



FOREWORD

Your Committee are seriously perturbed about the condition of some of the club tackle. In the last issue of the Journal mention was made of certain damage to a rope-ladder and it has now been found that another is in an even worse state. Both of these ladders were fairly new and the damage is definitely not "fair wear and tear". It has therefore been decided that there must be more control over the tackle, and in the future it will only be available by booking and obtaining a key from the Gear Curator, Peter Harvey, or failing this from the Hon. Sec.

David Willis reports that his recent club trip to Swildons did not attract a single member and although he is quite willing to continue to run club trips, suggests that it would be a great help if members who are interested in visiting any particular cave would get in touch with the Hon. Sec. so that trips on suitable dates can be arranged.

We would like to congratulate Willie Station, Howard Kenney, Donald Thomson, Phil Davies and Oliver Lloyd on the recent discovery of about 700 ft of new passages in Swildons. It should be mentioned that at the moment it is not possible for members of "comfortable girth" to get into the series (as a 'yard stick' we may mention that David Willis found he could only just get through), but it is gathered that modifications will be made in the future to enable the more 'normal types' to pass the tight spot, and we hope that it will then be possible to arrange a club trip to the discovery.

In connection with this new discovery we would earnestly request that all who visit the place should take every care to avoid any damage to the formations. In saying this we must include under the heading of 'formations', Gours and mud stalactites and such like things, and we suggest that by example all Wessex members try to encourage other cavers to take every care to avoid any damage. As an example of the sort of thing that can be done it can be mentioned that during a recent visit to photograph certain formations at the bottom of a mine shaft, all members of the party were told just where to put their feet when crossing a particular section to avoid damage to the formations.

The Mendip Rescue Organisation recently held its annual meeting and it was suggested that all Mendip clubs should encourage their members to leave particulars (cave, digs, either in cave or swallets, or if mine shafts, give district) and so make it easier to locate them in the event of reports being received of people being missing.

HON. SEC: F.W. Frost, 22 Wolseley Road, Bishopston, Bristol 7.

Phone: Bristol 44221.

HON. ASST. SEC: D. Thomson, 4 St. Joseph Rd. Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset.

HON. TREAS: G. Williams, 1 Redhill Drive, Fishponds, Bristol.

HON. SEC. LONDON GROUP: Mrs. J.H.D. Hooper, 92 Station Crescent, Ashford,
Middx. Phone: Ashford, Middx. 2168

HON. LIBRARIAN & GEAR CURATOR: P.I.W. Harvey, 33 Brighton Rd., Redland,
Bristol 6.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

W.H. DONNAN, 7 The Warren, Hardingstone, Northampton.

A.M. JOHNSON, 16 Beach Road, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset.

T.H. STANBURY, 48 Novers Park Road, Bristol 4.

NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome the following new members:

N.BROOKS, 392 Victoria Road, Ruislip, Middlesex.

B.R. FLAVELL, 18 Swains Grove, Kingstanding, Birmingham 22 C.

MR. & MRS. J.W. FRAME, 24 Sherwin Crescent, Farnborough, Hants.

D.G. PENROSE, Kingwell Hall, Timsbury, Nr. Bath, Somerset.

FORTH COMING EVENTS

SUNDAY APRIL 12TH August Hole and Longwood Swallet (upper passages only). Cleaning-up trip. Meet at Lower Farm 2.30 p.m.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY 18TH & 19TH APRIL Hillgrove working party. Names to Peter Harvey.

SUNDAY MAY 10TH Lamb Lair. Meet at entrance 3 p.m. Names to Hon. Sec. Leader: D. Willis.

SUNDAY MAY 17TH Scavenging trip in Swildons. Meet 11 a.m. Maine's Barn. Names to Dr. O.C. Lloyd, Withey House, Withey Close West, Bristol 9.

SUNDAY JUNE 7TH August Hole. Meet at Lower Farm 3 p.m. Names to D. Willis, 18 Church Road, Hanham, Bristol.

FUTURE ARTICLES

In the next issue of the Journal articles will appear on the following subjects:-

Caves of Malta by Trevor Shaw.

