



## WESSEX CAVE CLUB

Journal No. 100, Vol. 8.

March 1965

### EDITORIAL

People always expect a sign or portent of a great new breakthrough in knowledge but this time again there was not much sign that we were on the brink of discovery. The 100th Journal was waiting in the slaps and looking very thin and undernourished when a small team started stirring up the mud - in the sumps of Stoke Lane and Swildons. As a result we have some material to print. We also had some which was withdrawn - from another pen - with news of a breakthrough in technique quite as interesting - perhaps he is sending it to "The Speleologist"!

Journal 100 is rather a misnomer as it is merely the 100th publication since the war. The name Journal starts in December 1951 with Journal 31, following on from (New Series) Circular 30. Before and during the war there were somewhat over 50 Wessex publications.

The Mendip Preservation Society mentioned in these pages hopes to deal with a matter near to many of our hearts. The preservation of the countryside is something which needs a lot of common sense; progress must be encouraged when it goes hand in hand with the humanities. There is no room for the Old Dear who feels that preservation means keeping things as they are. Control is what is needed and forethought. Everyone should join.

### CLUB NEWS

#### Hilliers & Balch Caves

Unfortunately both of these caves are now closed. The entrance of Balch Cave has been blocked by renewed blasting along the south face of the quarry and now one can only hope that the idea of the Cerberus S.S. to sink a "Tunnel Cave"-like shaft into the further reaches of the cave will prove successful. It should certainly be a telling test of the accuracy of the survey, and with luck may give this beautiful cave a temporary reprieve. Hilliers is now almost choked full of sludge waste which is produced from the comparatively new dust extraction plant now used in the quarry. It is indeed a sobering thought that, in the short space of some ten years, over 4,000 feet of interesting cave has been virtually found and lost in this area. We can only hope that this rate of demolition slows down, for Mendip is only a small caving area after all.

## Hillgrove Hut

The Club Headquarters is now being used to absolute capacity, which is a very happy indication of our growth of caving on Mendip. The Hut Warden is keen to fit new curtains to the windows, as the existing ones have now gone beyond the stage where washing will help. If any members feel they could help by kindly donating any suitable materials, which will match the new light blue decor of the Hut, would they please get in touch with Nick Hart, 80 Ridgeway Road, Long Ashton, Bristol.

## Council of Southern Caving Clubs

At an inaugural convention on Saturday 9th January, representatives of thirty-five caving organisations in the South of England and Wales met at the University of Bristol and decided to form the C.S.C.C. The Wessex are members of this new Council, and we are fortunate that the first Honorary Secretary and Treasurer is Dr. Oliver C. Lloyd. The basic aims of the C.S.C.C. are best summed up by the phrase "Live and let live", which figures as the main guiding principle in its Constitution.

## New Members

We welcome the following new members to the Club, elected on 7th February 1965:-

- E.F.D. Acland, Hundhow, Burneside, Kendal, Westmorland.
- E. Bartley, 20 Hollywood Road, Brislington, Bristol 4.
- D.P. Drew, 25 Cromwell Road, Bristol 6.
- A.C. Fuller, 203 Collingwood Road, Sutton, Surrey.
- J.H. Herbert, 16 Dowling Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol 3.
- D.P.S. Hobbs, Rookery Cottage, Sutton Veny, Warminster, Wilts.
- A.G. Parfitt, School House, Bagley Close, Wedmore, Somerset.
- M.J. Wooding, 25 Cromwell Road, Bristol 6.
- Mrs. J. Teasdale (Joint Member), 32 Tonfield Road, Sutton, Surrey.

## Subscriptions

Rule 8 states: "Any member whose subscription has become more than three months overdue shall be named in the next Journal and if within one month the subscription has not been paid the member's name shall be removed from the list of members, and notice to this effect shall be sent to the member".

Subscriptions for the year 64/65 were due on the 1st October 1964, so almost twice the usual 3 months' "grace" has now elapsed, and the Treasurer, Brenda Willis, will be very pleased to receive 15/- (or 17/6 joint membership) from all those named on the enclosed list. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Wessex Cave Club".

## CLUB MEETS

The Club Dig at Thrupe Swallet is being reopened after the Winter and work will be going on during the following weekends:-

April 3rd/4th; May 8th/9th; 22nd/23rd; June 5th/6th/7th (Whitsun Camp); 19th/20th; July 3rd/4th.

Organiser: Alan Surrall, 216 Evesham Ed, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcs.

Easter - Yorkshire Further details from: Nick Hart, 80 Ridgeway Rd, Long Ashton, Bristol.

Saturday May 15th Longwood Swallet. Meet at the cave 2.0 p.m.

Leader: Roy Staynings, 8 Fanshawe Rd, Hengrove, Bristol 4.

Saturday May 29th Lamb Leer. Meet at the cave 3.0 p.m.

Names to: Rodney Hobbis, Warren Lodge, Long Ashton, Bristol.

Weekend June 12th/13th South Wales. It is hoped to visit Dan-yr-Ogof and/or Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. Numbers may have to be limited. Please send details of times of arrival & departure and transport available or required to: Oliver Lloyd, Withey House, Withey Close West, Bristol 9.

Saturday July 17th St. Cuthbert's. Meet at the Belfry 3.0 p.m.

Leader: Nick Hart, address above.

Saturday July 24th Hillgrove Weekend - maintenance, etc.

Weekend September 11th/12th Steep Holm A "Long Weekend"?

Leader: Roy Staynings, address above.

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Hon. Secretary: J.D. Hanwell, "Chaumbey", Wookey Hole Lane, Wookey Hole, Wells.

(General Club Policy)

Hon.Asst. Secretary: T.E. Reynolds, Yew Court, Pangbourne, Berks.

(Membership applications, cave keys, C.C.C. Permits, Survey Scheme)

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. B.M. Willis, 3 Derwent Lodge, St. Philip's Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey.

(Subscriptions, Accounts)

Editor: C.J. Hawkes, 147 Evington Lane, Leicester.

(Journal Material)

Hut Bookings: P.N. Riches, Priory Cottage, Chewton Mendip, Bath. Phone 357.

(Hillgrove & Eastwater Bookings, Mendip tackle bookings)

Activities Secretary: C.R. Hobbis, Warren Lodge, Long Ashton, Bristol. Phone: L.A. 2127

(Offers to lead trips, Requests for trips)

Publication & Badge Sales: R.J. Staynings, 8 Fanshawe Rd, Hengrove, Bristol.

(Copies of old Journals, Reprint Vol. 1, Supp.to Vol. 8, Badges, Ties)

## PYRENEAN EXPEDITION 1965

At a recent meeting to discuss Pyrenean holiday plans about 15 members who are definitely joining the expedition got together to discuss details; they decided upon the following programme:-

August 21st First party leave Southampton approx. 10.00 a.m. on Thorenson car ferry to Cherbourg, Arrive at pre-arranged base camp near St. Girons on Sunday night or Monday morning. After settling in, the more ambitious members take light tents into the hills and tackle Grotte de la Cigalere and Gouffre Martel. The Grotte de la Cigalere is also suitable for easier trips. The less strenuous visit easier caves and tourist caves in the vicinity of the base camp, with local French cavers acting as leaders.

August 28th Second party leave Southampton by same route and arrive at base camp 29th or 30th by which time the party from La Cigalere etc. should have returned and be rested. Having settled in the combined tigers from first and second parties move off with light camp and all tackle to the Arbas Massif and camp high at the entrance of Gouffre de la Henne Morte, where an exchange of parties between this and Grotte de Sarrat Dech Mene will be attempted (involving descent of G. Henne Morte to depth of -250m.). A support party at the high camp will be welcome. The less active will continue visiting painted caves and generally holidaying in the area around St. Girons base camp.

Sept. 4th Part of party returns home, remainder move off into Spain for walking holiday and cave prospecting in the Trou du Toro region of the Province of Huesca; continuing researches of last year; staying at Mountain Refuge of Spanish Alpine Club.

Sept. 11th Party return home on the 5.00 p.m. ferry from Cherbourg to Southampton, arriving at 6.00 a.m. Sunday.

The party is likely to total at least 20 in the three weeks, some going for the first two weeks, a few for all three, but the majority for the 2nd and 3rd weeks. There is still a chance of joining the expedition if it sounds like the sort of holiday you would like. Write immediately to Phil Davies ("Morley", Silver St., Nailsea, Bristol).

The organisers would be pleased to hear from anyone who has a dinghy that they would be prepared to loan to the expedition.

## NOTTS POT, LECK FELL

Tim Atkinson

### Introduction

One of the two Yorkshire pots descended by Wessex parties during the first week-end in January was Notts Pot. A full description of the discovery and exploration of this pot has been published elsewhere. (1) However, some of the information given in this and in "Pennine Underground" did not tally with our experience in the cave, and the purpose of this article is to try to clear up these discrepancies.

### Brief Description

Notts Pot is an extensive system, with three separate routes down it, all of which begin from a chamber at the bottom of the second pitch. Of these, the Wessex party took the Left Hand Series, which consists chiefly of a large shaft, 150ft. deep, reached by a short length of dry stream passage from Three Ways Chamber. Below this shaft, a short pitch leads the caver to the main stream passage, and the converging point of the three ways down the cave. This streamway is a high, narrow, rift passage, which is best negotiated by traversing about 8ft. above the stream. It is broken by two pitches, at the bottom of the second of which there is a big intake of water from a rift, and a final short pitch to a sump. The whole route shows strong vertical development, consisting of pitches linked by short lengths of stream trench.

