

FOREWORD

My apologies for the delay in sending out this issue, but it has been quite impossible to get it ready until towards the end of the month.

Tackle. Early this year it was reported that our ropes seemed to be permanently damp, i.e. even when hung up in the tackle hut after use were found to be wet a week later. We therefore decided to remove all the ropes to Washingpool where they were properly dried out. We took this opportunity for making a special examination and test of the tackle and this resulted in the withdrawal from normal use of some of the ropes, which while not suitable for tethers and life-lines could be used on digs. These will be available to members and will be considered 'expendable'. For the time being these ropes will be stored at Washingpool, and all the ropes at Hillgrove will be life-lines or tethers - under no circumstances must these be used for any other purpose.

The ladder problem was causing us a certain amount of concern, so we were quite pleased to receive an offer from a member to sell us four 25' metal ladders. The committee decided to make offer of £6 for the 100' of ladder, but the seller thought that £10 was a fair price, as even this was well below the cost of the materials used in the construction a year or so before. In my view it was imperative that we obtained these ladders, so I contacted several people and asked if they were willing to help us by finding the balance of £4, and between us, George Williams, Oliver Lloyd, Norman Tuck, Denis Warburton and myself were able to make up the balance.

- When booking tackle would you please give details of the cave you intend to visit and the nature of your party, i.e. non-members or members, and the actual day on which the tackle will be used. This information is necessary for several reasons, most of which will be apparent to most members.

Sec. F. Frost, 22 Wolseley Rd, Bishopston, Bristol 7.

'phone Bristol 44221.

Treas. G. Williams, Cedarwood, Cadbury Camp Lane, Clapton-in-Gordano, Bristol.

We welcome the following new members.

B.M. ANNETTE, Winchester Rd.Works. Basingstoke.

K.J. CLARK, Woodside, Maidenhead Rd, Billingbear. Nr.Wokingham, Berkshire.

P.K. HARRIS, 'Dene House', Dene Rd. Whitchurch, Bristol 4.

Miss J.M. JAMES, Archery Nook, Wellington Heath, Nr. Ledbury, Herefordshire.

D.J.J. KINSMAN, 123, Knole Lane, Brentry, Bristol.

K.G. LONG, Riverbend, Seawalls Rd, Sneyd Pk., Bristol, 9.

R.E. LOVEGROVE, 5 Hillsdon Rd, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.

G.N.STRANG, The Old Rectory, Flax Bourton, Bristol.

M.M. THOMSON, White Cottage, Chalk Lane, East Horsley, Surrey.

G.B. Guest Days.

March 27th-30th. May 9th-10th. July 4th-5th.

Fatality at Swildons Hole on January 17th.1959.

This was the week-end on which the Cave Diving Group had planned to make a full scale attempt to further the exploration of Six, and perhaps, onwards.

Early in the week snow had fallen on Mendip but by Friday the weather had improved and there appeared to be no reason why the trip should not proceed as arranged, so the party of over 35 people met at Maines Barn on Saturday morning.

The plan of action was for the divers, J. Bevan, J. Buxton, P. Davies and O.C. Wells to dive to Swildons 6 and then to try to eliminate Sump 5. L. Davies, D. Ford, and J. Wright were to dive to Swildons Five and act as support for the main diving party. A Kitchen would be set up in Four.

It had been decided to make the gear into 35 loads, and these would be brought to the head of Blue Pencil Passage by teams of porters. A specially selected team under the leadership of Dawes would relay the packs through the passage.

The stream was a little larger than normal when the first party led by Dawes went underground, at 11.15 a.m., but not sufficient to cause any concern. The diving party entered the cave at about 12.15.

The porters were divided into 6 parties, each with a leader, and descended at 15 minutes intervals. Clear and precise instructions had been given by the organisers as to the methods to be used by all members of the party when journeying through the cave and these included the use of a life-line at the 40'.

Party 4 caught up with party 3 at the 40' and were in turn caught up by party 5. The leader of 4, Lawder, decided that his party should proceed in pairs to Trat's Temple, but it was quite a long time before the last of his party caught up with the leading pair. The stream at this time (1.30 p.m.) was quite normal and had not risen at all. Party 4 proceeded to the Base camp, but it was a long time before Party 5, (which included Wallington) turned up. During this wait the stream rose, and the Blue Pencil Passage stream increased considerably, but those who had been down in similar conditions were not perturbed.