Les Eyzies Part I by David Willis.

Exploring Goughs Caves Part I by Willie Stanton.

HOLIDAYS IN FRANCE

VERCOR Grotto Favot. It is regretted that this cave was misspelt, Tavot, in the last Journal.

ST. PAULS PASSAGES: A NEW DISCOVERY IN SWILDONS HOLE

St. Pauls Passages are a continuation of the dry tunnel which leads off the Upper or Nov. 21st Grottoes in Swildons 1. On 25th January 1953 a group of Mendip Nature Research Committee members, Luke Devenish, Howard Kenney and William Stanton, blasted a route past the large stalagmite boss at the end of this tunnel. Especial care was taken to avoid damaging the nearby formations, and in fact not one stalactite was blown down. A large passage was entered and explored for 100 feet among beautiful formations.

C.H.K. and W.I.S. returned on the following day with Oliver Lloyd and Don Thomson in order to complete the exploration and photograph the more vulnerable stalactites and crystals. The main passage was found to end in a mud choke, while nearby was a sump. A tortuous inlet passage was followed for a considerable distance and was named Damascus.

On March 1st a large party consisting of C.H.K., O.C.L., W.I.S., and D.M.T., with Paul Davies, Richard Kenney, Bob Sellers and Colin Vowles continued photographing, laid a guide wire (or tracer tape) through the entrance grottoes, bughunted, and began a survey. This work was completed by C.H.K., O.C.L., W.I.S. and D.M.T. on March 14th, when also Damascus was followed to its bitter end, another sump. A polite but ungrammatical notice was placed at the start of the guide wire.

St. Pauls Passages total just over 800 feet in length. Apart from the entrance grottoes the tunnels are low and muddy, resembling the Mud Series between the Black Hole and Swildons 2. However, at a point a few yards before Damascus is an exquisite crystal pool, the "Pearly Gate", which is as yet un-muddied. We hope soon to open a bypass passage and until then we would ask explorers not to cross the Pearly Gate into Damascus (which is a horrid place anyway).

The name of this series derives from the fact that they were discovered on the anniversary of the conversion of St. Paul on the road to Damascus.

The new passages will be the subject of a special publication by the M.N.R.C.

W.I. STANTON

VISIT OF THE ROYAL NAVAL SKI AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB TO MENDIP
1ST-2ND NOVEMBER 1952

For some time the R.N.S.M.C. have been toying with the idea of trying mountaineering in reverse, and this idea came to fruition on the first weekend of November.

The start of the weekend was rather a muddle, one intending member of the party was unexpectedly ordered to Scotland, and as a result others had to come by rail. Commander Lawder and Admiral Lawder (who is a founder member of the R.N.S.M.C.) formed a reception Committee at Hillgrove, finding that two members had already turned up and another arrived during the evening. The author fetched another from Bristol late at night, so on Saturday morning the party numbered seven.

When the blood-chit had been signed we moved off to Lamb Lair, five by car and two on a motorcycle. Four light weight wire ladders were used for the pitch, a point that was greatly appreciated by all. The flat-runged ladder was put at the bottom, but in fact was not necessary at all. The newcomers were shown the sights, including the dig; this had six inches of water in it and nobody accepted the invitation to see inside. A move was then made to Swildons, where two free-lancers joined the party. Since the intention was only to introduce the Naval Club to caving it was decided not to ladder the cave, and in view of the amount of water and predominance of hand lights there were no dissenters. The trip therefore only consisted of a saunter round the Upper Series and then we called it a day. In the evening the usual visit to the Hunters was made and the visitors introduced to the cavers pub. Peter Harvey, who was spending the weekend working on the hut, met us there and very kindly ran a shuttle service back to Hillgrove.

Sunday started grey and drizzly, the cloud base well below the top of Blackdown, and stayed that way all day. Commander Lawder took a party of five down Eastwater (another visitor having arrived meanwhile) and the author ferried two brave spirits, undeterred by tales of sumps and prickly passages, over to Stoke Lane.