### Location and Detailed Description

The entrance to Notts Pot is in a double depression on Leek Fell, to the west of Ireby Fell Cavern, and rather farther to the west than the map in "Pennine Underground" shows it to be. A stream sinks in the eastern half of the depression, and in the western part is the recently collapsed hole which is the entrance to Notts Pot. The entrance pitch is 50ft. deep, belayed to a iron stake on the south side of the hole. The Wessex party, perhaps rather rashly, used a travelling lifeline on this pitch. At the bottom, a meandering stream passage leads quickly to the second pitch. This is 20ft. deep, not 16ft. as it is given in "Pennine Underground", if it is belayed to a wooden beam wedged above the pitch, and not to a belay in the upstream passage. The top few feet of this pitch are quite constricted, but it is dry, the stream having sunk in the floor of the passage some few yards upstream.

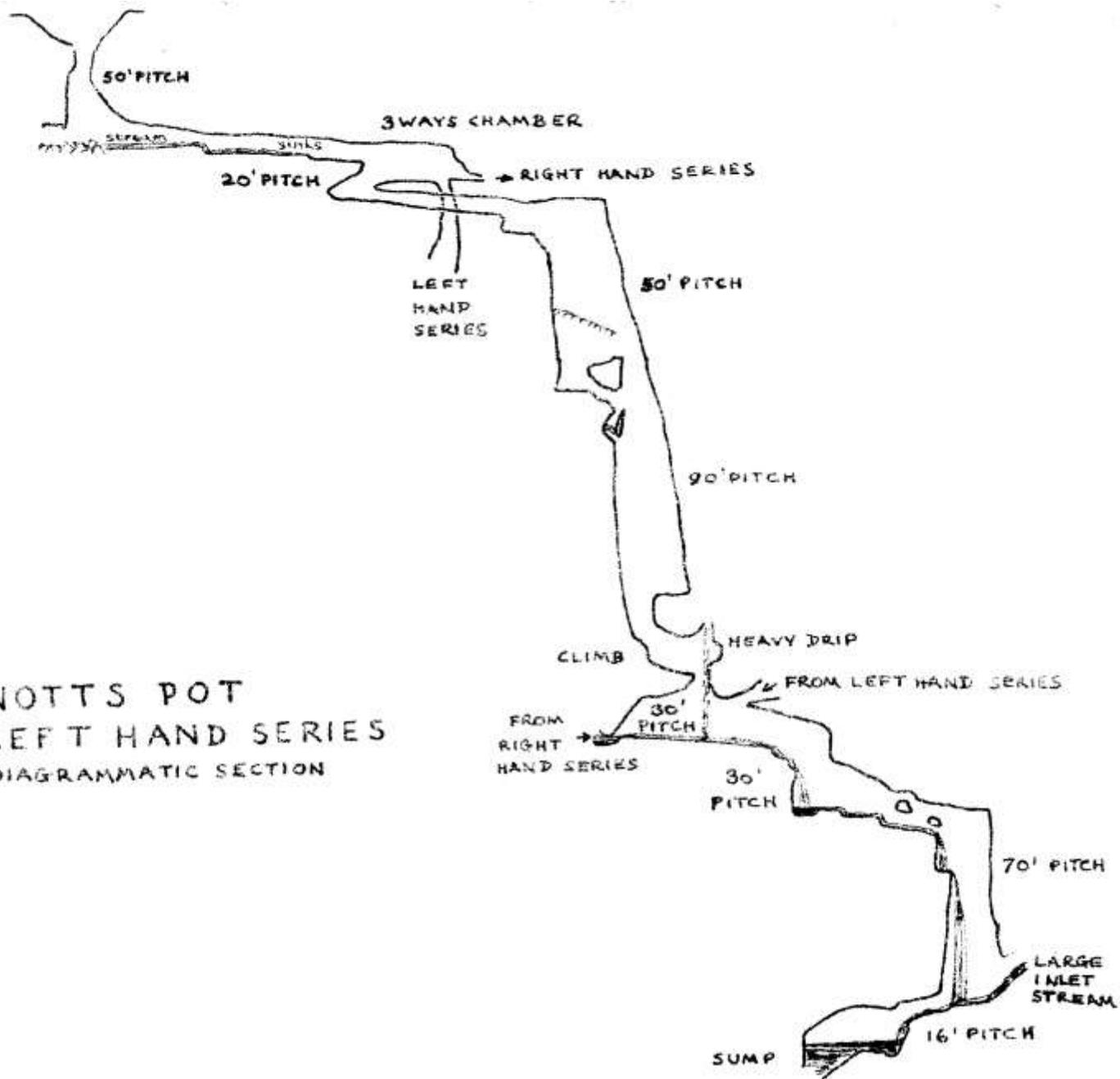
At the bottom of the pitch is a largish chamber, into the floor of which the stream, which has reappeared, sinks. On the far side is a 70ft. pitch into the Centre Series. A sharp left turn in this chamber takes the caver into the Left Hand Series. 70ft. of dry stream

passage lead to the edge of a huge shaft, 150ft. deep. On the left of the passage at the edge of the shaft, a hole, at roof level, leads through a rock rib to the top of a 15ft. deep pothole, from one side of which the main pitch falls away, There is an ideal rock flake on the left, which is thick enough to serve safely as a belay for both ladder and lifeline. The shaft below is laddered in two pitches the first of which is 50ft. from this belay to the second of two ledges in the pot. As there is some risk of a falling climber bouncing from this ledge into the lower half of the shaft, a double lifeline should be used here. The ledge at the foot of this pitch has a bucket shaped hollow in it from which a tunnel leads down to a window on to the 4th pitch of 90ft. The ladder for this is most easily belayed to the ends of the one above, though it is probably safest to provide an additional belay on the ledge itself. The pulley for double lifelining this pitch should be hung as near to the rock window as possible, as otherwise there is a great deal of friction on the rope. There are several belays in the form of eyelets in the walls of the bucket shaped hollow.

At the bottom of the fourth pitch, which is a fine climb in a cylindrical shaft, there is a short, greasy, climb down into a largish chamber taking a heavy drip on the far side. It is helpful to hang the tails of the ladder down this climb for the return journey. From the far side of this chamber a pitch of 30ft. belayed to an obvious flake above a hole in the floor, leads the caver into a large, rift-like, stream passage. Upstream, water enters through a sump. This is the end of the Right Hand Series. The Centre Series enters via a pitch a short way downstream of the fifth pitch just described. Proceeding downstream, the sixth pitch, a wet 35ft. one, is met with. The belay for this is a stalagmite, above which is an eyelet hole, 10ft. above water level. The ladder hangs under the waterfall in the lower half of the pitch, and because of this a lifeline should be used.

A few yards downstream is the seventh pitch. This is 59ft. deep from the floor of the upper passage to the floor of the chamber below. We used a belay to a rock bridge close to the lip of the pitch and about 3ft. above the level of the stream. As a result of this the ladder hung in the midst of the waterfall, and under the conditions obtaining at the time of our descent, the pitch was too wet to be negotiated. This situation could have been avoided, however, if a belay 15ft. up in the roof had been used. (3) The ladder would then have hung clear of the fall and could have been reached by a caver leaning out from the stream bed. The use of this belay would have made the pitch 70ft. deep, which is the figure given in "Pennine Underground".

At the bottom of the seventh pitch, as described in "Underground Adventure", there is a big intake of water from a rift, and a final 16ft. pitch to a sump. As it is such a short distance from the seventh pitch to the bottom of the pot, it is probably easiest to lifeline this pitch using a travelling rope, and keeping a hauling party at the top.



NOTTS POT  
LEFT HAND SERIES  
DIAGRAMMATIC SECTION



While Notts Pot probably deserves its SSP grading by virtue of its Right Hand Series, the Left Hand Series does not fall in that category. The principle reason for this is that two of the big pitches, though impressive, are dry, although both excitement and water are to be found in the streamway. A suitable grading for the Left Hand Series might be VERY DIFFICULT or even SEVERE. All in all, the pot provides a satisfying day's caving, and was certainly enjoyed by George Pointing, Ian Walker, Nick West, Tim Phillips, and Tim Atkinson, who made up the Wessex party.

### References

- (1) "Underground Adventure", A. Gemmell and J.O. Myers. Dalesman, 1952. pp. 63-75.
- (2) "Pennine Underground", N. Thornber. Dalesman 1959 p.102, pp. 140-1.
- (3) Information supplied by J.O. Myers.

### Tackle for Left Hand Series, Notts Pot.

<u>Pitch</u>	<u>Ladder</u>	<u>Belay</u>	<u>Rope</u>	<u>Other Tackle</u>
1st	50ft.	20ft.	T	-
2nd	20ft.	6ft.	T	-
3rd	50ft.	8ft.	100ft.	Pulley, 8ft. belay
4th	100ft.	(20ft.)	200ft.	Pulley, 20ft. belay
5th	30ft.	14ft.	T	-
6th	35ft.	10ft.	T	-
7th	70ft.	20ft.	T	-
8th	15ft.	40ft.	T	-
T	= 100ft.	nylon lifeline.		

## THE DIGS AT WHITEBEAM SLITTER CAVE AND SWINE HOLE, CHEDDAR

W.I. Stanton

At the high-level end of Whitebeam Slitter Cave, opposite R.C. Gough's autograph, there used to be a narrow vertical rift almost blocked by a flow of tufaceous stal. One could see that it widened out considerably after a foot or two, and stones thrown in sometimes produced fascinating rumbles. Obviously however, it was a dig that could only be worked economically with chemical assistance.

Such was forthcoming, and on January 6th 1965 a disorganised expedition consisting of Jim Giles, Tim Atkinson and myself approached the cave respectively without lamp, and boots, but clutching the precious chemical. It took only a few minutes to drill and charge a ten-inch hole in the tufa, but the spongy rock reacted badly to the explosion, only disintegrating into fine powder within a few inches of the drill hole. The fumes were too thick for us to continue, and we departed, as did several disgruntled bats.

On February 3rd Nick Barrington and I returned to the cave, drilled another hole and fired another bang. It was some improvement on the first, and we were enabled to see into a small grotto with a large stal pillar in it. This looked promising, but before we could make a third attack Nick persuaded a tiny Axbridge man to penetrate into the grotto. He reported that only one passage led out, and that it closed down unpromisingly after 15ft. We therefore abandoned the dig. Whitebeam still has possibilities, but none seem very attractive at the moment.

