





### FOREWORD

At long last the Club Library has managed to find its way to Hillgrove and, thanks to some good work by Cdr. Lawder, is now installed in a bookcase (locked). A list is given on pp 201 - 203 of this issue, together with details of how to obtain loan of the books. We hope members will co-operate with the Librarian, Richard Kenney, in making this an effective system. Additions to the collection will be reported in the Journal, and we will always be pleased to receive gifts of books, which will be duly acknowledged. Phil Davies has given the Club two bound volumes of the Club Journals, and we hope to make a complete set of all the circulars published since the Club was formed. Copies of some of the earlier issues are missing from the Club's records, and we will be pleased to hear from any of our older members, who would help us by loaning a set, so that we can get stencils cut of the missing issues.

The Mendip Rescue Organization at its Annual Meeting decided that, in view of the experience gained at the recent rescue from Eastwater Cavern, it would be as well to arrange a "field day", when rescue practice can be held and then discussed. The party is expected to consist of wardens and helpers chosen by them.

Members have reported that all of the short metal ladder tethers are missing from the tackle hut. This has resulted in considerable inconvenience and, in addition, the Club has to meet the cost of new ones. Perhaps members using the

tackle will make certain that the gear is returned to the hut after each trip.

Hon. Sec., Frank Frost, 22 Wolseley Rd., Bristol, 7.  
Phone, Bristol 44221.

Hon. Treas., G. Williams, 1 Redhill Drive, Fishponds, Bristol.

We welcome the following new Members:

S.G. BANKS, Ways End, Malmaine Drive, Frenchay, Bristol.

Miss P.M. CHARD, 2 Elmgrove Rd., Bristol, 6.

N.H.L.W. CLEAVE, 19, Henleaze Rd., Bristol.

N.W. DAVIS, 31 Hill View, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.

R.W. HORTON, 8 The Glen, Durdham Downs, Bristol, 6.

E.C. SMART, 82 Bishopthorpe Rd., Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.

R.J. SMART, 302 Gloucester Rd., Bristol, 7.

A. SURRELL, 26 Avenue Rd., Handsworth, Birmingham, 21.

R.W. TUDWAY, 83 Bell Barn Rd., Bristol, 9.

L.K. WALDEN, 27 Caledonia Place, Bristol, 8.

B.J. WILSON, Clifton College, Bristol, 8.

Engagement

We are very pleased to announce the engagement of Philip Davies to Patricia Mary Chard.

Death

R.T. Sellers, on the 10th April, 1957. An obituary notice appears on page 221.

## Future Events

G.B. Guest Days (for Wessex C.C.); June 1/2nd, July 13/14th, Aug. 17/18th.

Geo-electrical Survey over Lamb Leer: Aug.24th to 29th.

## Pen Park Hole

Providing it does not interfere with the work of exploration and survey now going on, we will be able to run a Club trip to the cave in the near future. Names to the Hon. Secretary.

## Eastwater Surveys

A limited number of copies of Denis Warburton's survey are available to members at a cost of 3s. 6d. a set, postage extra. Apply to the Hon. Secretary.

## Club Supper

Saturday, June 1st, at 7 o'clock at the Club Headquarters, Hillgrove. Numbers limited to 25. Bring your own liquor and money for the food; also some spare cutlery. Names to the Hon. Secretary.

## News Item

Two Queen's Scouts of the 7th Battersea (London Group, affiliated to the Wessex C.C., have successfully passed the Caving Section of the Climber Badge and both P/L(S) Ken Issott and S/Sct Albert Fletcher wish to convey their sincere thanks to those members of the W.C.C. who over the past year have given them so much guidance, knowledge and advice towards this achievement.

## CLUB LIBRARY.

The Club Library is now housed at Hillgrove and a list of books available to Members follows these notes.

Hon. Librarian. R.R.Kenney, 20 Mary Road, Wells, Somerset.

There are two systems in use for the issue and return of books.

1. By written application to the Librarian. A fee of 5d must be enclosed to cover the cost of postage and packing.

Books will be issued for a loan period of one month in the first instance.

Renewal must be by written application.

2. When applying to the Hon. Secretary for a hut key a request can also be made for a library key.

An issue book has been provided for the library cupboard.

The person holding the key is responsible for all issues and returns during his or her tenancy.

Please keep the library locked when not in immediate use.

The loan period and renewal systems are as above.

## FOUND

In a library book: one sheet of postage stamps. Will the owner please contact the Librarian.

