
they started to walk backwards and forwards over us from
the time it was day break, but as long as we did not try
to shoo them off they would not bite. We had a dip in the
river, then our breakfast; after that meal, we took off
our boots and stockings and went up to our knees in the
river and washed our stockings and handkerchiefs and our
towels, and then hung them on the bushes to dry. Loafed
along the riverbank for the rest of the morning watching the
boys fish. They did not succeed in catching anything, but
saw two bream and hundreds of tiny fish and I saw a small
crab. Christmas Dinner. The most enjoyable dinner we had
had, for we did not know how long, and we came to the
conclusion that why it was so, was because we did not bother
our heads about the cooking; only had to sit down and eat it.
1st. course-fowl and ham. 2nd. course-Christmas pudding with
all the different lucky prizes in it. Stoakley got the ring.
Mrs. Jones the thimble, Laura a threepence, Mab, Larry and
Clara the same. Nell and I did not get anything. Desert-
figs; and the glorious part of it all was that there were no
dishes to wash when we had finished. Another loaf for us
girls as the boys want to find the man who is to be our guide
for the Mount tomorrow. He at what is known as "Whiteheads"
outstation hut. He (the man I mean) came back to tea with
boys and told us a great deal about the place and that he
would be able to tell us the names of hills and places going
up to the Mount on the morrow, as he lived at Grogin for
22 years, and knows every inch of the country. He told us
it would take the whole day to do the Mount so we decided
to start at 6am. the next morning. When he was leaving he
hoped we children would be able to stand the ride. He
evidently thought because we had our hair in pig-tails and
wore mushroom hats that we were mere children. Had quite
a jolly evening. Made Stoakley smoke to keep some of the
insects off, and the rest of us talked and sang. We rose
at 4.30am. and got away by 6am. We left our camp just as it
was, only taking enough food for one meal with us. Our
Boxing Day. guide (Mr. Reilly) met us before we left camp. We started
Dec. 26th. off in quite the opposite direction to the Mount, but our
1905. guide knew what he was about, for after we had done some
climbing we turned again and found we were on a high ridge
known as Leathesvalue ridge, having been named after one
of the first men to settled there.

Going steadily to the north as we were then, we could see Mount Pilot or Forest Hills where the Murray River rises. The Cobra's, The Three Knobs, and the entrance of the valley between the two last~~y~~ named that the Menaro track is blazed through on our right hand, and to our left we could see the Murray River or the "Indi" as it is called at it's head, Grogin and Mount Wallace. Now back to our immediate surroundings. We were on what is as "Little Mick" a very steep hill like the side off~~y~~ a house which we had to go down, at the foot of it ran a little sparkling stream which is known as Leathervalue Creek, and another hill going straight up on the other side. It could be ridden down for our guide did so, but we preferred to walk or slide, I should say as it was just a case of striking in your heels and going, with your horse coming after in the same way. This was the only bad bit of the whole journey. After crossing Leathervalue Creek, we started to climb, nothing very steep, but always on the grade, passing over many nameless ranges but nevertheless lovely as spring had just cast her glorious mantle over them. "Such flowers", Bill Buttons as big as half crowns, orchids, violets, and many more kinds to numerous to mention. But as we moved along the track we gradually left spring behind and jumped back to Winter for on the "little Bogongs" only snow grass and stunted trees and many rocks could be seen. We were still five miles from the top of Mount Kosciusko, but we first caught a glimpse of "Feathertop" and the "Bogongs" looking most majestic with their snow caps towering far away above the other hills. As we proceeded the trees gradually grew more and more stunted until they were mere bushes and then they disappeared all together leaving nothing but snow grass and some lovely ~~last~~ large white daisies that seemed to relish the cold and very damp soil, as they grew all the way to the top. On and on we went expecting we knew not what would come next, as we were crossing and recrossing large patches of snow by this time and still going up, but to our surprise when we came over a rise and saw a lake right on the side of the mountain rolling and looking like the ocean. Oh, how can I describe it and do it justice,!! can you imagine a lake about three acres large, set right into the side of a mountain, then imagine 300 feet upright wall of glittering snow which nature had been sculpturing and moulding to her perfect taste, then back to the lake again where you see it first framing white where the waves break on the shore, then all the grandest shades of blue first, then green, then the two mixed together and the middle a