Swine Hole appears to have been unremarked by cavers until now, though it must have been known to the locals as fires have recently been lit in there. The entrance is midway along the direct route from Whitebeam and Brock Hole to Priddy Hole Slitter, i.e. about 100ft. west of Brock Hole, and is reached by scrambling some 20ft. up the cliff from the path. Tim Atkinson, Jim Giles and I explored it after the first bang at Whitebeam. A double passage led 15ft. into a small chamber under an aven with pretty tracteries of white tufa or moon milk. From here an inclined phreatic passage branched off half right, but was almost choked by a tufa flow 7ft. Beyond it the passage widened, so we decided to explode. The bang echoed impressively around the Gorge, Jim cleared the debris, and Tim crept through to find, alas, a dead end only 12ft. further on. Reaction and bang headaches set in and we sat around gloomily in the chamber trying to decide on a name for the cave, eventually choosing Swine Hole because (a) Sow's Hole and Pig's Hole are nearby, and (b) the Atkinswine located it.

For the statistician Swine Hole is 45ft. long with a vertical range of 20ft. and the entrance is 669ft. O.D. It offers little hope to the digger.

## A HELIGMITE IN GOUGH'S CAVE

Tim. Atkinson

### Description

On January 7th., while poking about with Jim Giles in holes in Gough's Cave, W.I. Stanton and I observed a remarkably delicate heligmite, of a type which has not, to my knowledge, been previously recorded. It was located on the floor of a small chamber, reached through an artificial boulder choke at the top of the steps from the main passage of the show cave to St. Paul's and King Solomon's Temple. Part of the floor of the chamber was covered by concrete chippings thrown in by the guides. A few feet beyond these was an isolated chipping on which the heligmite was growing. On one side of the chipping was a mass of white translucent calcite from which rose a fine stem. This broadened towards its top into a hollow trumpet in which rested a drop of water. Near this trumpet, the largest (see diagram), were three others, little more than one tenth of an inch high. So delicate was the formation that we at first thought that it must be made of candlewax. One of us touched it to find out and, unfortunately, the largest trumpet broke off as he did so. On hitting the ground it was flattened by its own impact. Fearing for the safety of the rest of the formation, we brought it out of the cave and left it in the Cave Man Museum, where it is available for inspection.

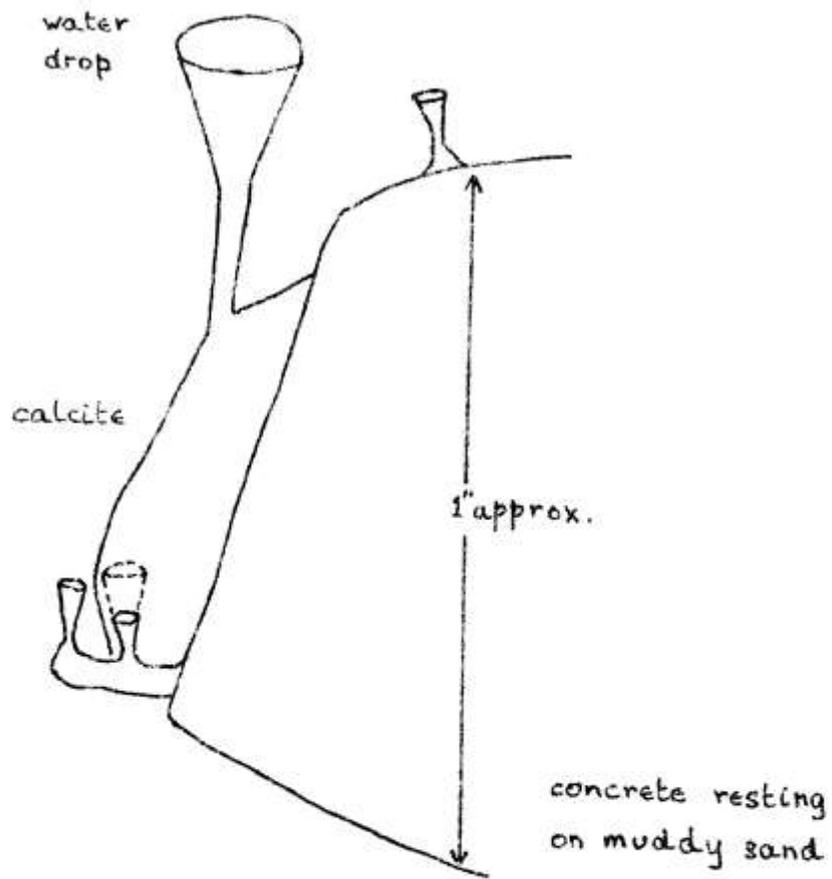
### Possible Origin of the Formation

The formation can be quite accurately dated. The concrete chippings on which it was growing were thrown into the chamber during the winter of 1962-3, so that it is not more than two years old.

The fragility of the formation was demonstrated by the collapse of the walls of the largest trumpet when it was broken. It is clear that a drop of water falling from the roof 2ft. above would have smashed the whole heligmite. Thus it is clear that this formation was not formed by dripping water. Capillary action affords a more likely explanation of its origin. When the chipping was held against the light it could be seen that not only the trumpets, but the whole formation, was hollow and had very thin walls. Thus the bulbous mass of calcite on the side of the chipping could, when full of water, have formed a reservoir, later bursting out of this through the pressure of more water entering the reservoir formed capillary branches much like a normal helictite. Water climbing these capillaries from the reservoir formed drops balanced at the top, around which a trumpet grew. The result, when the trumpet reaches full size, i.e. when the surface forces of the water will no longer support a column of water higher than the heligmite, would be much like the largest of the four observed.

This theory explains the process of formation of the trumpets. However, it requires that water enter the reservoir from a second, larger, reservoir, in order that the capillary tubes shall form. This water must have come directly from the concrete chipping. Although this is slightly porous, it certainly could not hold the quantity of water which would be required to build the whole formation. The chipping was itself resting on damp, muddy, sand. It can only be assumed that water passed from the sand into the concrete and thence to the heligmite.





HELIGMITE FROM GOUGH'S CAVE C. 2 YEARS OLD

One question remains. How were the walls of the calcite mass on the chipping formed? The most likely explanation, and the only one which can be put forward without examining the internal structure of the mass, is that it was formed around a drop of water on the concrete chipping. This would explain the thinness of its walls.

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## THE CARBIDE MINES OF SVENSTAVIK, NORTH SWEDEN

By Prof. Karl Jonköping

Extract from a paper presented to the Stockholm Scientific Society 11th November, 1947  
Translated by A.D. Oldham.

The Carbide Mines of Svenstavik lie to the north of the small industrial town of Hammerdal deep in the ranges of the Arvidsjaur Hills, and at an altitude of about 1,500 metres. They are unique as this is the only site in the World where "Carbide of Calcium" is found native. The mineral occurs in a bed of Carboniferous Limestone which has been metamorphised at an early date forming, at the junction of the Skjon Series, a band of solid carbide 2 metres thick, extending for many kilometres.

The mines are entered by spacious horizontal drifts, extending far into the hills. The mineral is obtained, in a fashion similar to that of coal although the workings are not as modern as some coal mines, the mineral being excavated from the working face, which is about 2 metres high, with a pick. The working faces are continually sprayed with paraffin to keep down the dust and this also gives the carbide its characteristic black glossy-appearance.

The mines are quite dangerous places of employment with the combined action of the choking dust and the gas, which is both inflammable and poisonous. A few years ago a Laplander employed in the working very nearly caused a nasty accident by obeying the call of nature at the working face. The resulting explosion brought down a large part of the roof but fortunately there was no loss of life.

The carbide is removed by conveyor belt and then by trolleys with brass wheels to the surface. There it is screened and sieved in large sheds, and then washed in paraffin and packed in airtight containers ready for exportation to all parts of the world.

The mines are privately owned and sad to say there is only one large working left, the others having gone out of production as today this commodity can be obtained much more easily and safely from an electric furnace.

## CAVES OF PORTLAND BILL (DORSET)

Brian S. Roach

On the 28th February a party of 13 (10 Severn Valley Cave Club and 2 Portland Caving Group and myself) assembled at Portland Bridge. We split into two groups and I was amongst those visiting the caves of Portland Bill - the other party explored caves in the centre of Portland. The descriptions which follow are in the order in which we visited the caves.

### Cave No. 1

Tackle used: 40 ft. ladder 60 ft. lifeline. Tether around large square boulder.

The cave can easily be seen by standing on "Pulpit Rock" at Portland Bill and with the lighthouse on one's right. It is the nearest of three Sea Caves. Access is by following the fence of the Naval Gunnery Establishment until a large rift is observed. The ladder is hung about fifty feet to seaward of the cave entrance and a slight wetting must be contemplated. When the bottom of the ladder is reached one steps on to large slippery boulders and scrambles on to a small boulder strewn beach.

The cave entrance is some 50 ft. high (the ladder is hung from a ledge lower than the entrance) and 20 ft. wide. This quickly narrows down to 3 ft. by 10 ft. When one has passed this low part, the cave opens out into a rift 40 ft. high. After 100 ft. the cave becomes impassable, but it may be possible to proceed further by climbing into the roof.

I am of the opinion that although the sea has played a major part in the development of this cave, there may have been some solutional activity further back. Although mud abounds, there are several quite pretty formations at the rear. There are also a few "woodlouse type" creatures scuttling about.

It should be noted that it may be necessary to remove driftwood from the low parts of the cave to gain access at a future date. Also the cave should not be attempted during a high wind as the waves will penetrate rather a long way in.

### Cave 2 - Sawmill Cave

Tackle used: None.