Here the fact that a considerable stream was using the caver's entrance, the usual streamway being blocked, and the unhealthy look of the sky made it inadvisable to enter the cave and the idea was called off. A pair of quite respectable shoes, dry but not mildewed, tucked neatly away under cover prompted a telephone call to Howard Kenney. However since there was no report of anybody missing no action was taken. Eastwater was the obvious alternative, and just inside the entrance we found the other party, lost in the ruckle. After a quick sniff round as far as the top of the first

pitch and the rift chamber, and a look at the top of the Primrose Path, just to show the visitors what real caving was like, we followed the example of the other party and got lost for a couple of minutes halfway up the ruckle.

The visitors were unanimous in saying that they found caving a novel and pleasing experience and were avid for more. It is hoped to arrange other meets later on, when the caves will be laddered and longer trips undertaken. The appreciation shown by the members of the Royal Naval Ski and Mountaineering Club was most gratifying to the organisers of the visit and it is hoped that they will persuade others to cone along next time.

R.E. LAWDER

SCAVENGING IN SWILDONS

On Sunday the 17th May I am arranging another party to help to clean up Swildons Hole. Meet at Mains Barn, 11 a.m. A. canvas bucket, scrubbing brush and garden trowel are a great help. On the two previous scavenging trips I have found that it is generally quite easy to clean the carbide off the rocks and formations, even when crusted and caked, and that one does not get unduly cold. When carbide is in cracks, as at the head of the 40' pot, it is almost impossible to move it; but this is unusual.

Two or three days work by half a dozen people should be enough for cleaning up all spent carbide, cleaning out gours (as in Barnes' Loop) contaminated by foreign bodies, and burying old batteries and broken apparatus. After that an annual spring clean should be enough to keep the place tidy.

This cave is so beautiful that it is well worth the trouble.

OLIVER C. LLOYD

VISIT TO THE TROU D'HAQUIN, AUGUST 1952

During a recent holiday in Belgium we visited a number of caves in the district around Dinant, in the Meuse valley. Our guide on most of the trips was Father Felix Anciaux of the Abbey of Maredsous and President of the Belgian Spelaeological Society.

The Trou d'Haquin lies east of the Meuse valley beneath rolling pastoral country, with scattered orchards and woodlands. Having obtained the key from a local farm, Father Anciaux proceeded to transform himself from monk into caver. By removing his cassock he revealed a sports shirt and shorts, which he covered over quickly with a boiler suit. After having been joined by two local cavers, we walked across a couple of fields to the place where a stream disappeared underground at the bottom of a deep wooded swallet.

To our surprise we found a party of 7 would-be cavers grouped in the swallet, hopefully studying a small and very inadequate looking plan of the cave. They were mostly youths, under the leadership of a plump cure, but with them was a very stout and extremely talkative middle-aged man who regarded the trip as a huge joke. Having little idea what to expect inside a cave, he had brought a number of alternative costumes which he put on in quick succession, until he finally decided to dress for the trip in a sports shirt, bathing trunks, and one suspender! None of the second party had been in the cave before, and after Father Felix had spent some time pointing out all the mistakes in the plan that they had brought along they were very glad to come along with us.

The usual photographs having been taken of the party while still clean, we entered the cave by a low archway at the bottom of the swallet. Part of the stream sank among the rocks in its bed, just before it reached the archway, and the remainder of the water entered with us. Almost immediately we were at the top of a boulder ruckle very similar to that of Eastwater. We climbed down an awkward slot between two large rocks and passed hurriedly through a shower-bath as part of the stream cascaded downwards among the boulders, not to be seen again until well inside the cave. Within a few yards we were faced with the familiar problem of finding the way. Father Anciaux and the other member of the party who had been in the cave before, poked hopefully into holes between the boulders, while the cure and the stout man talked incessantly, adding not a little to the general confusion. Then the way was discovered, and a rope was fixed to act as a hand line while we traversed across the side of a huge boulder and slid down into the chamber below.

