

The Perisher Range

FURTHER DETAILS OF THE TOPOGRAPHY.

By R. T. Walker.

In the *Australian Ski Year Book* of 1931 there appeared an article by J. W. S. Laidley, entitled, "The Perisher Range—A Preliminary Communication."

I spent about six weeks during the past summer, camped near the Perisher Range, and was thus able to make a fairly detailed investigation of the topography of the district. Dr. Laidley, in his article, dealt fairly thoroughly with the creeks of the district, but did not attempt a representation of the mountain range itself, hoping, as he said, that his article would stimulate a more accurate research in this respect. I was able during the summer to construct a sketch map of the range, and I feel that the few details contained in it, together with a short account of the topography, may be of use to skiers planning tours on the range, or crossing the range on their way to the Main Range. Only by aerial survey could complete details of the mountain system be obtained, but I feel that the details on the sketch map are so much more accurate than those on the present map of the district that I do not hesitate to offer them as an improvement.

The Perisher Range occupies an isolated position among the other mountain masses of the district. Its north-eastern limit is marked by Sun et Valley, which separates it from the Smiggin Holes highland and down which the Perisher Creek meanders. On the west, it is separated from the Guthrie-Paralyser Range by the valley of Spencer's Creek, and on the north-west runs the deep valley of the Snowy River. Only in the south does it maintain any connection with the other ranges. This connection is made, through the saddle of the Perisher Gap and Mount Wheatley, with the Ram's Head Range, and is at the south-eastern extremity of the range. Its south-western extremity is clearly defined by the valley of Betts' Creek.

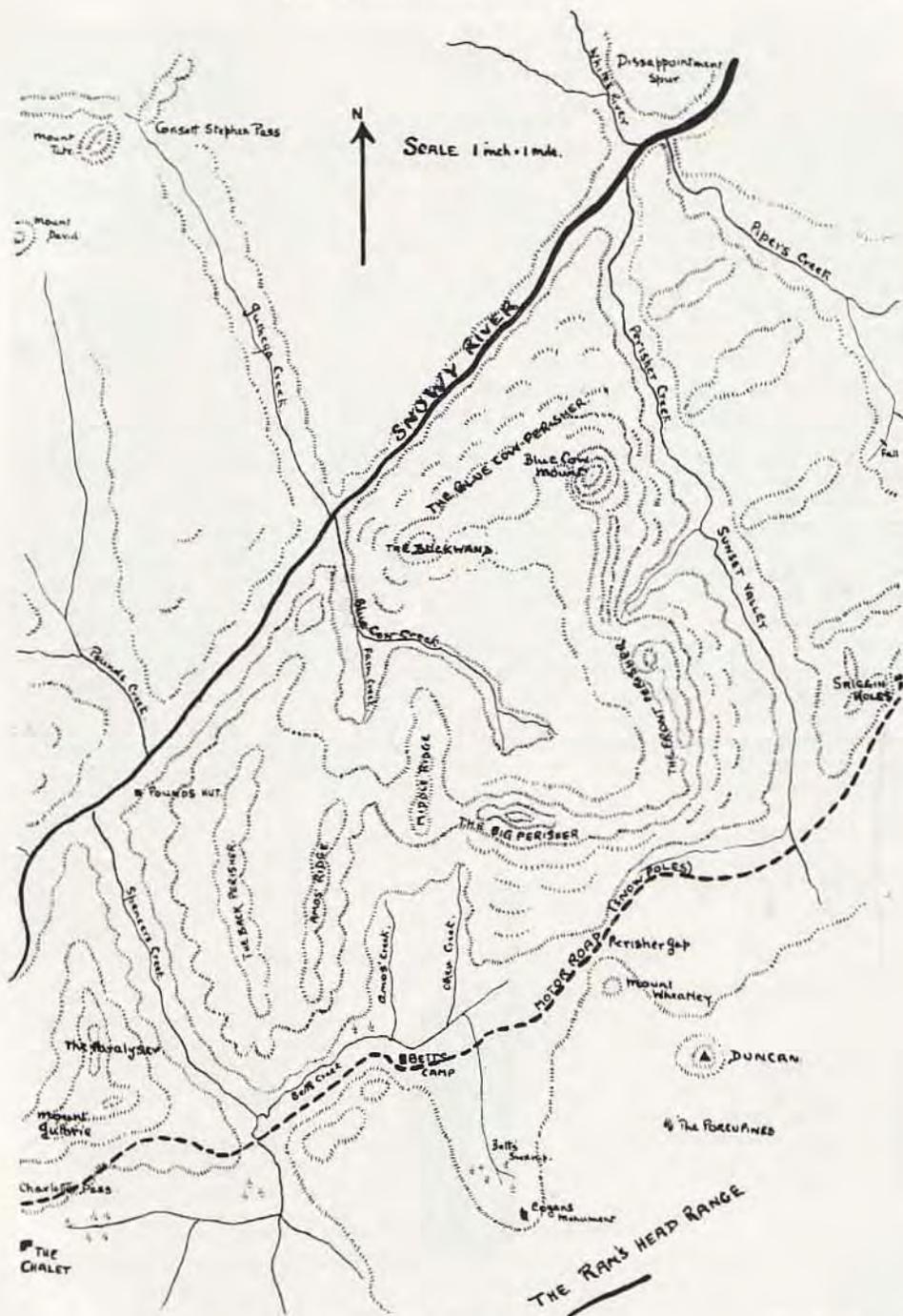
As to the actual topography, a glance at the accompanying sketch map will be more enlightening than many words.

