

Round the Town

A Smithton Commentary
by "Bungle."

Until the weekend I thought that chopping had nothing new to offer me in the way of entertainment. I don't think that relay chopping races had been introduced here when I was last in the district, and in any case, not since I was very young have I been interested in chopping sufficiently to attend sports meetings except on rare occasions, and then primarily to meet old friends rather than to take an interest in events. But after last Saturday I wouldn't miss next Saturday's meeting at Forest for anything short of, well, short of a trip to Sydney to see the chopping at the Commonwealth Carnival. I suppose they have relay races there too, but I don't suppose they have an entirely Circular Head team in action against "The Rest" as they had at Edith Creek, and as, in a return match, they are going to have at Forest. Excitement Well, I haven't yet got over the way I elbowed some 18-stone axeman who looked like a good-natured (and just as well) gorilla so that I could get a better view, and I don't reckon the lady in the blue hat has forgotten the way I tramped

ed all over her feet during the last few seconds of the race. There are times when it pays to be anonymous.

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I met one very interesting resident at Edith Creek too. That was Mr. Simon Sutchkoff, whose career, until he settled down to peaceful farming at Edith Creek, was as colourful as any you'd be likely to find in this quiet corner of the globe. As an editor in pre-Communist Russia he fell foul of the government, and was banished to Siberia. From there, after a long journey in a rowing boat down one of those rivers with a name like a sneeze, he escaped to Manchuria, to become just a journalist. By gradual stages he transferred to Singapore, and from there to Australia to join the "diggers" in World War I. Taken prisoner in France, he saw the rest of the war out on a German farm and, naturally enough, took up farming when repatriated to Australia. I remembered Mr. Sutchkoff best by the white horse which conveyed him to Smithton for many years and many years ago, but learn that he has, like so many others, become all mechanised now and does much of his travelling per tractor.