A wide, sandy passage followed, with good formations on the side from time to time, and then we entered the top of a large chamber known as the Salle du Tunnel and began descending a steep, muddy, rock-strewn slope. The party spread out and moved forward slowly amid a

babble of conversation. John, my husband, and a Belgian caver and I were able to follow leisurely in the rear looking for pictures. The Belgians were at a disadvantage as they were without caving helmets and only two of them had means of fixing a light on their heads. Apparently the type of mining helmet used commonly among British cavers is so expensive in Belgium that it is regarded as a luxury. Father Anciaux owned a helmet but considered it too precious to use except on very special trips.

At the bottom of the long, muddy slope we crossed a narrow ravine and in front saw a massive column called the Sentinel, from which a steep mud and stalagmite slope filled the whole width of the chamber and descended to our feet. We scrambled over the slippery mud and dropped into a continuation of the same chamber beyond. On our left, the water of the stream which sinks into the ground outside the cave entrance reappeared to form waterfalls. The chamber became narrower and we entered a passage about 10 feet wide and 8 feet high whose roof was made entirely of very fine rock pendants. Beyond was a small chamber with a tiny statue of the Virgin and Child and as we turned back we saw behind us the glow from a candle left alight by one of the Belgians.

John decided to photograph the roof pendants and then we returned to the point in the main chamber where the great pillar stands. Here we turned left and entered a side tunnel by following a narrow ledge on the steep, muddy cave wall. In the entrance to the side tunnel a fine curtain, about 8 feet long, hung in lovely, tapering folds, and naturally we stopped for another picture. Then we proceeded as fast as possible to try and catch up with the rest of the party. Sometimes walking and sometimes crawling, but guided always by the noise in front, we soon rejoined the others in a chamber about 20 feet long and 20 feet high, formed by the enlargement of a steeply inclined bedding plane. In the left wall a slot 3 feet high and 18 inches wide led to the Letter Box. A handline had been fixed, and comforted by the thought that the fatter members of the party were already below the tightest place, we waited patiently for our turn to descend. Going down the Letter Box proved quite easy - first a crawl along the entrance slot, then a drop down a nearly vertical slot about 10 feet deep and a foot wide, and finally a fairly tight crawl into a moderate sized chamber beyond. We were in the Salle de l'Espoir. Here again were some nice formations, including a fine pillar, and we paused for photography.

Dropping through the boulders at the lower end of the Salle de l'Espoir we passed through a short tunnel and entered the Salle de Minuit, a very large chamber about 80 feet wide and the same height. Here half the party decided to turn back but Father Anciaux led those of us who had still some energy left, through a series of crawls known as the Chatière into a lofty passage at times 30 feet high, which we followed until we reached a rock bridge. Here the party was photographed and then we made our way back to the Salle de Minuit.

The others had set off on the return journey, leaving the cave strangely quiet after all the babble of conversation. While we had been visiting the bridge the Belgian photographer had wandered along a large gallery and had discovered the Rivière Fossile, a fine pillar with a huge stalagmite flow beneath. He wished my husband to photograph. So we disappeared into the side tunnel for a few minutes, while Father Felix, who had been ahead and had not realised what was happening, became most worried because he thought we were lost.

The rear guard now consisted of Father Anciaux and the two Belgian cavers, together with two youths from the party of cave hikers and ourselves. Climbing up the Letter Box was slow and would have been very tedious if half the party, including the two stout members, had not gone ahead. From the lower end the vertical slot looked smooth, tight and awkward, but with the aid of the hand line I was soon up and crawling through the short drain-pipe tunnel at the top. This tunnel was little more than body size and seemed inadequately ventilated. It had acquired a strong smell of garlic which I found most unpleasant and I was glad to reach the chamber beyond. Behind me were the two Belgian cavers. One followed quickly but the last man stuck in the vertical squeeze and had to be pulled and coaxed from above until he emerged finally in a rather exhausted condition.