NON - FICTION.

- ATKINSON, R.J.C. Field Archaeology.  
BALCH, H.E. Mendip Caves. (2 copies)  
Wookey Hole.  
BARFORD, J.E.Q. Climbing in Britain.  
BEER, G.R. de Alps and Men.  
BROWNE, Rev. G.F. Ice Caves of France and  
Switzerland. (1865).  
CASTERET, N. Une vie de Chauve-Souris.  
Au fond des Gouffres.  
Ten years under the earth.  
My Caves. (2 copies)  
Cave Men New and Old.  
La longue course.  
CHAMBERS, Mineralogical Dictionary.  
CHEVALIER, P. Subterranean Climbers.  
CULLINGFORD, C.H.D. British Caving.  
DAWKINS, Sir. W.B. Cave Hunting.  
DUBKIN, L. The White Lady.  
GOUGH, J.W. Mines of Mendip.  
NORTH, F.F. The River Scenery at the Head of the  
Vale of Neath.  
PORTEOUS, C. Caves and Caverns of Peakland  
RAMSAY, A.C. Physical Geology and Geography of  
Great Britain (1878).  
ROYSE, J. Ancient Castleton Caves.  
SERKO, Dr. A.) The Cave of Postojna.  
and IVAN, M. )  
SMYTHE, F. British Mountaineers.  
Kamet Conquered.  
Mountaineering Holiday.  
THORNBUR, N. Britain Underground.  
Pennine Underground  
WEITÉ, P. La Spéléologie.  
WELLBYE, R. Picturesque Touring Areas in the  
British Isles.

## FICTION

GARVE, A.	A Hole in the Ground.
VERNE, J.	A Journey into the Interior of the Earth.

## PAMPHLETS, JOURNALS & SURVEYS.

STONEHENGE: Past and Present.	
BELFRY BULLETIN.	16 Issues.
BRITISH CAVER.	5 Issues.
BURNLEY CAVING CLUB NEWSLETTER	2 Issues.
CAVE RESEARCH GROUP.	
Newsletters.	No. 12 to present.
Constitution.	1 Copy.
Transactions.	Complete Set.
Publications.	3 Issues.
Occasional Publications. Complete Set.	
CAVE SCIENCE.	2 Issues.
DIE HÖHLE.	8 Issues.
JOURNAL OF THE CRAVEN POTHOLE CLUB.	2 Issues.
JOURNAL OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.	3 Issues.
JOURNAL OF THE TORQUAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.	1 Issue.
M.N.R.C. Swildon's Hole.	(2 Copies.)
	Waldegrave Swallet. Balcombe, F.G.
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, U.S.A.	19 Issues.
Newsletters.	
Occasional Papers.	2 Issues.
NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE FIELD CLUB.	1 Issue.
SORBY SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.	1 Issue.
STOKE-ON-TRENT- POTHOLE CLUB.	1 Issue.
SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB.	4 Issues.
U.B.S.S.	3 Issues.
W.C.C.	13 Issues.
YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS CLUB	10 Issues.
SUTHERLAND CAVE PLANS.	

R.R. Kenney 26.4.57

## THE JOYS OF A "PARADISE REGAINED" SHERPA

In a rash moment on August Bank Holiday, 1956 I agreed to join a supply trip on the Sunday to Dennis Kemp's camp in Paradise Regained. I had previously found the Blasted Boss squeeze, leading into the St. Paul's Series from Tratman's Temple, to be just too tight for me and accordingly armed myself with a hammer and cold chisel. The prime object of the expedition was to carry in Ben Dawes' kit, which task was largely performed by three Stoke-on-Trent Pothole Club members, who were having their first trip in the cave.

On arrival at the Blasted Boss squeeze I confirmed that it was in fact too tight for me and so settled down to a solitary stalagmite chipping session, which required some considerable contortions. After I had hammered away for about an hour, Richard Kenney returned from the Mud Sump to keep me company. The abolition of a ridge of stalagmite made the squeeze just passable, so I passed and repassed it in order to see the first part of St. Paul's Grotto; Richard and I then left the cave, having been underground six hours. While I had been occupied with squeeze-expanding the others had been lugging the kit to the camp site in Paradise Regained. The baggage included one item which is not a common piece of cavers' paraphernalia, namely a bottle of milk wrapped up in that day's "News of the World" and Saturday's "Times". Thus the supply party was able to tell the campers that this was the "milk run" trip with perfect truth. The campers goggled at the fresh milk and exclaimed delightedly, but the "News of the World" met with a rather cool reception, as it appeared that the campers would have preferred the "Observer"; However, the sheets were put to good use as table cloths.