Situated in a quarry opposite "The Sawmill Tavern", the cave is of interest inasmuch as one can go from one quarry to another. There is only one passage (except for a small oxbow near the entrance) which meanders for about 600 ft. with an average height and width of 4ft. An interesting feature inside this cave is the large ammonites in the roof,

some of which have stalactites hanging from them. The formations, although not exceptional, are very pretty and care must be exercised to avoid hitting them down with your helmet.

### Horseshoe Cave

Another cave which we visited was Horseshoe Cave. This consisted of a horseshoe-shaped passage 20 ft. in length. It is not possible to fix a location on this cave owing to the many quarries nearby.

### Sea Cave near "The Red Crane"

Tackle used: 60 ft. ladder and lifeline.

The Red Crane is one of the cranes used by fishermen for lifting boats in and out of the water. Near the crane is a very large chamber known as "The Cave". It is possible to peer down into the cave through a grill set in concrete. A ladder was slung over the edge of the cliff and tethered to a large iron spike. From the ladder it was possible to gain a small ledge which can be followed for 20 ft. but not quite far enough to see into "The Cave". In my opinion the only means of access is by boat or a swimmer with a lifeline, even so this could only be done in the calmest weather as there is a danger of being dashed against the rocks.

Should anyone be interested in visiting Portland it can easily be arranged and I would welcome the opportunity of taking a canoe for further exploration of the sea caves.

## THE DISCOVERY OF STOKE LANE V, VI, & VII

David Drew & Mike Wooding

"The chances of a further large above water extension in Stoke Lane seem very slight" - thus spake some of the C.D.G. after their unsuccessful probe in the fourth sump. However, the Fred Davies' philosophy of "Caves be where you find 'em" would seem more applicable to Stoke Lane Slocker. Three assaults during the past month have revealed about 1,000 ft. of new passage beyond Sump 4 and still the wretched cave refuses to subside beneath the water table. All the trips were made by Mike Wooding and the writer, of the Independent Cave Diving Group, using 750 litre tadpole cylinders and Scubair demand valves.

Sump 2 was the end of the cave until 1962 when C.D.G. passed it to discover Stokes III and IV some 810 ft. long. The streamway immediately before the fourth sump is low and wide with several ducks, the sump itself beginning as a dismal rift with 2 - 8 inches of airspace. On January 28th we made an attempt to pass this obstacle but failed to find the correct way on. February 8th saw us back for a 'final' attempt to determine whether or not the sump was passable. I dived first towing a coullene line and found that the rift extended almost straight for some 60 ft. to a sizeable airbell. I continued along this, submerging when the airspace became inadequate until after a few feet a slot in the right hand wall at floor level gave access to a parallel rift along which I progressed easily enough for 35-40 ft. before grinding abruptly to a halt on a bank of shingle. A short wriggle and I was in a low chamber with a good airspace, the stream doubled back on itself to the left and a shingle bank led upwards. A brief reconnoitre sufficed to show that it 'went' and I signalled for Mike to come through and join me in V. It seems highly probable that this was the chamber reached by Steve Wynne-Roberts of C.D.G. in 1963, when, owing to poor lighting, he did not leave the sump to explore and was pessimistic about the chances of further progress being possible.

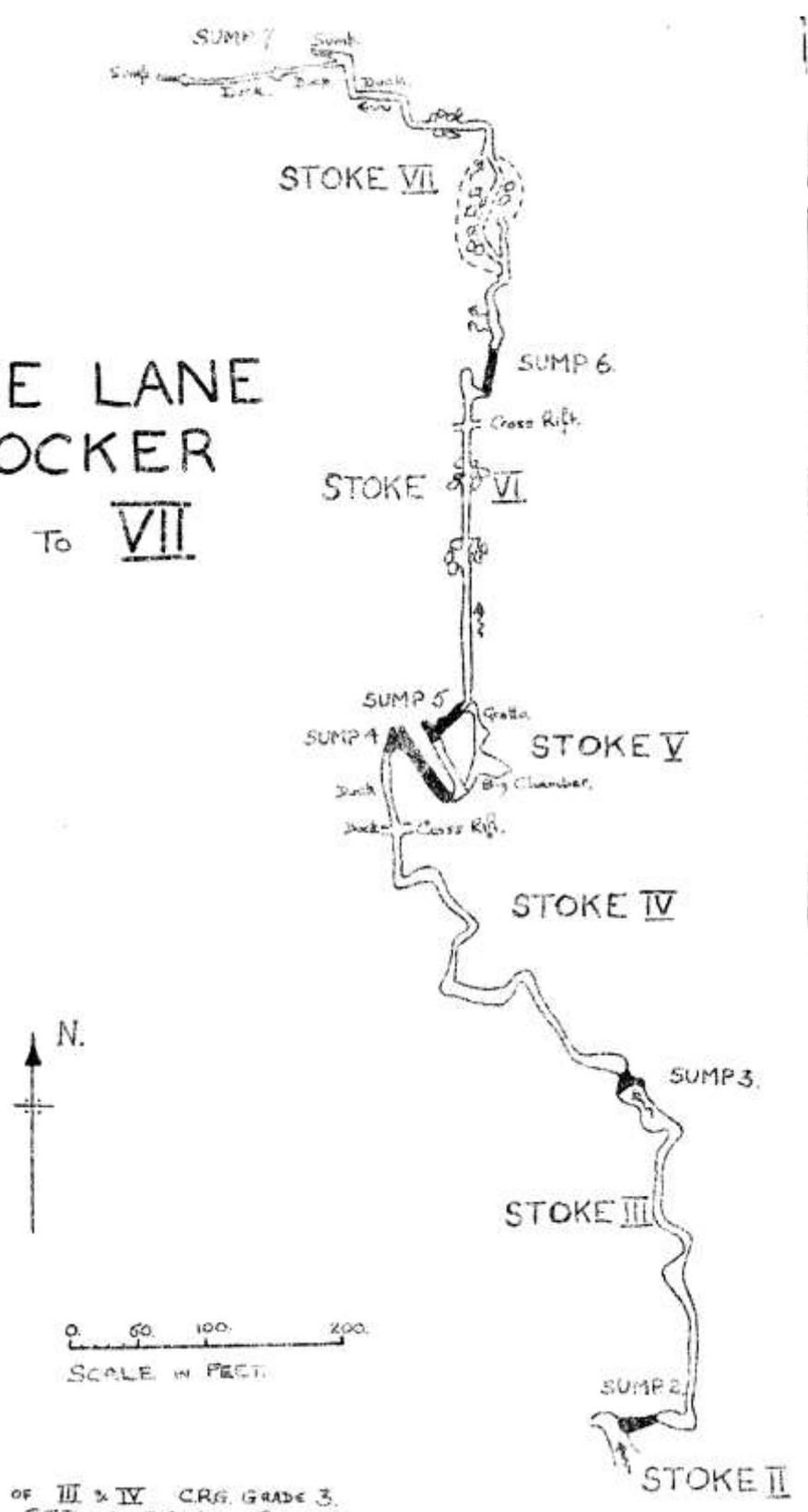
The course of the streamway beyond the sump was not obvious so we crawled up the shingle bank to reach an ascending passage which in turn led into a large chamber of indeterminate height - probably over 80 ft. - well decorated and with a floor of soft, silky sand. Several low passages led off and in the first frenzy of exploration we shot off down the largest of these lured by the distant sound of flowing water. The crawls all united in a small grotto from which a short drop and further crawl landed us in a roomy stream passage with the stream emerging from a sump on the left: we had contrived to bypass the fifth sump and reach Stoke VI quite unintentionally. The VI streamway is a large passage partially blocked in two places by rather unstable boulder chokes with chambers above. From the second of these a descent to the stream followed by a low arch brought us to a rather impressive sump pool very similar to upstream Sump 6 Swildons. A large cross-rift immediately before the sump was investigated in the hopes of discovering a

bypass, but no way on was discovered and we retreated to Sump 4 to collect a B.A. Whilst there I noticed that the mainstream continued at the foot of the shingle bank. A passage similar to the Sewer in Stoke II meandered for 60-70 ft. via a duck until it terminated abruptly in a blank wall and the only way on could be felt underwater in the right hand wall - Sump 5. I kitted up and dived, hoping that the sump was short and would provide easy access to VI for divers. The underwater passage continued low and wide for about 30 ft. with a floor of thick mud, until the route split into three, of which two ways on were just passable but as a short easy sump now seemed highly unlikely I retreated. We then hauled one B.A. down to Sump 6 and Mike had the dubious honour of first dive. The only way on was found to be at the end of a rift leading off the sump pool where the floor dropped away steeply indicating a spacious under water passage. Mike then dived at this point following the roof downwards to a depth of 8ft. in what had by then closed down to a rift passage which levelled off. The rift was blocked straight ahead so Mike reversed a little way and moved a few feet over to the left to where a bank of shingle led upwards. After a short distance however, the shingle partially blocked the passage but beyond the obstruction the way seemed to open up again. After a brief scrabble Mike returned to the surface to report and then dived again to scrape at the shingle with his hands for several minutes without success. As our air-supplies were running low we decided to call a retreat and emerged into daylight after an 8½ hour trip, highly elated with the new discoveries and confident that Sump 6 would 'go' and reveal further open passage.