While he was having a rest John and the Belgian photographer and I pushed on to the point where the side tunnel joined the main chamber of the cave and the great pillar of the Sentinel made a good subject for photography. By the time we were ready to take the picture the others had rejoined us and were experiencing considerable difficulty in getting down the steep muddy slope linking the side tunnel with the main chamber. It was here that John and I began to realise the superiority of our caving footwear. The Belgians were all wearing rubber soled climbing boots or plimsolls, which by now gave little purchase on the mud, while our nailed boots allowed us to walk without difficulty.

Father Anciaux and the two Belgian cavers having been photographed grouped round the base of the Sentinel, we skidded down the mud and stalagmite flows below it, crossed the narrow ravine and began the tedious climb up the steep muddy floor of the Salle de Tunnel. By now the Belgian who had stuck in the Letter Box was suffering from exhaustion and other members of the party were becoming over-tired. With our much better grip on the mud, John and I were climbing without too much difficulty and we pushed and pulled and generally encouraged the weary ones up the slope. Once at the top, on rock or sand, the Belgians moved more easily. We found the bottom of the rope we had used to reach the base of the boulder ruckle and scrambled up over the smooth rocks without much delay. Then we wandered among the boulders, getting wet in the spray of the stream as it fell down through the rocks, until someone chanced upon the narrow vertical slot up which we climbed to reach the gate and the sunshine outside. The advance party was waiting in the swallet, clean and tidy and as noisy as ever, having found its way out alone - quite an achievement for inexperienced cavers.

So, having washed and tidied up, one of the youths ran the curé's motor cycle straight up the side of the swallet. Then we all shook hands, said "Goodbye" and set off homewards (or in our case campwards) after a very entertaining trip.

WIN HOOPER

Sidcot School,
Winscombe,
Somerset.

Dear Mr. Frost,

I wonder if you could put a notice in the Journal concerning our dig at Nods Pot? We have found that this dig has become rather large for our society.

Nods Pot (or Piney Sleight Swallet) is a shaft in 'Fault breccia'. It is situated in the larger of two depressions, about 100 yards from the edge of Cheddar Gorge on Piney Sleight Farm. (Grid. Ref. 31/476549). The dig consists of a shaft (roughly 6' x 5') which is nearly 70 feet deep. The top twenty feet are a shaft made of tar barrels (installed by M.N.R.C.) There is a derrick and a winch (also provided by M.N.R.C.) It is in a very promising position, being about 600' above the level of the Rising at Cheddar.

Sidcot cavers have been digging there for about five years, and have removed the Mud and Stones out of 60 feet of the shaft. But we now consider that more experienced diggers should work there, as it is no place for school boys. It would be a pity to see it filled in, after so much hard work, but this will be necessary unless someone else would like to dig there.

If anyone is interested, could they write to me fairly soon, because it will have to be blasted in unless I hear from someone. I sincerely hope someone will want to dig there.

R. WOOLLEY

HON. SEC. SIDCOT SPELEO. SOC.

23 Duntroon Street,
Hurlstone Park,
Sydney,
N.S.W.
Australia.

Dear Frank,

It was with great pleasure that I received the Wessex Cave Club Journal and it is now being circulated amongst our members.

Upon returning to Australia I immediately commenced work at an Aircraft factory and did not have any spare time for caving. Xmas time however presented me with the opportunity to spend eight days in the Southern Alps, Yarrangobilly caves being in this region (some 300 miles south of Sydney). Perhaps you will recall that just before leaving for England my co-worker Peter Macgregor and myself discovered a very large cavern at Yarrangobilly. As Marion could not accompany me this time Peter Mac and myself set out on Boxing Day for Mount Kosciusco. Due to late falls of snow there was ample for people to indulge in ski-ing, Peter and I however were content to indulge in photographing and collecting wild flowers. We camped at 6,500', well above the tree line. We had a superb view from our tent and the snow nearby provided a natural refrigerator for our perishable food stuffs. It would be difficult to describe my feelings at once more being amongst the hills of the Southern Alps; truly the area to me means more than words can describe.

After about three days at Kosciusco we hitch hiked the 86 miles to Yarrangobilly caves. we arrived at the Eastern Eagle Nest Cave - for that is what we christened it - on New Year's Eve. The cave entrance is situated in a small gully some 350' above the Yarrangobilly river; in fact the entrance is in the form of a swallet, the depression in the gully being very large indeed. As soon as I obtain colour films of the entrance I'll send you a copy.