dark bold green with a blue sheen, and the whole a
marvellous glorious sight above of moving water. From
the north end of the lake we were only quarter of a mile
from the mountain top, it being quite chilly although the
sun was shining. We rode right to the top not having to
walk at all, although we had started out quite prepared to
have to do so. The Observatory, a little hut with a look-
out surrounded on three sides with walls of stones was the
only sight of habitation with the exception of the cabin a
few yards away on which we all carved our initials and the
date of our visit, we also carved our names in full on the
side of the hut. By the time we had our dinner which we were
very ready for. We boiled snow down to make the tea and our
fire was an old piece of case the last bit of loose wood
anywhere to be found. We had dinner, ham and sandwiches,
bread butter and jam, the rest of the Christmas pudding
(I got threepence out of it) and for desert, figs. We did
have appetites. Nothing like a very sharp cold wind for it.
The view from here was just magnificent being able to see
for miles in all directions. Looking toward the south in
the far distance could be seen Feathertop standing out well
its snow white cap and all the country that we had a few days
previously journeyed across. Looking west could be seen
the valley of the Indi River with tiers and tiers of mountains
rising away in the background. Looking to the north and the
north west we could see the hill where the snowy River rises
and its valley heading away towards the "Indi" and the east
could be seen the districts of Cooma, Delegate and the
surrounding country for miles and miles. But the most
notable was (a little more to the south east) Mount Pilot,
the Cobra Ranges and the Knobs through which the road to
Monaro runs. We came down the same way as we went up but
loitered on the lower mountains to pick wild flowers of which
there was a lovely variety. We reached camp at 6.30pm.
and hot weather, how we did wish for some of the snow we
had left behind. Sat round and talked for all hours that

day 27th night. 4
305. Rose at 4.am. boiled the billy and pulled down the
tents while the boys got the horses. Had our last meal in
N.S.W. for that trip. Loaded our horses and left Grogin,
N.S.W. at 7am. Had a little excitement when we had gone
about a mile, by one of the packs falling loose and some of
the stuff came right away, the rest fell underneath and the
horse kicked until he got it all off. Oh, to have seen our
billy, we thought it would never hold water again. Then the
horse took to his heels and went, but we managed after a
bit of galloping to head him off and catch him. Then we all
went back to pick up the fragments and get loaded again, and

this time we really got away with no more accidents, not stopping again until we reached Hope Creek. Having covered about 19 miles all on the uphill grade. We rested for two hours there, taking the saddles off the horses and letting them have a roll while we had our dinner, and the mosquitoes had their dinner off us, and they were large ones too. Our next halt was to pick up our buggy which we did about 4.30pm. We also waited to have afternoon tea. From there we had 18 miles to go before reaching our camp for the night, so there was not much time to loose as we had to do the first ten miles fairly slowly on account of the buggy, and when about 3 miles from camp we lost a horse. One of the girls was in the trap and her horse was just running along. By some chance it took a side track and we did not notice it until we had ridden some distance past, we then went back but could find no trace of him on the road or in the bush anywhere, and at last had to give the search up, with the hope that the horse would turn up at the camp alright.

The delay made us very late being 9.30pm. about before we reached our camping ground. Again we girls pitched the tents and got the tea, and then it was past midnight before we got to bed and still the horse was missing.

Thursday 28th. We did not have a very long night as we were up again at Dec. 1905. 4.00am., as Stoakley had to be in at the Bank at 10.am, and we still had about 23 miles to do.

Before starting we all had to look for the missing horse, and found him with the saddle as well as could be just within call of where we camped. We all rode together for about 10miles then we separated. Stoakley going to Omeo, Margetts to "Bindi", and Larry and I home.

<u>=Distance</u>	<u>174 miles.</u>	<u>Distance we did in a day</u>	<u>miles</u>
		First day Omeo to Leinster	31
		Second day Leinster to Grogan	40
		Third day, did nothing	
		Fourth day Grogan to top of Kosciusko & back-	32
		Fifth day Grogan to Omeo Station	48
		Sixth day Omeo Station to Omeo	23

Copy obtained from John Whitehead, President Upper Murray Valley Historical Society.