I.C.D.G. versus Stoke Lane entered round three when February 20th 10.00 a.m. saw Wooding and Drew duly installed by Sump 6 complete with an entrenching tool after a lightning 2½ hour trip through Stokes I-VI. We kitted up and reluctantly I eased myself into the sump clutching the digging tool, a brief reconnoitre confirmed Mike's view that the only way on lay up the shingle bank and I proceeded to begin the excavation of a passable trench through the barrier, using a distressingly large quantity of air in the process. After several minutes vigorous activity I returned to the surface feeling distinctly chilly to inform Mike that I thought we would have to dig for at least 6ft. to get through. Duly heartened by this piece of pessimism Mike dived while I lifelined him. About 20ft. of line went out and then all was quiet for a minute or two apart from odd twitchings on the line presumably associated with Wooding's digging activities. Then suddenly the line began to run out at an alarming rate; wondering whether Mike was signalling that he wished to return along the line I attempted to belay it, but did not succeed until around 40ft. had been paid out. Several seconds later Mike emerged from the sump, tore off his mask and gag, let out a great bellow, announced "Stoke bloody Seven", and promptly dived back again to belay the line in VII. (It later turned out that on his first dive I had hauled the unfortunate creature back into the sump before he could consummate his glory by reaching a belay point in VII.) Mike had found my trench and by pushing the entrenching tool on ahead had though the passage became human-sized very quickly. After a quick scrabble and wriggle he was through into a



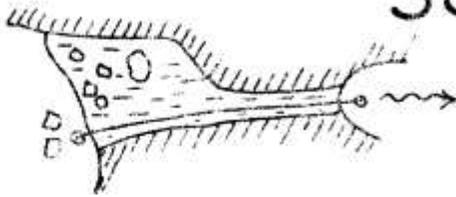
# STOKE LANE SLOCKER III To VII



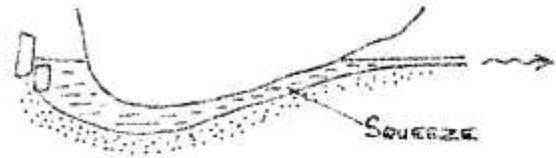
SURVEY OF III & IV C.R.G. GRADE 3.  
 by F. J. DAVIES, S. G. WYNNE ROBERTS  
 & M. M. THOMPSON.  
 SURVEY OF V, VI & VII TO GRADE 1.  
 by M. J. WOODING & D. P. DREW.

67

# SUMP 2.



PLAN



SECTION

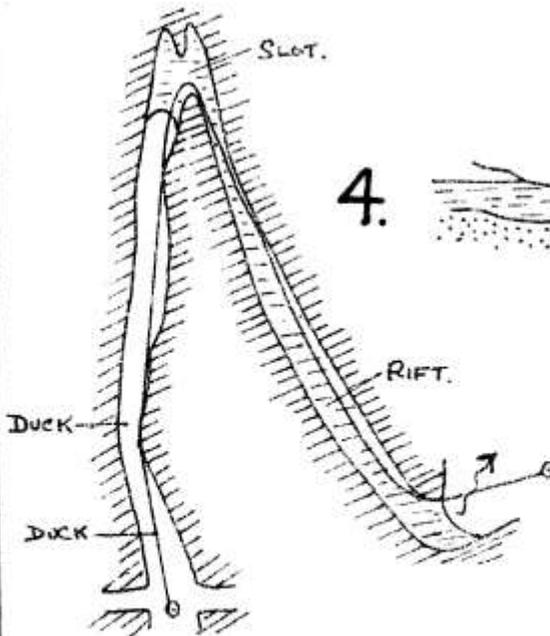


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3.



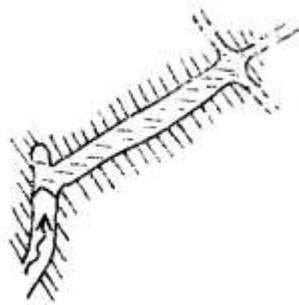
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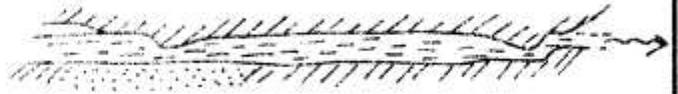


0 10 20 40  
SCALE IN FEET.

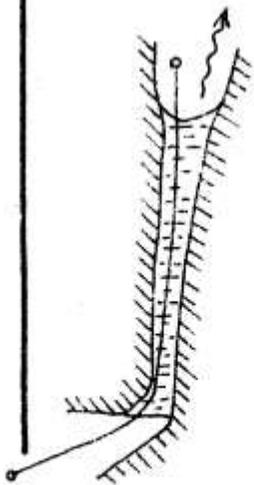


# SUMP 5.

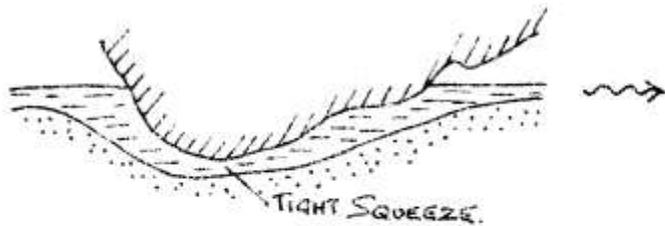
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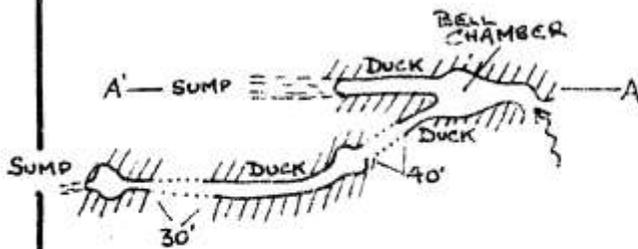


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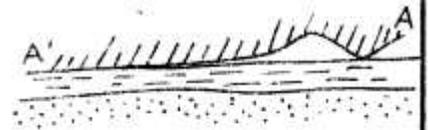


SECTION

PLAN



7.



roomy ascending underwater tunnel which emerged into a sizeable passage - Stoke VII. In record time I kitted up and flashed down the line only to be brought up short at the squeeze which required considerable thought and effort in its negotiation. It is considerably tighter than the squeeze in Swildons Sump 6, measuring about 2 ft. in width by 9 inches in height and it seems liable to silt up again. However, I duly emerged to find Wooding positively twitching to explore the roomy clean bored passage which led on. We followed it around several bends and two ducks for about 150ft. before a boulder choke blocked the way on. The stream could be heard beyond but some frenzied boulder shifting produced result and we retired some 30ft. back to investigate a rift which intersected the passage at right angles. We now realized that the passage we were in was not in fact the active streamway but a very damp oxbow and that the stream disappeared at some indeterminate point in the left hand wall just beyond the sump (see survey).

I climbed first into the rift and after pioneering an involved route between boulders, cleverly emerged on the other side of the streamway after a pleasant academic round trip of about 15ft. Somewhat deflated I maintained that it did not go. Mike then duly climbed up and entered a large boulder maze to the left of the oxbow and by dint of removing odd boulders engineered a very tight complicated route back into the streamway beyond the choke. Realizing that it was not Drew's day for profound utterances I henceforth refused to give opinions.

There is no clearly defined passageway in this area, only a maze of alternative routes in a highly unstable pile of boulders. Beyond, the streamway flowed on down a steady gradient in a low wide passage similar to Stoke IV. Two further boulder ruckles were passed without difficulty but beyond the second of them the passage became a narrow rift with 6 inches - 2 feet airspace above 1ft. - 3ft. of water. Several very awkward and unpleasant ducks followed until at about 400ft. from Sump 6 a small chamber was reached from which point two routes on were apparent - a pair of narrow parallel rifts. I investigated the right hand one first. The passage was triangular in cross sections about 3ft. high, 3ft. wide at the base and tapering up to a point. I followed the 3 inch airspace for about 10ft. lying on my back with my nose just out of the water until the airspace became too small to utilize. I then took a deep breath, submerged and pushed myself along for a further 10ft. but could feel no airspace so beat a hurried retreat finding the airspace in the chamber after a few moments of unhappy wild threshing, Mike then inserted himself into the left hand rift which was similar in form but narrower. He succeeded in following a meandering airspace 3 inches high for about 100 ft. to a small circular bell chamber with 2ft. airspace. Beyond, this point the passage sumped and the only way on appeared to be a tight passage under a boulder. Mike then returned much to my relief, as lurking waist deep in water in my chamber, all I had heard for the past five minutes were disjointed slappings of water together with loud pantings and was not at all sure what was happening. This was Sump 7 and honour satisfied we decided to call it a day and thankfully retreated - Stoke VII seems a revoltingly remote and unappetising

part of underground Britain. After a pause for Drew to smoke the first ever cigarette in VII we continued, to emerge at the surface to hot water and coffee generously provided by Mr. Stock.

### Conclusions

Stoke V consists of about 250ft. of passage, Stoke VI, 300ft. and VII of 500ft. In each case there are still various small side passages to be explored, and the total length of passage beyond Sump 4 is probably in the region of 1,300ft.

The stream in V and VI seems to continue to flow northwards in the direction of the dip and must be within 200-250ft. of the edge of the limestone escarpment. In VII the stream follows a zig-zag course alternating between dip and strike, but the most pronounced development is westwards along the strike and Sump 7 is so aligned. In order to reach its resurgence at St. Dunstan's Well the water will have to flow due west presumably following one or an associated series of bedding planes. Flow to the south seems likely when it encounters the Frog Lane fault which is unusual in hydrological and geomorphological terms to put it mildly.

The two rifts that comprise Sump 7 probably link up again to form one passage. The right hand rift looks the more promising and appears technically easy, but the transportation of B.A.'s to that point will be an exceedingly arduous operation.

Stoke VII itself must rank as one of the most dismal, uninspiring and unstable streamways on Mendip as well as being very strenuous, but there seems every reason to suppose that Sump 7 is passable to further reaches of open passage and the chances of a through trip to St. Dunstan's are improving steadily.

We intend to make a further assault on Sump 7 in the near future, when memories of the last trip have faded sufficiently, in an attempt to overhaul Swildon's tally - Swildon's VIII to beat!

## MENDIP NOTES

by

### Cheramodytes

Your Scribe has not been particularly lazy during the past two months, but, having rejected a certain amount of material that he found unsuitable, there remain only four paragraphs, the last being by his colleague, Cave Beetle.

Have you heard of the Hillgrove cat?  
On Friday she's thin and on Monday she's fat.