That night in the local hostelry the cry was for out-sherpas; my conquest of the squeeze was held against me, until I agreed to go (fool that I was!), which brings us to the second chapter of this gripping epic.

On Monday morning George Weston and I rose reluctantly at 10 a.m. (we were due at the cave at 10.30) and in due course motored over to Dennis Kemp's surface camp, where we sat in the Land Rover with the rain bucketing down and eagerly discussed the delightful prospect of getting into our wet caving kit and going underground once more. We were still waiting for Norman Brooks, who was unavoidably delayed, when Len Dawes popped out of Swildon's like a jack-in-the-box. He had got tired of waiting for us and had come out from the camp site alone, getting stuck for twenty minutes on the way. We decided that we could wait no longer, so Roger (?), George Weston and I donned our apparel and set off down the cave. The trip was devoid of incident and we reached the camp site in 1½ hours from the entrance. The campers greeted us with a fog of gellignite smoke and a cup of tea; the party then split up, three going down Blue Pencil Passage and the other two to investigate the results of a bang in another passage. Blue Pencil Passage certainly deserves its name and removed quite sizeable chunks of me, but it was worth it to hear the famous stream at the end. We were removing the results from the last bang, when a body was heard scraping down the passage. Who could it be?

It was Norman Brooks, who had followed us down alone and found his own way through Paradise Regained, a far from easy task. He did get lost

once and got quite worried, but was directed by the smell of gelignite fumes coming through a little hole he had several times passed and dismissed as the way on. After a little more digging Dennis Kemp went in to lay another charge and we started to make our way up that — — ! ! passage. Several times, as I forced myself up places that I had had difficulty in getting down, I pondered on my choice of sport, but decided it was worth it, if only because it was so nice when one stopped. It was a great relief to emerge into the wide open spaces of Paradise Regained, where we had another cup of tea. George and I then decided to move off before the others, because we were getting cold.

Our share of the kit was a small shoulder pack, a lorry inner tube full of clothing and secured with quite unnecessarily large angle iron clamps at the ends, but with no provision for carrying, and a normal sized kit bag, which ended up almost too heavy for me to lift with an arm alone. The trip through the stooping bits of Paradise Regained was tedious, particularly on the uphill mud banks, but not too difficult. We left the Mud Sump behind (very nice and dry it was, too) and had a nice little struggle past the pool in Balch's Grotto. Here we added to our load a Nife set, that I had brought in so far; lucky it was we had it, as George forgot to light a candle before changing carbide and his matches wouldn't light. Mine had got accidentally left in Paradise Regained.

We staggered on up the streamway with the bags seeming to get heavier all the time. As my method of getting the kit bag across pools was to drop it in, kick at it, climb round and collect from the far side, it probably was getting heavier!

While climbing the Double Pots encumbered by his "sausage" George satisfied a long-standing ambition by falling in. We had a long tussle with the kit bag at the 20 ft. ladder. The only means of raising it we had was the ladder itself (blush!), and the string I tied the bag on with repeatedly broke. At the third attempt we got it up and staggered on to the 40 ft. pot. George climbed it first and started to pull up the "sausage" with a rope. I had tied the "sausage" in the middle of the line; I now tied the kit bag to the end and climbed to free the "sausage". Due probably to my recent four consecutive ascents of the 20 ft. ladder my arm muscles started to fail and I came unpleasantly close to falling off, but made it to the ledge underneath the pipe, from where I could fend off the tackle and help pull.

And that is really the end of the story, except of course for those wretched little entrance passages. I am sure that I will never again complain about carrying ordinary tackle through them. For the record, George and I took 4½ hours from the camp to the surface and were underground 7½ hours altogether. The cup of coffee given us at the surface camp was very welcome and after a short rest we motored languidly back to Hillgrove, where we ate after a fashion. After this exertion we felt fit only to loll in chairs and discuss the day.

R. E. Lawder.

## EASTWATER RESCUE

On Sunday afternoon, March. 17th, 1957, Roger Forse, a Bedminster scout, of 19 years, went down Eastwater Swallet. It was his fifth, and probably last, caving trip. He is a senior scout and was in the company of the troop leader and the scoutmaster. On the way out, Forse fell the forty feet from the ledge at the Second Vertical to the bottom, and placed before the Mendip Rescue Organization the most serious problem with which it has yet had to contend.