Before entering the cavern Peter and I celebrated the return to the cave by drinking some excellent white wine; and indeed via toasted the Wessex Cave Club - whose pennant was fluttering from our tent pole. Incidentally our camp site was surrounded by magnificent gum trees and was situated some 20 yards from the cave entrance.

Our trip was more of a reconnaissance of the cave in order to note what work had been done over the last two years. This being necessary us a well organised expedition will be led by Peter and myself at Easter, our prime object being to find the existing stream bed or at any rate find out where it comes out into the Yarrangobilly river by the use of fluorescine. Previously I had been some 650 yds

along the main passage. Peter had further pressed on to the end of the main passage about 18 months ago; so therefore we wasted no time in getting to the end of the main passage as Peter was anxious to let me listen to the roar of a mighty river which could be heard some few yards the other side of the end of the passage. The main passage is not really a dead end but it narrows down to a squeeze hole about a yard wide and 2" high. For the last 200 yds the passage is about 100' high and a yard wide, the floor being completely covered in crystals. Before the end, some 30 yds from it actually, an upper gallery has been explored a little. These passages I think will provide us with the means of finding a way over to the large stream which can be distinctly heard at the end of the main passage. After noting what further work has to be done Peter and I lazily strolled back admiring the formations of the cave; the cave is very large for the first 650 yds being some 150' to 100' in height; the width varying from 120' - at this portion the roof height is about 30' - to 20' where the height is about 100' to 150'.

The rest of our time was spent strolling around the Plateau discovering no less than four large cave entrances and many swallets. These four cave entrances were guarded by many loose boulders and as there were only two of us it would have been foolish to press on for risk of being cut off by a fall of rock.

However we were very satisfied with what work was done over the three days although much more could have been done if Peter and I had not decided to spend many hours sunbathing and swimming in the river.

Well, Frank, if you can decipher this rather rambling letter you could possibly rehash it into something for the Journal. In addition as soon as the colour film is processed I'll send you copies which perhaps you could include during a 35mm screening at a club meeting.

Best wishes to yourself and wife,

BILL & MARION WOOF.

"LOST" CAVES OF MENDIP

The number of caves which have been lost on Mendip are now so many that it might be worthy of consideration by the ardent digger whether his efforts might be more profitable if directed towards the re-discovery of such caves rather than wasted on new sites where it is by no means certain that a cave exists at all!

The cave most determined to be lost appears to be Lamb Lair. Discovered by mining in the seventeenth century, it was later lost, and then found again in 1880 after £100, reward had been offered by the Waldegrave Estate for its rediscovery. (I am sure this list would not be so long if similar offers were made today!) The cave has also been temporarily inaccessible in this century owing to the continual collapses of the old shaft, until the more permanent entrance shaft was opened in 1936. A passage and chamber visited by John Beaumont in 1660 in this cave does not describe any part of the cave we now know. In addition research by Geophysical Megger is said to indicate a Chamber adjacent to, and as large as, the main Chamber.

Stoke Lane Swallet presents us with a fascinating mystery. It must have been quite a shock to the "first" explorers of the new chambers to find that they were not the first to enter the Bone Chamber. Charcoal deposits on several large boulders showed that others with more primitive means of lighting had visited the cave before. It seems a pity that so little effort has been made to fix the time of these visits, as the continual passage of cavers is likely to destroy the evidence. I venture to guess that it was some considerable time ago, as if visits had been made within say the last 500 years, one would expect there to be some local legend connected with such a spectacular discovery; or were the first explorers trapped by the roof collapse now closing this old entrance, part of their remains being those discovered on the boulder slope? Have the bones been dated?