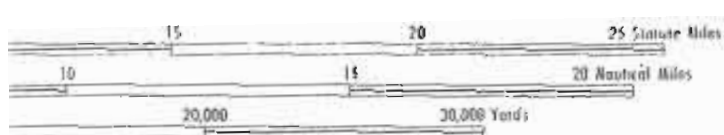
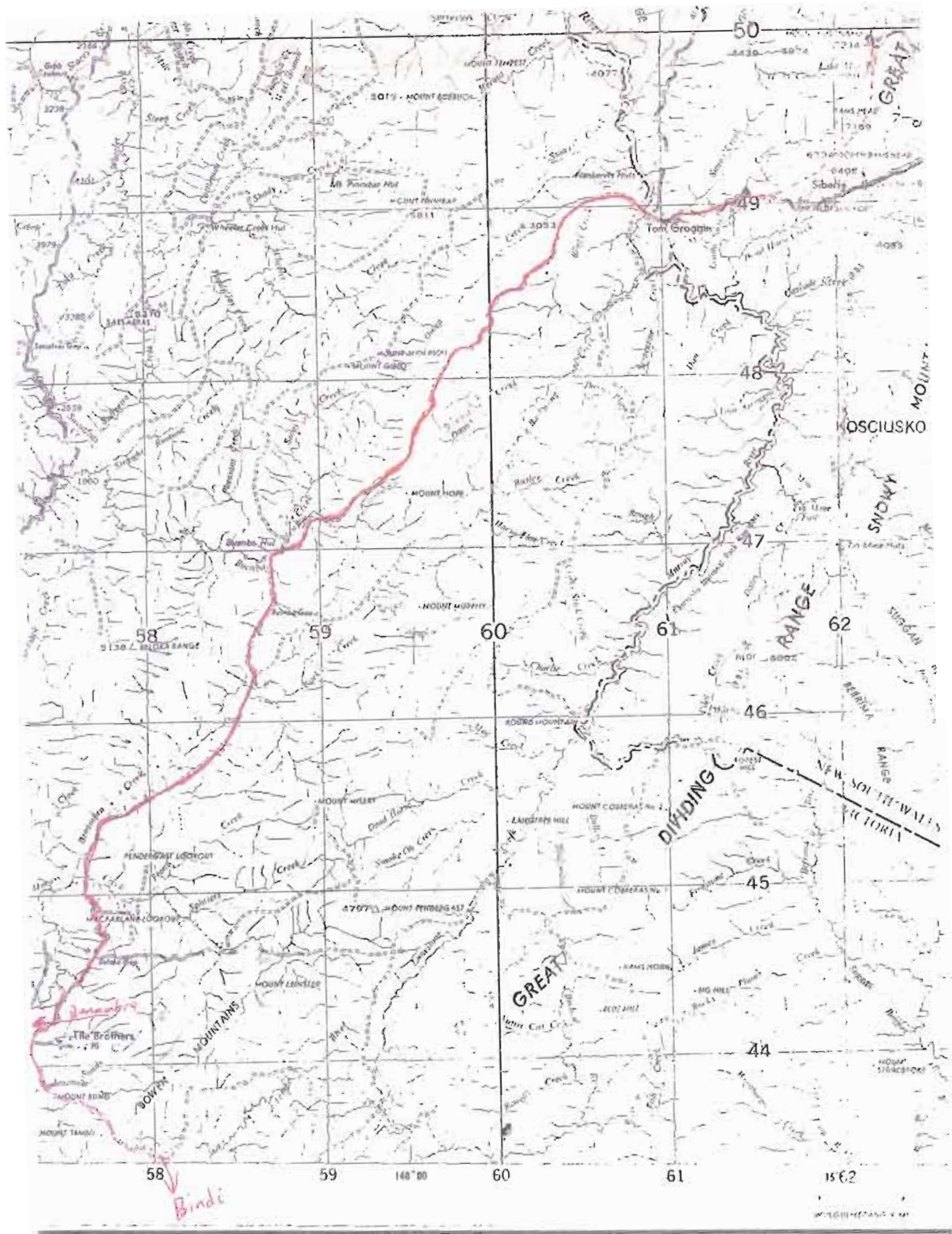
A copy was given to the Society by Alan and Margaret Brumley, Cavendish, Victoria

Alan Brumley was phoned 21 July 2009.

He was happy for me to pass on this doc, and publish if the Brumleys were acknowledged.

Lily Brumley 1886-1990 was born at Hinnomunjie station which her parents bought in 1885. Her nickname was Mitta due to her love of playing beside the Mitta Mitta river. A camera was not taken on this trip.

Graham Scully, KHA Huts and heritage subcommittee
23 July 2009





Hinnomunjie Station

Dec. 3rd 1904. From the mining town of Elm City we followed the road
 towards home, and on the evening of the 2nd reached Hinnomunjie station
 on the Little River. We stayed the night & some well sand for by
 the Burned. The country from Elm City is somewhat mountainous.



A group at the Burned. The homestead is situated on the Little
 River on opp. side. Crops and cattle do well on the fertile
 plain which bounds the Little River. We thoroughly enjoyed
 our stay here.