



The sea entrance to the Hollyford River, the graveyard of many boats approaching Jamestown in the 1870s.

# The Hollyford experience

ONE OF THE MAGNIFICENT WALKS in Fiordland National Park is the Hollyford Valley walk, which takes the observer from the Hollyford road end to historic Jamestown and Martins Bay. In April this year five members of the Society undertook the walk, and they tramped, jet-boated, and flew sections of this wonderful natural route. The trip, which lasted 3 days, is described in the following article by D. E. Trotman.

THERE ARE three organised tramps that can be made in Fiordland, the sort that have a meal and a bed organised for you at the end of the day's plod. One is world famous; most Americans seem to have heard of the Milford Track even if they are not entirely positive about the whereabouts of "Noo Zeelan". The Routeburn and the Hollyford Tracks are known only to the "natives" and the fortunate overseas visitors who discover them.

The Hollyford attracted us. It seemed from the brochure that a jet-boat figured considerably in the arrangements and should reduce the slog of the day's march to a great degree.

So in late April we set forth. The Milford Track was already closed, but as the Hollyford does not climb to high altitudes, and indeed never even

leaves the bushline, it remains open as long as there are parties willing to set forth.

## Start at Te Anau

Everything starts at Te Anau, it seems; it is no wonder that the place is mushrooming. The Milford, the Routeburn, and the Hollyford trampers usually rendezvous there on the night before departure.

In the morning we bussed to Marian Corner, the head of the lower Hollyford Vally, and on to the Hollyford road end after inspecting a very interesting museum at Gunn's Camp, where there were items from the old Jamestown and Martins Bay settlements, whence we were bound. (Gunn's Camp was founded by well-remembered Davy Gunn, of the Hollyford, who bought land from the McKenzies in 1926 and ran treks to Martins Bay down the years.

He was drowned in the Hollyford River on Christmas Day 1955.)

We adjusted our boots, rain gear, and our light 7-kg-maximum day packs and set forth. The weather was cloudy, mist enshrouding the high peaks above us, but was pleasant for walking. There were 11 in our party, four Americans (two of whom were celebrating their golden wedding), an Englishman and his small, beautifully spoken 8-year-old son, and five New Zealanders (all members of the Society).

We followed the Hollyford River for several kilometres, crossing two or three creeks on swing bridges.

The track was in excellent condition and we passed two groups of young people working on it. One group had an all-girl cast and were wielding spades and pick axes with great dexterity.