Several factors made the accident likely. The party was apparently too inexperienced for a rather difficult cave, and they were certainly ill equipped. Forse himself was wearing shoes with smooth rubber soles, and a beret. It was decided that a round trip should be conducted, and to make this possible the party descended by the Dolphin Pot Vertical, while another scout party withdrew the ladder and tackled the Two Verticals Route. Before he reached the Dolphin Pot Vertical, Forse was showing signs of fatigue, but in spite of this the party continued, and by the time they had returned from the end to the bottom of the Second Vertical, Forse was very tired indeed. In retrospect it is difficult to piece together just what happened next. Forse tied what he presumably thought was a bowline in the life line and after some delay he got onto the first rung of the ladder. The slack on the life line was taken in, tightened, and suddenly went slack. Forse shouted, "My God, the line's gone!" and after a brief pause lost balance and fell 40 ft. to the bottom.

The party sent out one of their number who contacted a Wessex Party at the Eastwater Hut. One of these then rang the Wells Police, who

fortunately contacted the M.R.O. Wardens, just as they were about to leave for Bristol. The first alerts were sent out at about 5 p.m., one and a quarter hours after the accident, and throughout the evening further alerts were sent out from Bristol to provide relief parties. Cavers turned out from Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare, besides from the Mendip area, so that altogether at least 40 people were present.

Meanwhile a number of small parties descended the cave very soon after the accident. The Medical Warden arrived about half an hour after the call out, bringing a St. John's carrying sheet, which went down with the second party, followed by the Medical Warden himself. The information originally brought out of the cave by the scout suggested that the accident had occurred on the Dolphin Pot route, but the first of the rescue parties corrected this and sent out accurate information. There was also a lack of information regarding the tackle available in the cave, so that the second party found themselves short of hauling ropes. However, they wrapped the patient in a blanket and the carrying sheet and began hauling operations with a rope attached to the sheet.

At the head of the Second Vertical the Medical Warden was able to make some assessment of the injuries. His patient was unconscious and it appeared probable, from the extensive bruising of his right eye, that he had a fractured skull. It also seemed possible that he had some fractured ribs. During his progress through the cave his condition varied, and although he appeared to have quite definite evidence of brain damage, this did not get any worse. He was noticed to be very restless in the "S" bend, when he was lying

on what was later found to be a fractured collar bone.

Progress through the cave was quite rapid. Hauling up the verticals was comparatively easy, although the constricted region above the Second Vertical was much more difficult. At the First Vertical it was greatly helped by belaying the M.E.O. pulley to rocks above the ladder belay. The most difficult places were the constricted passages between the verticals and in the "S" bend, and on four occasions the patient had to be hauled over prostrate rescuers. The "S" bend, which was particularly difficult, took two hours to pass. The Canyon and Boulder Ruckle proved comparatively easy and good progress was made.

Forse was brought to the surface at 3.45 am., and very soon after the last of the rescuers was checked off at the entrance. In the Eastwater Hut he was wrapped in blankets and warmed with hot water bottles. The ambulance from Wells got lost on Mendip but eventually arrived and the patient was dispatched to the Bristol Royal Infirmary. Once the clothes and stretcher were removed he improved rapidly but did not regain consciousness for a further 24 hours. He was x-rayed later, confirming the fractured ribs and collar bone, but no fracture of the skull was detected.

So much for the rescue. Every call out illustrates improvements that should be made, and there were lessons to be learned from this one. It has been suggested that there were too many rescuers. I think this is rather a good thing, especially in a tiring cave like Eastwater, as relief parties are then easier to recruit.

I do not think the time of mobilization could

have been speeded up. The first rescue party was down the cave before the Medical Warden arrived thirty minutes after the call out. The remaining parties were summoned as they were considered necessary, and in fact were waiting ready at the entrance an hour or two before they had to go down. In regard to the speed of mobilization it might be useful to remind people that if they are likely to be called on a rescue they should keep caving gear (including lighting) ready, preferably packed. The organization of rescue equipment is purely the concern of the M.R.O. Committee of Wardens, and this Eastwater rescue has shown this to be efficient.

Many subsidiary people attended to back up the rescue squads. Listing and later checking off all people who entered the cave is a good idea and worked well at Eastwater. The continual processing of tea and food on the surface is very necessary for tired parties and was very adequately done.