"Lost" caves fall within several definitions; some are only legendary and may not even exist. The most startling of these is that of Cheddar. As long ago as the 12th century, Cheddar was referred to as Cheddar Hole, and a cave with "great spaces of land, and rivers" was described. This cannot be Goughs. (See Mr. Balch's book for details). Apart from legends, we can surmise that there ought to be a cave there, as we can elsewhere on Mendip. Certain old records indicate that there may be a cave in the vicinity of Red Quarr but details are very uncertain. We read of the "Gulf" discovered by miners in Western Mendip, and although this has not been positively identified, W.I. Stanton's theory that it is part of the Levvy of Sandford Hill seems likely (see Mr. Balch's book). It seems that the miners at the old Priddy Lead Works discovered a cave or chamber, but owing to the lawsuit Nicholas v. Enner, restraining the miners from polluting the Axe at Wookey Hole, they were anxious that its discovery should not be known, and they hastily concealed it. Tales of caves entered by dogs who re-appear at great distances minus hair are numerous. These legends can still be heard and I have been personally told such stories twice within

the last year, at Cheddar and Nancy Camels Hole, Croscombe.

There are historically recorded caves which we cannot find today, the existence of which is, however, quite certain, owing to the undoubted authenticity of the descriptions. Amongst these are:-

1. The lost cave of Burrington described by Rutter.
2. Hutton Cave - here we are in the unusual position of having the archaeological finds but not the cave.
3. The lost chamber of Goatchurch.

All these are described in Mr. Balch's book.

Other caves have been lost for ever - Windsor Hill Cave, Stoke Lane Quarry Caves, Dulcote Hill Caves, Bleadon Cave and Crystal Pot in a quarry at Mells, all by quarrying. Doubtless there have been other quarry caves which were never brought to the notice of cavers.

The more definite type of "lost" caves are those the entrances of which have collapsed or have been blocked, and these are the most likely ones to be re-discovered. They are:-

1. Cow Hole - the only vertical cave in Mendip.
2. Bos Swallet, Burrington, opened by Sidcot School Cave Club.
3. Cuckoo Cleeves discovered in 1947.
4. The inner chambers of the swallet in the Upper Twin Brook Valley, Burrington.
5. Coral Cave, blocked by the Axbridge RDC after an accident.
6. Fairy Slatts near Blacker's Hill Camp in Eastern Mendip, filled in, in the last century, because of the danger to cattle.
7. Plumley's Den at Burrington, the scene of a caving tragedy of the last century.

At Badgers Hole, Wookey Hole, we have evidence of an unusual nature of a possible inner chamber. In the course of archaeological excavation in the outer vestibule, a neat pile of broken off stalagmite pillars was found in a gully. The pieces joined together perfectly, and showed no signs of wear as would have happened if they had been rolled out by water. We can only assume that they were removed by early man from some part of the cave not yet found, because they were in the way.

Fairy Cave, or Cox's Hole in Eastern Mendip is likely to fall within the definition of this article in the near future. The main entrance has already been obscured by quarry waste and the smaller entrance is partially blocked and hidden away behind quarry buildings. It is an attractive cave, and well worth a visit.

The final classification is that of size. Those of us who started caving earlier enough in life were fortunate in being able to explore places quite inaccessible to our elder brethren.

For example, there are the final chambers of Sidcot Swallet, the grottoes of Loxton Cave, several passages in Goatchurch, and other similar places. For the heavier built caver, this list can be quite a long one.

Apart from the many lost mine workings of Mendip this list is, I believe, complete, but it would be interesting to hear of any other stories of lost caves known by members.

C. H. KENNEY

NOTE:- Since writing the above, Mr. Balch has shown me a reference to a cave at Green Ore. In "A Handbook for Travellers in Wiltshire, Dorsetshire and Somersetshire", published by John Murray in 1859, two references are made to this cave. One sentence mentions "the caves of Banwell, Chedder, East Harptree and Green Ore farm" and another sentence mentions "Green Ore farm on which there is another of the Mendip caverns". This may be Nedge Hole by the side of the race-course, but it seems unlikely,

C.H.K.

LONDON GROUP

The last meeting of the London Wessex was on Feb. 23, when Trevor Shaw spoke on 'Caves in Ireland and Gibraltar'. Most of his lecture dealt with caves on the Rock which can never be visited by ordinary civilians, which is a great pity as there are lovely formations. Attendance was disappointingly small but that is probably due to the prevailing epidemic of influenza.