All the diving party had reached Sump 4 by about 3.0 p.m., and shortly after, the packs were passed through Blue Pencil Passage and collected by the Support Party, who took them to a camp 80' upstream where the divers began to assemble their gear. Two of the porters who had complained of headaches were told by C. Hawkes that it would be advisable for them to make their way out of the cave. By about 4.30 p.m. all available packs had been sent down but it was noticed that two were missing. These arrived at about 5.15 p.m. with the last party, who, after a short rest began the return journey to the surface.

The Support Party had also noticed the increase in volume of water flowing from the B.P. Passage while they were working there, but the main stream did not rise, although the flow became much stronger and the water was very discoloured.

At 5.15 p.m. (or a little later) it was decided that diving should be abandoned, and leaving the assembled gear in a safe place, the diving party retreated at 5.30 p.m.

The main stream had become a torrent but the 20' was not too bad, as most of the water shot clear of the ladder, but getting a line to people was a little tricky.

Outside the cave there had been a deterioration in the weather and it had begun to pour with rain. The water ran off the frozen earth, and the stream rose so that at 3.30 p.m. it was within a foot of the top of the grating. O.C. Lloyd had arranged to go down with other members of the U.B.S.S. to help with the luggage and lifelining at the 40' but with a view of getting there as soon as possible, three only of the party of seven, went into the cave, On reaching the 40' they found a torrent pouring over the lip, and although it appeared impassable, they held the life line in case one of the party below tried to climb the ladder. It would not have been possible to communicate with anyone at the bottom of the pitch.

At about 4.30 p.m. they decided to leave the cave as the grating at the entrance was about to flood, and at 5.0 p.m. Lloyd phoned L. Devenish and asked him to give a "Stand By" to the Mendip Rescue Organisation, and to send along the special hauling gear for the 40' together with the carrying sheet. He told Devenish that the 40' was impossible and that it was likely to take up to six hours for the water to subside. Six of the U.B.S.S. party then left Priddy and returned to Burrington to get a meal, having been asked to return to Swildons at 9.0 p.m.

A very short while after this, the first members of the party came out of the cave having climbed the 40' without help. At 6.5 p.m. another appeared and he reported that a party was collecting at the foot of the 40'. Lloyd and M.Dale went

into the cave, leaving a request for a relief in about 1½ hours time. On the way into the cave yet another member of the party was met who said someone with a sprained wrist was being pulled up the 40' pot. In view of this Lloyd told him to ask Devenish to send someone down as soon as possible with all the 40'hauling gear. Information had been sent from the bottom of the 40' that one person was suffering from exposure and a couple more needed treatment. When Lloyd and Dale got to the top of the pitch they found that Dawes and five others had hauled up the fellow with the sprained wrist. This party took the injured man out of the cave. Lloyd took over the life-lining and got another five people up before handing over to Dale.

The party at the bottom of the pitch were mostly in good spirits, singing and slapping each other on the back to keep warm. The policy was to get those up first who were not wearing exposure suits.

After someone had made an abortive attempt climb the pitch, Wallington was helped to tie on the life-line. He was told that whatever else he did he must keep climbing up. He climbed about 15-20' then stopped and went back, and came off the ladder, the life-line looping around the pipe at the top of the pitch.

As Wallington fell, his feet caught in the rungs of the ladder, and he was help upside down under the falling water. F.Darbon rushed forward and tried to lift Wallington's shoulders so that he could free himself but this was not possible. He signalled N. Humphries for help but in spite of a combined effort they still could not lift Wallington's shoulders. All this was taking place under the waterfall. Darbon then decided to try another method to free the victim, and scrambled

up the ladder until he was above him. By forcing his feet against one wall and his back against the other he managed to get sufficient purchase to enable him to release Wallington's feet, and the resulting fall was broken by Humphries.

Wallington's life-line was removed and he was helped on to a ledge to await the arrival of the special hauling gear. The time of Wallington's attempted ascent was about 7.30 p.m.

Devenish, at the surface had been told of the difficulty of communications between the top and bottom of the 40', and so he had, at 7.15 p.m., called out the Axbridge rescue team as he knew they had a portable telephone, but as it seemed all was going well in the cave he cancelled the instructions about a quarter of an hour later. In Bristol I had received the stand-by at 5.10 p.m. and had arranged for H. Stanbury to be ready to transport a rescue party if required. Dr. Crook, the Medical Warden of the M.R.O. could not be contacted at that time, and he only learnt of the call-out at about 9.0 p.m. when he returned to Timsbury from Bristol. He then phoned and told me that one of the party was unconscious at the top of the 40', and asked me to get in touch with Dr. S. Robertson at Southmead Hospital and ask him to stand by in case extra medical help was required in the cave. Dr. Crook then left for Priddy. Unfortunately Dr. Robertson was on weekend leave, but Dr. Beaty offered to stand by to assist if this became necessary. (He was not a caver but had been to the bottom of Swildons when a student at Bristol University).