This rescue showed how important it is to have one of the wardens waiting at the 'phone to call out reserves from the alerted groups as these become necessary. In the Eastwater rescue this was done by a Bristol Warden, in consultation with those in charge at the cave. The latter took more than usual care with public relations; at least the Press did not produce its usual garbled account.

Rather unfortunately, Roger Forse's father arrived unknown to the rescuers and waited around the hut for several hours. During this time he was treated to loud, lengthy, gloomy prognostications, delivered with much relish, on his son's condition. Many people were guilty. One can never be sure relatives are not present, and I

think it should be emphasized that such discussions are unnecessary.

However, all was well in the end. My wife and I visited Roger Forse in the Bristol Royal Infirmary a few days later. He still had a black eye and sore ribs, but looked very well. As the most important participant in this drama he has a right to have his views recorded. "The M.R.O." he said "is a very fine organization, and I would like to thank everybody who came and helped."

Donald Thomson

## MENDIP NOTES

### Second thoughts

Going on cave rescues has had a most unfortunate effect on Cheramodytes. He can't look at a squeeze without wondering how to pull a body through it. However, as he heard one man say at Eastwater, "What a good thing it was that it didn't happen the other side of a sump."

It is easy to blame people for not observing the "caving code"; inadequate clothing, poor lights, no helmet, shoes with smooth soles. But how many of us are blameless ourselves? Casteret used to go sumping with nothing on. He said he found he got dry quicker that way. It is certainly true that no clothes are better than too few. I've done a quick Goatchurch or Sidcot with hardly anything on, and felt how refreshing it is to be able to sweat freely. But it does slow one down such a lot trying not to get scratched. What then of rubber soles? I have known good cavers who prefer plimsols, but I would not recommend them. They are treacherous on muddy

slopes and wear out quickly. Eric Hensler used to do a certain amount of solo caving. "It is a practice," he says, "which I discourage in other people". I started caving alone in the far off days, when I had never met another caver. Even in recent years, when I ought to have known better, I have done a full Swildon's by myself. It is a most interesting experience; not alarming but very lonely. I wouldn't choose to do it again.

A calculated risk is not always wrong. When things go wrong it is usually due to a combination of circumstances including carelessness. One should always be on the look out for the "lame duck" in the party; look after him, relieve him of his burden, and if necessary send him home with another chap.

### Further advances

In Stoke Lane Swallet, Derek Ford tells me that the survey is nearing completion. He has had a lot of fun mapping the little-known series behind the Throne Room, which is approached by a climb up the recess to the left of the entrance to the Princess Grotto. After a short crawl a 20 ft. ladder pitch drops into a spacious rambling passage, which leads into the roof of the main streamway near the Second Cascade. At the end there is an attractive little grotto which appears not to have been entered before. It is so remote and so prettily decorated, that he feels sure it must be the place of seclusion for the cave god himself.

In Swildon's Black Hole Series, Trevor Shaw and Garry Witts have added another 26 ft. by chipping away at the stalagmite cemented

boulder choke at the far end of Fool's Paradise. They tell me that it is very unstable and dangerous, and that if anyone wants these extra 26 feet they can have them.

### Cave owners and their caves

I have often wondered how many of the cave owners have been down their own caves. Not just the show caves, I mean, though even there they have had adventures. Wing Cdr. Hodgkins once got stranded in the upper series of Wookey Hole without a light. Mr. Stock has been through the sump in Stoke Lone and holds his cave in affectionate regard. Mr. Maine has the same feeling for Swildon's, which he often descended in his younger days. Mr. Young has often been down G.B. Cave but not, I think, down Longwood or August Hole. I wasn't at all sure whether Mr. Weeks had ever been down Eastwater. One day, when we were changing in his barn, he was driving in his cows for milking and he came, in to have a chat with us.

"When did you last go down your cave"? said I.

"I've never been down it."

"Would you like to come down with us this afternoon?"

"Would you like to milk my cows?"

Cheramodytes.

## MUD IN THE PEAK.

On our first trip to Peak Cavern, Derbyshire, we had to rescue the guide's wheelbarrow from the flooded cave. Heavy rain had made caving impossible. In January we returned, this time with a group of London University Mountaineers.

The wind was bitter and the less hardy climbers decided to join us on a trip round Peak Cavern. Les Salmon was to be our guide, and obviously going down a Show Cave would be more comfortable than climbing a wet and windy mountain. My party changed into boiler suits and waited for the Salmon group. The climbers pulled on old jerseys and began to look worried. The Salmon group arrived very late and encased in exposure suits.