### Fault Chamber

Oliver Lloyd's exploration of Fault Chamber in Swildon's Hole extended over three years, from 1957 to 1960. At the end of this the direct route had been climbed to a height of 90 ft. by Kit Eaton, and was found to end in a walking-stick crook to the right, and a pool of water. The entire aven is in the fault, starting at an angle of 45 but steepening and narrowing further up. He never explored the left hand (westerly) opening, out of which the water comes. The loose shattered breccia makes exploration very dangerous, and a member of his party did once get injured by falling rocks, though fortunately not seriously.

Now I hear that members of the Severn Valley have explored this second opening and have ascended another aven, equally shattered, to a height of about 200ft. Most of the climbing has been done by Bob Lewis, Ken Higgs and Paul Allen. He wishes them good luck.

### First Mud Sump, Swildon's.

In 1954 Oliver Wells tried to pump this sump dry by means of a stirrup pump, utilizing up-stream dams. He was unsuccessful. Now the idea has been revived by Roger Biddle, Martin Mills, Bob Gannicott and others, who are using a much more efficient pump, and are sending the water forward into Damascus.

### Throwing Stones.

From what I hear at Hillgrove, Mike Wooding and Dave Drew are coming in for some unjustified blame. These two are being attacked for muscling in on other people's explorations. This is not the first time, they say, hinting darkly that, if Wooding hadn't been so quick getting up Maine's Aven, the Shepton-Wessex parties would have done it

by now, Now they are saying that the C.D.G. members got into Stoke V only a few months ago and should have been left to continue with this exploration. I cannot find that this is so. The last published account of a C.D.G. exploration of Stoke Sump IV is dated 12.10.63, published in December 1964. In both cases, therefore, more than a year has elapsed before Wooding has pushed someone else's exploration - and made a success of it. His activities have been marred by a certain amount of secrecy (always undesirable in cave exploration) but in the Maine's Aven exploits the secret was very badly kept. As regards the diving, he asked Mike Thompson on 22.12.64. whether he had any objection to their continuing exploration started by members of the C.D.G. and the reply was that he had none.

### Part 2, by Cave Beetle.

#### A New Death Cult, or Cousteau Lloyd?

What shall we do with him? People that don't conform are always a nuisance and how easy it is to sit in your regulated little world and say "fool" to those who step outside. Oliver has free dived sumps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in order and then back again. He is mighty pleased with himself; and well he may be - and many of us are pretty sore, we hide it under a lot of talk about safety. Me? I'm just scared at the thought of it. Ever since Morley and Sims made a mistake in May '62 Oliver has been working up to this. He said then, "For my part I am thankful that such 'bloody fools' exist. Life would be dull without them."

\*\*\*\*\*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

"Dear Sir,

We wish to protest, through the pages of the Wessex Caving Club journal, at the prevailing conditions in Burrington Coombe.

First and foremost at the appallingly disgraceful way in which most of the popular caves have, over the past years, been spoilt and ruined. Along with many others we have tried to clean up such caves as Goatchurch Cavern and Rod's Pot, only to see things revert to their dirty, rubbishy state within a couple of weeks.

The entrances of the caves abound with disused carbide, cast-off caving clothing, tins and bottles. The cave walls are smeared with cavers initials, paint marks and crude figures. Disused flash bulbs are to be found almost anywhere.

If one has the misfortune to be in the Coombe during a week-end then the behaviour of some cavers leaves a great deal to be desired. Many of these are teenagers who appear, in the main, to come from the Bristol area. They are often noisy, have no respect for the amenities that the Coombe has to offer and delight in appearing outrageously dirty and unkempt. To the casual visitor these young hooligans typify "potholers" and do the sport much harm.

The new owners of the "Mendip Gate Cafe" tolerate these base youngsters at the moment. It is conceivable that when all the alterations to the cafe have been finished that they may not be so well disposed.

Unfortunately there is more to come, in at least two of the caves there is a strong smell of faecal matter. Surely there is no excuse whatsoever for this?

Finally, what is the "cure" for this "sickness"? Many of these "yobos", are not caving club members and probably their interest only lasts a couple of years. Thus in the main they take from the sport and put back nothing. Perhaps the only answer is for some responsible body to restrict access to these caves.

Yours faithfully,

Paul L. Weston.  
Wessex Caving Club.

Garth B. Weston.  
Westinghouse Apprentices  
Association Caving Club."

## DISCOVERY OF SWILDONS VIII, IX, X, XI & XII

### Swildons VIII & IX

#### Mike Wooding

The last chapter in the story of the exploration of the Swildons streamway was written in June 1962 when Steve Wynne-Roberts, Mike Boon, Mike Thompson and Fred Davies of the Cave Diving Group returned to the cave for an attempt on Sump 7. In an epic dive Mike Boon alone was able to get through despite losing his facemask and at one stage his gag. He left his breathing apparatus by the sump and set off down the streamway at a trot until brought to a halt by the inevitable sump - Sump 8. This, he said, looked easy.

In January an I.C.D.G. party consisting of Dave Drew, Dave Savage and myself entered Swildons VII and had a look at Sump 7. Partly due to inexperience and partly due to a misleading description of the sump we did not get through, although two of us had several attempts. Correspondence and conversation with members of the C.D.G. party led us to the conclusion that some blasting was necessary in the entrance to the sump. Mike Boon kindly supplied a sketch of the sump showing that the first section of 15ft. led to an air bell from which the second section, also of 15ft. led off. It was this second part that caused Mike's desperate struggles. A month later Dave Savage and I carefully planted 5lb. of bang and retired a respectful distance before setting it off. Fumes were still thick after an hour, carpeting the approach to the sump in knee-deep fluffy white vapour.

On the weekend of the 27th February the other members of the team were otherwise engaged, so I decided to have a look at the effects of the bang. I was lucky enough to be offered the use of their ladders by an Imperial College party en route to free-dive Sump 4. As I approached Sump 7, I sensed that something was different about the place. What was originally an awkward duck to enter the sump pool was now a gaping hole. Not only had the massive boulder blocking the sump disappeared but one wall had detached itself from the roof. It was easy to float into the half-way bell, and here the water was neck deep. I thought that the way on would have been obvious but it took four dives to find the correct hole. It was too tight to get through with the side mounted air cylinder, so in approved fashion I took it off and pushed it in front of me. Despite not wearing a weight belt I found this section tight and the flexes of my twin headlamps kept snagging. Once in Swildons VIII I hurried downstream through two ducks and was stopped by a miserable pool, heavily silted - Sump 8. A rusting air cylinder was jammed in the sump and I pulled this out and examined the thing. A block of wood was protecting the tap and as I pulled this off the tap started hissing violently. Very much startled by this I tossed the cylinder away and dived into the widest part of the sump. It was short (about 10ft.) but tight, and it was a very relieved diver who surfaced in Swildons IX. By now I had

become concerned about my reserve of air so left the breathing apparatus on a shingle bank and headed downstream. Less than 100ft. further, the spacious passage turned sharp left. I scrambled over huge boulders and found myself on the brink of a large pool, Sump 9. It is an evil black place but appears to be a good diving site!

## "EXTRACTS FROM THE HILLGROVE LOG"

### Swildons X & XI

#### Dave Savage

On the 6th March, M.J. Wooding, Dave Drew and Dave Savage again entered Swildons and made a relatively uneventful trip through Sump 7, though the place is still awkward and tight, despite removal of the first portion a few weeks ago. With one person in VIII it was quickly established that there is a talking connection from VII to VIII, via large boulders to the left of the sump pool. We quickly passed Sump 8 and began preparing to dive Sump 9. Dave Drew dived first on the end of a 150ft. coullene line, and returned after 50ft. had been paid out. He reported a large steeply descending passage with a very soft muddy floor, but failed to clear his ears and had to return. Dave Savage dived next and after dropping about 15ft., the large passage levelled out and it was possible to reach an air surface about 80ft. from base. On his return Mike Wooding then dived and passed beneath the air space at a depth of 15ft - 20ft, traversed another 60ft. following gravel on the floor, and found several smaller air spaces (one of these may be below 'water level') eventually reaching dry land in Swildons X.

After 20ft. a short (3ft.) sump led to Swildons XI and 100ft. of roomy stream passage to Sump 11. Dave Savage dived next into X and XI, after Mike Wooding's return, and poked a short distance into Sump 11 which looked easy. More interesting though, to the right of Sump 11 is a steep, slippery climb of about 30ft. at the top of which is an opening, 3ft. by 4ft., through which can be heard the sound of a large stream falling about half a dozen feet. This opening obviously provides a bypass to Sump 11 and the noise is coming from Swildon's XII.

### Swildons XII

#### Dave Drew

The 20.3.65. found the trio back in Swildons - deepest cave in the country!

An uneventful trip through the sumps brought us to Swildons XI which was explored carefully (high level by-pass to a duck found) no side passages of consequence discovered. The steep climb by Sump 11 was tackled (permanent line) and proved to be

very awkward - 30ft. high and muddy. A gentler slope on the far side led down to the streamway of Swildons XII; the stream issuing from Sump 11 some 30ft. away. Swildons XII proved to be 110ft. of very impressive passage some 10ft. wide and up to 60-70ft. high, with fantastic "Tate Gallery" effects and "windows" splitting the passage at several levels. The roof of the passage was not reached but many muddy tubes and avens lead off. Sump 12 is an unprepossessing looking pool developed along the strike. Immediately downstream of Sump 11 the gradient of the floor steepened abruptly for a 60ft. stretch and included one 4ft. pot (a feature not seen in Swildons since IV). Sump 12 was then attempted. Dave Savage dived first, and reported a steeply descending passage ( $45^{\circ}$ ) extending for 50ft. at which point he reached the edge of an underwater pot and returned. Dave Drew dived and appeared to spiral down very steeply, descended the pot, and continued steeply down with no obstruction, but as the passage showed no signs of rising he returned to base. Mike Wooding went 10-20ft. beyond this point and reported that the passage became choked with mud, however, he thinks there is an alternative route to be tried. Around 90ft plus, of rope was paid out and with the passage descending at such a gradient the depth attained was 40ft. at least. The only reason for not pushing the sump further was the high rate of air consumption at this depth which would have left us with an inadequate safety margin for the return trip.