At the next meeting Bill Stanton will speak on 'Recent Work on Mendip'.

FOUND: At the foot of the entrance waterfall in Swildons Hole on 22.3.53, a metal telescopic tripod. Will the owner please communicate with Dr. Lloyd, Withey House, Withey Close West, Bristol 9. (Telephone 83229).

BUG HUNTING IN THE STREET TUNNEL AND
ON THE MOORS OF GLASTONBURY

It all happened one Friday afternoon in June. William Stanton kindly asked me to accompany him and Luke Devenish on an exploration trip down a tunnel 'somewhere' in Street. As usual on these occasions I mumbled something about being busy, but after promises of puddles and eternal friendship I became faintly interested and packed up my impedimenta. I tried to convince myself that it would be an excellent opportunity to do a little bug hunting, between survey points, under the moors of Somerset - such a chance might not occur again in such celebrated company! Looking back I hope it will be some time before a similar opportunity arises. Four hours surveying is a long time! However it turned out to be well worth the strain.

On arrival I was introduced to some V.I.P's who obviously thought that we should probably never re-appear from the unknown and were kindness itself. A search round the cellar produced nothing unusual except a well full of rubble. This was unfortunate - I feel certain that something (necessarily undefined) of an interesting nature would have been disclosed on investigation. The passage had a clay floor and in some pools about thirty yards from the entrance Niphargus (a beautifully shaped white shrimp-like creature half a centimetre long) was found in surprisingly large numbers. To appreciate their grace and to collect some of these delicate Crustacea naturally demanded an immediate halt. William has been well trained to avoid putting the various parts of his long body in pools so specimens were speedily collected. Luke soon became rather troublesome and was provided with a tube. He was to be heard pursuing an energetic and elusive Niphargus round a small puddle. After a great battle it was finally captured and spent the remainder of the afternoon sulking at the bottom of the bottle. A bat louse was caught near the entrance but no guano was found. Several pink woodlice and a spider completed the bag. Footprints of an unknown troglodite were to be seen in the mud.

The capture of Niphargus in this situation is very interesting. Niphargus lives in the water table of various parts of Somerset but I believe I am right in saying that this tunnel is above the water table and this naturally leads to the question of how it got into this position. The most likely solution to this problem is that it 'wormed' its way along small water filled passages until it found itself in this tunnel where, until our arrival, conditions had favoured its survival. An animal of this size does not require much space in which to move or much water in which to live.

This success fired me with enthusiasm to search the moors in other places. I therefore made enquiries as to the positions of wells and was to be seen descending upon a quiet and peaceful farm one afternoon with a formidable array of bottles, nets, magnifying glasses and suction pumps. The ensuing conversation with the dubious farmer was something like this-

"Good afternoon. Have you a well?"

"Yes!" Followed by a long dissertation of the joys and pleasures of drinking well water.

"Do you mind if I leave a net in it for a few days? There may be some interesting bugs at the bottom."

After a lengthy description concerning the cleanliness of the water and total absence of all types of life followed by some choice remarks about the nature of my request, he was finally convinced that only the best type of water was good enough to suit my bugs, permission was reluctantly granted. At the conclusion of many instructions and threats of what would happen if I contaminated his underground supply of nectar, I lowered a net baited with a small piece of fish (fresh) down the well and departed. The bait must be frequently changed otherwise the water becomes foul and the Niphargus is most particular in this respect. Bait was obtained from a shop in Wells where, on entering for the first time, I was asked if I would like sufficient for three, about two pounds. I reluctantly pointed out that I did not know how many Niphargi were likely to share this feast and in any case one was not likely to consume more than a decimal part of a gramme and all I wanted was a bit at the bottom of my bottle. I was immediately escorted to the back premises and allowed to help myself. However, subsequent visits to this and other wells on Glastonbury Moor were unsuccessful. This does not mean that there are none to be found there, but that I was unsuccessful in collecting any.

R.T. SELLERS