"We syphon the mud-duck out but it fills up again in about four hours."

"What happens then?"

"Well you have to dive it - just a sump you know."

The first-ever cavers were not as worried as we were. They, we thought, did not quite appreciate exactly what they were in for. All changed and went on.

The entrance of Peak is a rope walk and is one of the most impressive cavern gateways in Britain. Past the cave-diving nursery in to the public part of the cave. A river way that is wide and unimpressive: a London Underground with a river where the trains should run. At a divide of the ways the cave becomes wet and the guides went on to drain the sump. We wandered

and found to the right of the way-on a superb little wishing-well at the end of a short wriggle. When we came back the main party had gone on. We followed through some very wet muddy parts and came into the mud duck. The queue waited.

Just ahead one anarak-covered climber decided that this was not for him. I saw what he meant. The duck was about four by two and a half feet and three feet down. It requires a sort of swallow dive into a red mud abyss and a flounder under the rock grill. After this spectacular start you wriggle in a two foot high crawl past the syphon gear and under two other grills. The duck is in three parts. Although air is available in each of these sections, without draining it would be a very difficult obstacle.

More mud and water, then a T-passage followed by a 20 ft. ladder drop passage divide. A huge rift chamber and an endless passage of comfortable proportions ended the cave. On and on in the passages to a final boulder chamber. At this point we noticed that the four hours were up.

In the duck things were very different. There was no comfortable air-space and what remained dry of our clothes was finally steeped. I dived and raised my head: it struck the rock and I dived again. One of my friends with glasses had to be led to a waterfall before he could see a thing.

One of the climbers had this comment of Peak:

"I don't mind going through mud -it's going under it I object to."

Mike F. Woods.

## A PROFESSIONAL CAVER IN ANGOLA

(The original manuscript of this article was lost about 3 years ago, somewhere between Angola and the Editor's desk - rather nearer the latter, we fear. Fortunately Dr. Stanton, who recently returned to this country had a spare copy with him and this we publish.)

Few Somerset cavers can view the prospect of a two and a half years absence from Mendip and Mendippers with complacency, and when in October, 1953, I left London Airport en route for Angola I was no exception. The maps and books which I had been able to study indicated that I was going to a country of steaming jungle and stifling semi-desert, with the intervening no-mans-land occupied by impenetrable elephant grass. One of the geological maps, it is true, showed small areas of limestone in the far north of the country, but I was still hazy about the exact position of the Company's mining concession and thought it too much to hope that I should land up anywhere near one of them.

Such are the ways of Fate, however, that for my first geological survey I was allotted a region about the size of Somerset, right in the middle of one of these limestone areas. The principal (and only) town is Uige, which can boast some 500 white inhabitants, and is marked on maps of Angola as a major town. The region is currently enjoying great prosperity as a result of the high price of coffee, and the many "picadas" or tracks leading to the fazendas make it one of the most accessible in Angola (where roads of all descriptions are about as frequent as A-roads in the Scottish Highlands.)

The country about Uige is rather like that

between Bristol and Mendip; steeply undulating hill country with the scarp of a great plateau occupying the distant horizon on two sides. Most of the valleys are filled with jungle, and the green hills, so like downland when seen from a distance, are found on closer inspection to be covered with razor-edged grass from three to eight feet high. The limestones outcrop - to English eyes - in the strangest fashion; thus vertical strata often produce parallel walls of rock ten or more feet high, that go marching away over hill and dale for half a mile or more. Again, a steep grassy hill the size and shape of Glastonbury Tor may be capped by an enormous solitary limestone pillar, that matches the old tower. Even where the strata are horizontal, the long grey scarps such as those of Ingleborough and Co. Clare, with their attendant screes, are absent; and their place is taken by huge isolated humps of bare rock, fluted by the intense tropical solution into fantastic minarets and pinnacles. The various strata weather into characteristic colours, depending, like the stalactites of the Cheddar Caves, on their mineral contents; these are surprisingly constant.

On the very first day that my brigade - consisting of myself, a Portuguese assistant, and half a dozen native boys - spent in the field, we happened across the caves of Chinganzanbi. Here a mass of limestone, of much the same size and ruggedness as Wells Cathedral, is so honeycombed with pits and passages that one may penetrate a fair distance in any direction solely by the light entering through the holes in walls and roof. There are entrances at several levels in the rock, but in the higher tunnels one can seldom go far before being brought up at a shaft which occupies all the width of the passage, and

drops through darkness, into the green gloom of a vestibule far below. Putting Chinganzambi onto paper would tax the skill of even such veterans as Denis Warburton and his Eastwater surveyors!