## MENDIP PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Does Mendip mean much to you, or would you be content to see it gradually encroached upon and built over? How great is the danger of this happening? Who knows? It is very difficult for an individual to learn in advance of development plans and once they are under way it is too late for resistance. The Secretary of a Preservation Society with the backing of a large number of members would, however, be able to make enquiries from official sources.

There is to be a development plan for the South-West centred on Bristol. A motorway is to be built through the valley to the West of Crooks Peak. Does this mean that Western Mendip, being cut off, will become part of Weston-super-Mare? There is a West Mendip Society concerned with the problem.

The principal aim of the proposed Mendip Preservation Society is to keep itself informed on all matters affecting the Mendip countryside and offer resistance to any scheme which may be detrimental to the rural amenities of the area. What action is needed and what form it should take will, of course, depend upon the wishes of the members. It may be possible to give support to other groups or societies whose aims are similar to our own. We may be able to encourage development which may enhance the natural beauty of the area.

It is felt that the Society may be able to act in other ways. There are historical and other landmarks neglected and falling into disrepair. The Chimney at Harptree and the Buddle House at Horrington Bottom are but two examples. One of the Deer Leap stones at Priddy was removed accidentally and a little persuasion on the part of an individual got it replaced.

The Society should be able to bring pressure to bear to prevent rubbish being dumped in local beauty spots. There is an ever-increasing amount of rubbish being left on Mendip, particularly old cars. There are cases where formerly open land has been fenced and fences extend across public rights of way. These rights will disappear unless the owners of the land are persuaded that fences across footpaths must have stiles.

What can individual members do to help? Firstly write and tell the Secretary of anything you know that is happening. Send in your suggestions. Attend the Inaugural General Meeting. Recruit other members. Show others this article. Have you access to duplicating or printing facilities? Could you produce - say - one circular a year (or ever)? Can you provide the Society with any publicity? Can you display a poster?

Since the Society needs members more than money the minimum subscription is only 2/6d. per annum. As this will only cover the cost of twelve postages a year it is hoped

that those who feel they could or should pay more will do so.

Prior to the Inaugural General Meeting, at which a draft constitution will be presented and a committee elected, the following persons are acting as officers:-

Mr. S. M. Hobbs (Secretary/Treasurer)  
Major R. E. Lawder  
Mr. A. R. Thomas  
Mr. M. M. Thompson

Please join by sending your subscription (min. 2/6d.) together with the form enclosed with this Journal to:-

Mr. S. M. Hobbs,  
Hokerstone Cottage,  
Priddy,  
Somerset.

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE SPELEOLOGICAL YEARBOOK AND DIARY 1965. edited by J.K. Dryden.  
8vo., 120p., illus. (Obtainable from the DRC Publishing Co. Ltd., 24 Southernhay West, Exeter.)

After the usual prepublication fanfare, the 1965 Speleological Yearbook and Diary made its appearance, unlike its predecessor the 1964 edition, before the 1st. January. Apart from this extraordinary achievement, there were two other points which were immediately noticeable between the two editions: first, the price for a single copy has increased from 11/6 to 14/6 (there were reductions for buying in bulk before the 31st August 1964), and secondly, the number of pages has decreased from 184 to 120, but owing to the use of smaller type, the total number of words has probably increased.

The text of the 1965 yearbook shows a distinct improvement over the 1964 edition. Notable improvements being: the new list of speleological terms which is the most complete I have ever seen, the inclusion of a condensed caving bibliography, revision of the section on First Aid, the replacement of the descriptions of the main caving areas for reports of the main work done, and discoveries made, in these areas in the last year, and finally, the 'List of caving organisations in Great Britain' has been increased, and is by far and away the most valuable section of the Yearbook.

There are, however, one or two relapses. First, there is a section 'Some knots used underground'. This includes only three knots; the reef knot, the bowline and the tarbuck knot. I would have thought that the double bowline and the use of the Beaudrier Alpin instead of a waist-length would have deserved mention. Also, I am still left in the dark as to the correct way of tying the tarbuck knot, since the diagram in the Yearbook differs from the diagram in the Wessex Journal No. 88, p. 160. Secondly, there is a section entitled 'Physics and Mechanics in Cave Exploring'. This contains what are supposed to be useful formulae for cavers. Personally, I have been able to cave very happily for several years without using, or having to use, any of these formulae (with the possible exception of the first formula mentioned). All these formulae are very common, and most can be found at the back of any set of four figure log tables, and as a result I can't see much point in their inclusion in a publication of this nature.

Apart from the above however, the text has been generally improved over last year's edition, but owing to the smaller size type, the pages tend to look very cramped. This is certainly very noticeable in the Diary section, where, instead of one week to a page, there are two, and no pages reserved for notes: however, one can't complain since each day now has its date put in.

But in spite of the various improvements, I still feel that the Yearbook and Diary lacks in

certain respects. First, I would have thought that a section on each of the main caving areas, giving details of how to obtain access to the various gated caves would have been invaluable, especially since the onset of the gating mania which now seems to have caught on. One of the advantages of a Yearbook is the fact that it can be fully revised each year, and this advantage is wasted by including information of a permanent nature. But, information of a 'hot' nature (like the list of clubs and societies or details of cave access) seems the ideal thing to include in a Yearbook. A second criticism I have to make is the price. For a book which only lasts a year, 14/6 is very expensive. Admittedly it is possible to get reduced rates, and the quality of the paper is high, but even at the cheapest rate the Yearbook costs more than 'Barrington' which contains, I feel, far more useful information than the Yearbook.

T.E.R.

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### THE JOURNAL.

Gloucester Speleological Society, Vol. 3, No. 1. Nov. 1964. (Jan. 1965) 4to. 32 pp. plans sections, etc. (from A. Iles, 68 Goodmore Crescent, Churchdown, Glos.) at 2/-.

The Gloucester Speleological Society's work is mainly centred around the Forest of Dean, and as the Forest is literally honeycombed with old iron mines, it is only natural that most of this Journal concerns mines and mining.

Undoubtably the most interesting article is by George Hall, entitled "Working at New Dunn Mine". The author worked in this mine during the latter part of the last war, and he describes vividly the everyday experiences of working underground. Although the mine has long since been abandoned, this article is of special interest to the G.S.S. as they are undertaking the job of exploring and surveying in this large, man-made system.

However, the G.S.S. do not spend all their time in old iron mines, as their log of caving trips shows. Visits were made to South Wales, to bottom Pwll Dwfn, to Mendip to traverse Double Trouble in Swildons, and to the caves of South Devon.

The journal also contains reports, with surveys of original explorations and discoveries in the Gloucester area.

A.D.O.

DIVING REVIEW - 1963 (Cave and Cave Diving Group).

4to. 27+ (i) p., plans, sections. (Obtainable from B.M. Ellis, Knockauns, Comwich, Bridgwater at 3s.9d. p.f.)

The most recent Diving Review maintains its usual high standard of factual and objective reports. All dives for 1963 are described, including those where no progress was possible. Six Mendip investigations are reported, as well as eight in Yorkshire and two elsewhere. The Mendip dives were not spectacular in 1963; an underwater dig progressed in St. Cuthbert's Swallet, and Sayes Hole, Balch's Cave and Swildons were also visited. A grade 4 survey of Stoke Lane III and IV is given, showing some 810 feet of passage beyond Sump 2, and there is an account of probes in Sump 4. The survey of Swildons VII is to grade 5 and most of the other reports are illustrated by sketch plans.

T.R.S.

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THE HELL FIRE CLUB by Daniel P. Mannix. 6 vo. 158 pp. regretfully no illustrations. Reprinted 1964 by Four Square Books (The New English Library Ltd., Barnards Inn, Holborn, London, E.C.1.)

One may well wonder just what this book has to do with caving. Well, the answer is quite a lot! This book delineates the most unusual happenings in the Hell Fire Caves of West Wycombe (ref: Show Caves of Great Britain, by A.D. Oldham and A. Court, JI. W.C.C. No. 94 p. 54). The notorious Hell Fire Club was formed in the 18th Century by Sir Francis Dashwood and not unlike some present day caving clubs its objects were devotion to Black Magic, Sexual Orgies and political conspiracies.

The Club originally met in the ruins of an old abbey, they called themselves "The Friars of St. Francis of Wycombe" but as the Abbey became too public Sir Francis had some "caves" excavated in the hill at West Wycombe, supposedly to provide the unemployed villagers with work. The caves were cleverly laid out with statuettes and pornographic Latin puns. Even the plan of the caves formed a sexually significant pattern.

It is a pity that, the author who has obviously done some careful research into this subject had also let his imagination run away with him. The reference to a copy of Kama Sutra in Sir Francis Dashwood's Library is one of the lesser figments of the author's imagination. According to the author this book played an interesting part in the orgies of the club but it was not translated and published in England until 1883 nearly 100 years later!

A few references, especially to the caves would have made this book a useful as well as a licentious volume.

A.D.O.

## LIBRARY NOTES

Donald Thomson

A recent check through the Library at Hillgrove reveals that the 1957 edition, of Barrington's "The Caves of Mendip" and Balch's "The Mendip Caves" are missing. I am sure the motives of the borrowers were of the best as the missing books have been replaced with a number of Thud and Blunders, including some James Bond, which I have not added to the catalogue.

A list of the contents of the Reference Library has been brought up to date. We have the Journals and Newsletters of most of the British caving clubs and a few foreign ones besides. Inevitably over the years the Library has suffered from the depredations of a few long-term borrowers, and there are many gaps. Some societies (The Devon Speleos for instance) are not represented, and quite a number of publications contain little more than family gossip and are probably not worth shelf space.