The drainage of the range is accomplished by five main creeks, and by many other smaller tributaries, which could only be indicated on a very detailed map. The main drainage is directly northwards, into the Snowy River, through the Blue Cow Creek, with one source on the Front Perisher and another on the Big Perisher, and its tributary, Farm Creek, with its source on the Middle Ridge.

Southwards, Amos Creek and Other Creek rise on Amos Ridge and the Big Perisher respectively, and flow towards Betts' Camp to join Betts' Creek. A further creek has its source between the Blue Cow Mountain and the Front Perisher, and flowing westwards, joins the Perisher Creek. Of the "notorious Bugeral Creek," mentioned by Laidley, I have no knowledge. [It is, obviously, just nothing at all.—Editor.]

Three points on the range reach the seven thousand foot level; they are the summits of the Big Perisher, the Front Perisher and the Blue Cow Mountain. The most conspicuous point on the range is the summit of the Blue Cow Mountain. Since this mountain occupies an isolated position, it is a most useful landmark. From its summit a magnificent panorama of the Main Range may be obtained, and the entire topography of the Perisher Range may be studied. The summits of the Front Perisher and the Big Perisher are not so prominent, since they only mark the highest points of long ridges.

Thus it may be seen that the highest portion of the range lies in its eastern half. In the western half, the country is not so striking in contour. Similarly,



Sketch Map of the Perisher Range.

(R. T. Walker.)

although the range rises steeply on its eastern and south-eastern borders, it falls away much more gradually towards the Snowy River in the north.

The Big Perisher, the Front Perisher and the Blue Cow Perisher themselves form a horseshoe-shaped region of high ground in the centre of which the Blue Cow Creek arises. This horseshoe is terminated at one end by the Buckwand, a small symmetrical hill at the end of a spur of the Blue Cow Perisher, which falls away steeply towards the junction of the Blue Cow Creek and the Snowy River, and at its other extremity by a spur of the Middle Ridge falling away northwards towards the junction of Farm Creek and the Blue Cow Creek.

The western half of the range is composed of two ridges, both having a northerly trend, joined to the eastern half of the range by the Middle Range, which, itself, forms a watershed between the Blue Cow Creek system and the Betts' Creek system. The two ridges are known as the Back Perisher and Amos Ridge. The Back Perisher extends northwards by the side of Spencer's Creek and then follows a north-easterly direction, by the side of the Snowy River, to the junction of the Blue Cow Creek and the Snowy River. Amos Ridge is shorter, and only extends northwards until it joins the Middle Ridge, forming with the Big Perisher and the Middle Ridge, the valley which extends southwards beyond Betts' Camp to Cogan's Monument, a conspicuous collection of boulders, overlooking the Thredbo.

The Perisher Range occupies an important position, inasmuch as it lies midway between the Hotel and the Chalet. Whilst the range may provide a great deal of fine country for touring on ski, none of it can be compared with any that the Main Range can offer. It has been suggested that the Chalet should have been built at the Smiggin Holes, because the best downhill course is off the Perisher. This must be a fallacy. Whilst there are several nice runs off the Blue Cow Mountain and some off Amos Ridge and the Big Perisher, there are no continuous courses of even moderate length, and these will always have to be sought on the Main Range.

It is in the hope, however, that the information contained in the sketch map, and in this short account, may be of use to skiers touring the district, that I put forward the few details I was able to collect during my recent holiday.