Although limestone outcrops are quite common, they are usually well separated from one another, and I soon realised that to see continuous geological sections I must traverse stream courses either above or below ground. There are many objections to river traversing, since apart from the heat and the need to cut through the undergrowth, one encounters mosquitos and tsetse flies in abundance, and there are also unpleasant diseases to be picked up from the water. The objections to cave exploring are - well, just what? So I became a professional caver.

The brigade soon entered into the spirit of the thing. Even the boys, with their wages of about £4 per month, bought torches, and used their local knowledge to show me the most promising sites - though their interest was largely gastronomic!

The region is profusely dotted with swallet depressions, most of which are tree-filled and thus conspicuous in the expanses of elephant grass. (The grass would render them almost inaccessible, were it not for the brigade's ancient Land Rover and Costa Leite's flair for driving blind.) The majority are floored with soil and the natives grow vegetables in the shade of the trees. Sometimes there is a small cliff with a half choked hole below, and now and then in the deeper dolines, one finds a large cave with a stream entering. These active swallets are generally short, but with cascades and potholes their life is a merry one, and they are the pleasantest caves to explore.

East Twin Swallet in Burrington would not be out of place among them. During the torrential thunderstorms of the wet season most of these swallets fill completely with water, and the sight of huge tree-trunks wedged at unlikely angles in the roof is a sober reminder of this. The swallet walls are of smooth clean rock, and owing to the seasonal flooding stalactites are rare and small. So far I have not yet found a swallet with a possible descent of more than 50 ft. to the rising, and thus I have felt little urge to continue when the way on is less than 3 ft. high. There is always another cave not far away.

In the Uige district the dry caves outnumber the wet ones by four or five to one. They are to be found wherever limestone is exposed, and occur with equal frequency on the tops and sides of hills, in cliffs and in river gorges. Their position and character suggest that they are ancient solution cavities, formed beneath a long-vanished water table, and now being uncovered and destroyed by erosion. Often one can explore for several hundred yards before being halted at the object already mentioned. These caves usually consist of aimlessly winding tunnels and chambers, frequently interconnecting, roughly on a level and floored with red soil. Formations of the dry earthy type are abundant, and are sometimes very large.

The most noticeable feature of these dry caves, and the one which caused me great apprehension at first (and still does, to a lesser degree) is their fauna. I have never yet met a snake in a cave, nor a leopard, but I am assured that if I continue with this ridiculous pursuit I certainly will. So like a true son of Mendip I am careful always to let one or two of the native boys get ahead of me!

The most immediately repulsive cave-dwellers are the giant brown crickets that creep and jump over roof and walls. Some varieties have enormously long antennae, which tickle the forehead and ears of the unwary caver when he is too close to the roof. Accompanying these creatures in many caves is an even more unpleasant beast with eight legs, which I suppose is a sort of crab. The forelegs are armed with useful looking nippers, and the complete object is about the size and thickness of a fried egg. Only slightly smaller is a stoutly built hairy spider that squeaks when it is cornered.

Among the smaller insects several breeds of fly and mosquito cluster in dark patches on the roof, taking wing in a dense cloud on the approach of a torch. On one occasion I thought I saw fireflies in a cave, but this may have been an optical illusion. In caves that are much used by animals a variety of tick may be found crawling on the floor; it swells to the size of a pea on animals, but does not appear to thrive on man.

The only macro-fauna that I have encountered (apart from sundry writhings and scufflings in caves left, for that reason, unvisited) are toads and bats. The former are numerous, and their mass exodus towards sundown is an amusing sight. My first meeting with a colony of giant fruit bat underground was unforgettable. In the light of my torch the cave seemed full of eyes, glowing orange, and suddenly they all took flight and glinted past me into the remoter passages. The fruit bat is about the size of a rat and is much prized by the native for food. The bat hunt, on exploring a new cave, is the highlight of the day for the boys. Another kind of bat is very small

and hangs in clusters from the roof, each hat clinging to those above it. If dropped onto the floor they run about like mice. One of these snail bats (unringed) was black and white in patches.

It should be noticed that I have made no search for cave fauna; rather the position has been reversed, since I have often had to take evasive action to prevent the fauna catching me.