Many cavers have their own reference libraries, and some may have duplicate copies of publications which they may be prepared to donate. It might help in locating references if the Editor would allow members to ask for the loan of publications not in the Library through the Journal. It is just possible that members may have periodicals from the Library which they have forgotten to return. These can always be returned anonymously, if desired. Duplicates can often be exchanged with other societies for periodicals we need.

Several new publications have been received recently. Oliver Lloyd's monologue on St. Catherine's - Doolin is about to be received. This has already been reviewed in the Journal, and what looked to me like a précis of that review appeared elsewhere over a most unfortunate pseudonym.

The Severn Valley Caving Club is producing a new Journal and we have Volume I No. I. They produced a Newsletter previously but this is on a bigger scale. It reads rather like a copy of a caving log, which is not what one expects in a club journal, but it makes for dramatic reading. Particularly good is an account by M. Wooding of a trip to Cowsh Aven; this is the real stuff of caving. It has useful information about small caves in the North Somerset and Gloucestershire areas. It prints some verse for which I did not care, and it also contains a certain amount of waffle.

We have had the first issue of "The Speleologist". This is published in Exeter and is nothing to do with the Derbyshire Speleos who published a magazine of the same name some time ago. A review of this publication will be appearing shortly in this Journal.

## WESSEX CAVE CLUB

### REFERENCE LIBRARY

#### AXBRIDGE CAVING GROUP & ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

- Newsletters (Monthly): June 1962 to November 1963 inclusive  
January-February and April-November 1964.
- Journals (Quarterly): Vol.-1 No.2 (Sep.1952) to Vol.3 No.1 (Nov. 1956)
- Journals (Annual): 1962. inc.

#### BRISTOL EXPLORATION CLUB

##### Belfry Bulletins (Monthly):

- 1948 Nos. 9, 11, 13, 15, 17.  
1949 Nos. 19, 24, 25.  
1950 Nos. 32, 34, 36, 38, 41.  
1951 Nos. 46/47, 52.  
1953 Nos. 69, 71.  
1954 Nos. 78, 80, 83, 85.  
1955 Nos. 89, 92, 93, 95, 96, 98.  
1956 Nos. 100, Index 1-100, 101, 102, 103, 107.  
1957 Nos. 110, 112, 116, 118.  
1958 Nos. 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 128.  
1961 Nos. 155, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164., 165, 166.  
1962 Nos. 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177.  
1963 Nos. 179, 182, 183, 184, Supplement on Surveying, 185.  
1964 Nos. 191, 193, 201.

##### Caving Reports:

- No.1 Surveying in Redcliffe Caves, Bristol. Jan. 1956.  
No.2 A Preliminary Report on St. Cuthbert's Swallet. Aug. 1956.  
No.3A The Manufacture of Lightweight Caving Ladders.  
No.4 The Shoring of Swallet Cave Entrances. Aug. 1958.  
No.5 A Survey of Headwear and Lighting Available for Caving. Oct.1958.  
No.6 Some Smaller Mendip Caves.  
No.7 A Second Report on St. Cuthbert's Swallet. Feb. 1962.  
No.8 A Preliminary Survey Plan of St. Cuthbert's Swallet. Feb. 1962.  
No.9 Some Smaller Mendip Caves (Vol. II) Aug. 1962.

#### THE BRITISH CAVER (G.Platten)

Vol. 17 (1947) to Vol. 27 (1956). Vol. 31. Vol. 37.

#### BRITISH SPELEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

- Advance Programme of the Second Annual Speleological Conference and Exhibition 1937.  
Programme of ditto 1937.  
Speleological Abstracts Vol. 1 No. 1.  
Cave Science Vol. 3 No. 17. and No. 23. No.3 January 1948.

## CAVE DIVING GROUP

Indexes to Submerged Passages & Sumps: Section I Somerset April 1957.

" " " " Devonshire " "

Annual Reviews: 1952 1955-57 1961-62

Miscellaneous Publications:

1) The Oral Resuscitation Method of Artificial Respiration (from the directions of the Norwegian Association of Anaesthetists)

2) The Expired Air Techniques of Artificial Respiration

(reprint from The Telecommunications Journal of Australia Vol. 12 No. 6)

Letters to Members! 1946 - 1, 2, 3, 5.

1947 - 6, 8.

Since 1947 - 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25,

26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32 (1962)

## CAVE RESEARCH GROUP

Newsletters: Nos. 1 (Feb.1947) to 30; 32-46; 48-51; 53-54; 56-70/71; 83-89; 92.

Occasional Publications:

Cave Fauna Publication No. 1 Parts 1 & 2.

A Brief Glossary of Welsh Topographical Names. Arthur Hill.

Biological Records. Part VII 1957-1959.

Some Cave Accident Statistics. David E. Leitch 1962.

A Key Plan of Gaping Gill. Butcher & Gemmell.

Reports on the Investigations of Pen Park Hole, Bristol. Tratman.

Derbyshire Lead Mining Glossary. Nellie Kirkham.

Ogof Agen Allwedd. David Leitch.

Transactions:

Vol. 1 No. 2 Aug. 1949 & No.3 March 1950.

Vol. 2 No. 1 June 1952

Vol. 3 No. 1 June 1954

Vol. 4 No. 1 Dec. 1955

## CERBERUS SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Newsletters: June 1962 to September 1964.

Other Publications:

1) Committee & Members List May 1962.

2) Balch Cave Report.

3) Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme "Caving & Potholing Syllabus".

4) Letters to Clubs re access to Belch's Cave.

Occasional Publications: No. 1 January 1964.

## CHELSEA SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Newsletters: Vol. 4 Nos. 1-12 (Oct. 1961 to Sep. 1962)

Records: Vol. 3 July 1963 Secret Tunnels in Surrey.

Newsletters: Vol. 5 Nos. 1-12 (Oct. 1962 to Sep. 1963)

Vol. 6 Nos. 1-12 (Oct. 1963 to Sep. 1964)

#### CRAVEN POTHOLE CLUB

Journal: Vol. 1 No. 2 1950, No. 6 1954.

#### DERBYSHIRE SPELEOLOGICAL GROUP

The Speleologist: Jan. 1953, No. 2 Dec.1953, No. 3 Nov.1954, No. 4 May 1956.

#### EAST DEVON CAVING GROUP

Bulletins: No.12 Dec.1962, No.13 May 1963.

“Caving” (Quarterly Publication): Nos. 1-3 (Autumn 1962-Spring 1963).

Booklet on Aims and Constitution of E.D.C.G.

#### HEREFORD CAVING CLUB

Newsletters: No. 10 (Jan. 1957-April 1958), No. 14 Dec.1961.

#### MENDIP CAVING GROUP

Journal 1962.

#### NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Bulletins (Bi-annual): No. 16 Dec. 1954, 20 Nov.1958, 24 Pt. II July 1962,  
25 Pt. 1 Jan.1963, Vol. 26 Nos.1-3 (Jan-July 1964).

Occasional Papers:

No. 2 Vertical Shafts in Limestone Caves. April 1955.

No. 3 Notes on the Plethodontid Salamanders Nov. 1956.

N.S.S. News: Vol. 20 No. 8 Pt. 1 to Vol. 22 No. 10 (Oct.1964)  
Vols. 7-17 except Vol. 8 Nos. 7 & 11, Vol. 9 Nos. 6,8,11.  
Vol. 11 Nos. 4,7,9,11,12. Vol. 12 Nos. 1-2, 5-10,12.  
Vol. 14 Nos. 1-7, 10. Vol. 15 Nos. 1,4,8,11,12.  
Vol. 16 Nos. 1,2,4,7,10,12. Vol. 17 Nos. 1,5,7,9,11,12.

#### PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP

Newsletters: Nos.8-13 No. 2 (Special No.), (More or less monthly).

#### SEVERN VALLEY CAVING CLUB

Newsletters: No. 5 Aug. 1963 to No. 10 Feb.1964. Vol. 2 Issue 1 April 1964.

Journal: Vol. 1 No. 1 Winter 1964-65.

#### SHEPTON MALLET CAVING CLUB

Journals: Series 3 No. 1 (May 1961) to No. 8 (Nov.1964) inclusive.

#### SOMERSET ARCHAEOLOGICAL & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Proceedings 1926 Excavations in Chelm's Combe, Cheddar.

#### SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

Newsletters: No. 1 May 1952 - No. 47 June 1964 except Nos. 7,24,27,30,34.

Special Publications: Nos. 1-7.

#### UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Proceedings: Vol. 5 No.3 1944-1946. Vol. 9 Reprint "Lamb Leer in the 17th Century".  
Vol. 6 No.3 1950-1952. Vol. 9 No.2 & No.3. Vol. 10 No.2.

#### WELLS NATURAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY & MENDIP NATURE RESEARCH COM.

Reports 1914 to 1949.

#### WESTMINSTER SPELEOLOGICAL GROUP

London Caver Nos. 1 and 2.  
Bulletins: May 1963 to December 1964.

#### WESSEX CAVE CLUB

Journal Vol. VII. Reprint "Not in Barrington or Oldham" from Jnl. 90. June 1963

#### YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS CLUB

Journal: Vol. IV (No.12) 1912 to Vol. VI (No.20) 1932 except No.15.

#### MISCELLANEOUS AND FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS

Commercial literature on various American caves (Carlsbad New Mexico, Endless, Skyline, Shenandoah and Dixie Caves, Virginia).  
Cuba Con La Mochila al Hombro. Antonio Nunez Jimenez.  
Easier Climbs in the Avon Gorge, Bristol, April 1964.  
Mines of Mendip - Gough.  
Report on the Excavations on Lansdown, May June and September 1908.  
The Caves of Mendip - Balch.  
Permission to Explore Northern Caves and Potholes (C.R.O.)  
Mendip Cave Survey Colloquium 31st August 1963.  
Show Caves of Great Britain. Oldham & Court.  
An Introduction to Caving and Potholing for Novices. Bryant & Kenney.  
The Log of the Wookey Hole Exploration Expedition 1935.  
The Speleologist No. 1 January 1965.