The recent discoveries of very early human remains in East Africa, only 100 miles away, make the prospect of excavating an Angolan cave an alluring one. There are difficulties, however, in choosing a suitable site, since in this climate a cave that was habitable a million years ago is unlikely to exist now. Nevertheless, any excavation should yield interesting results.

To conclude this report of the Wessex Cave Club (Angolan Branch) it must be admitted that, diverting though the Angolan caves may be, they aren't a patch on Mendip.

W.I. Stanton,  
January, 1954.

### OBITUARY

We very much regret to announce the death of Robert Tate Sellers at the age of 27, who has been a member of the Club for about 7 years. He was killed in the early hours of the 10th April, 1957, when his vintage Bentley crashed and burst

into flames "between Ilkley and Skipton, Yorks. The car had mounted the grass verge and struck a tree before overturning. No other vehicles were involved and the blazing wreck was discovered by a lorry driver, who summoned the police and fire brigade. Bob was returning from Essex to his home at Threshfield in Yorkshire.

Bob's interest in caving arose out of his keenness for biology, which took him underground in his local caves in Wharfedale. He joined the Wessex Cave Club when he came to Wells to teach at the Cathedral School. Although Bob left Somerset some time ago, he maintained his interest in caving; it was one of his greatest joys to spend a week-end on Mendip, and he recently commented on how he enjoyed receiving the Journal. He was particularly interested in searching for Aselli in Swildon's Hole and had noted their presence in places above the 40, whereas previously they were thought to be confined to the Shrine Pool and Barnes' Loop areas.

For some months before his death Bob was suffering from ill health and he bore this with great courage and his usual cheerfulness, which his close friends will agree was his most loveable characteristic.

He was buried in the churchyard at Linton in Craven, his grave being on the bank of the River Wharfe, which he loved so dearly. Three members of the Club found it possible to attend the funeral and members of the Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Organization, of which he was a member, acted as bearers.

Bob will be sadly missed and our sympathy goes out to his parents and fiancée.

## BOOK REVIEWS

CAVE SCIENCE, Vol. 4, No. 27, June & October 1956. (1957). 4to., 48 p. , map, plans, illus. Obtainable from British Speleological Association, Duke St., Settle, Yorks, at 6s. p.f.

Most of this number is taken up by an exhaustive illustrated article by John Hooper on Baker's Pit Cave in Devon. This is the first of a series of three articles on the Buckfastleigh caves and is accompanied by a large folding plan of the very complex Baker's Pit - Read's Cave system. The other contents include a short summary of U.B.S.S. work in the Cullaun Caves of Co. Clare and accounts of work in Austria, France and Poland.

T.R.S., 27.3.57.

ONE THOUSAND METRES DOWN, by Jean Cadoux and others. [Allen & Unwin, 1957]. 192 p. , map, plans, illus. One guinea. (A translation by R.L.G. Irving of "Operation -1000" (1955).)

A worthy translation of a great book which has already been reviewed in this Journal, (Vol. 4, No. 57, p.88). I cannot speak too highly of it. There are five additional pages describing the expeditions of 1955 and 1956, but the geological appendix and a few illustrations have been omitted.

T.R.S., 26.3.57.

GROTTE ET PAYSAGES DE L'ATLAS AU TAURUS, by Pierre Strinati. (Georg, Geneva, 1956) 144 p., map, 55 plates (2 in colour), bibliog. , £2 3s 9d.

This is a luxuriously produced album of

photographs of French and Mediterranean caves and cave country, with short accompanying notes but no text other than a brief introduction and a preface by Casteret. The photographs are mostly good, some perhaps extremely good, but none of them are outstanding. There have been many better pictures published before and these seem hardly to justify such an expensive book to themselves. Nevertheless I think the book has achieved its aim of capturing the atmosphere of different cave areas, and it is a valuable record of some little known groups of caves.

T.R.S., 3.4.57.

## BOOK NOTICE

We have decided not to publish a review of CAVES AND CAVE DIVING, by Guy de Lavour, (Hale, London, 1956).

It has been translated from TOUTE LA SPÉLÉOLOGIE (1954) and we wish to place on record the following discrepancies between the original and the translation.

p. 54 & plate opp. p.96: Height of camp site on ledge is given as 150 ft. above the river instead of 1.5 metres.

p. 103: Fig.13 is printed upside down in the English edition.

p. 161: Martel's book "La France Ignorée", is attributed to Trombe in the English edition and to Martel in the original.

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