At the bottom of the 40' the party looking after Wallington awaited the arrival of the hauling tackle. He was in poor shape and had been given chocolate and glucose tablets, but

by now others too were feeling the cold and one other appeared to be in poor shape - he also was without an exposure suit -. On the other hand there was nothing to suggest that Wallington would not revive once he was past the 40' obstacle.

On its arrival the hauling gear was rigged by Lloyd, and it was decided to send up the four strongest men to act as a hauling party. Bevan, Buxton, Lord and Wells climbed the ladder where they found Dale on the lifeline and Lloyd standing back in the Water Rift. These two had been doing the hauling for some time, but had been joined by the party of three who had brought in the special gear.

The pulley was fixed about 10' above the top of the 40', and an attempt was made to haul from the Water Rift through the keyhole entrance, but the rope jammed and the gear had to be re-rigged. A bosuns chair (?) was fixed, and Lloyd and Dale took up stations at the top of the pitch, the others made up the hauling party in the Water Rift.

After Wallington had been placed in the bosuns chair the party began to haul and Hawkes climbed the ladder below him. When he was about 20' up, Wallington's foot got caught in the rungs of the ladder, and Hawkes tried to free him. Unfortunately the party had no idea that this was happening and continued to haul, so Hawkes, Wallington and the ladder were all pulled up together. It took about five minutes to get them up.

The party at the top of the 40' lifted and pushed Wallington into the Water Rift where he was given chocolate, which he ate. He was unable to stand unsupported, and Lloyd decided that he must be got out of the cave as soon as possible. There was some concern for the non-exposure suited people still at the bottom of the 40' and Ford took over the life-lining from Dale. He pulled up the other who had seemed near to collapse at the bottom of the 40' but he recovered as soon as he reached the top of the pitch.

The party with Wallington were having difficulty in getting him along, and to make matters worse he began to struggle. They supported him above the water but could do no more to move him. P. Thomas, a medical student had come down from the surface and noticing a deterioration in Wallington, called Lloyd, who said that he thought he was dead. This was about 9.0 p.m.

The carrying sheet was fetched and he was put into it, and taken out of the cave via the Old Grotto, Kenney's Dig and the Wet Way. Transporting him this way presented no difficulty at all. He was got out by 11.30 p.m.

THE INQUEST.

This was opened on 19th January and adjourned until 3rd February when the Coroner resumed the case with a jury.

The first to give evidence was O.C. Lloyd who said the expedition was under the auspices of the Cave Diving Group. In reply to questions from the Coroner he said that each member of the party provided their own clothing which would consist of plenty of old clothes and particularly woollen materials. He did not notice what clothes

Wallington was wearing. On the subject of medical supplies he said that these were not available at the time but were brought in later. In his view these would not have been of any avail, and that applied to restoratives, tonics or hot drinks. Once the caver was out these would have been invaluable. The first thing to do was to get the man out of the water and all energies were applied to doing this. Restoratives were available if he had got to the surface. He said that he knew of no test that would be valid as to fitness. It was up to the individual concerned.

F. Darbon described the incident at the 40' and said that the water coming down the pitch was above normal and very cold.

N. Humphries gave details of his help in freeing Wallington after he had got his feet tangled in the ladder and M. Palmer, a member of the party of three sent in with the hauling gear by the Mendip Rescue Organisation also gave evidence.

The Coroner in summing up said it was not the duty of the jury to attribute or apportion blame for the young man's unfortunate death. They had been told that it was up to the caver himself to consider whether he was sufficiently experienced to embark on such expedition, which no doubt the jury would agree was hazardous.

The jury return a verdict of accidental death from exposure to cold. They added a rider that in future caving operations precautions should be taken by providing a safety line from the highest point.

This article was compiled from reports sent to me by Len Dawes, Frank Darbon, Christopher Hawkes, Derek Ford, Robert Lawder and Oliver Wells.

Note from the Medical Warden of the Mendip rescue Organization. (Dr. B.A. Crook).

Apart from serious and severe cave accidents there would appear to be fatalities in caves associated with little or no trauma; the cause of death (according to Coroners verdicts) being exposure to cold.

This calls for further explanation, and my report to the M.R.O. on the rescue at Swildons Hole, 4.5.56., gives details of a similar but non-fatal case. This case shows a condition allied to surgical shock, i.e. circulatory failure as shown by weak, rapid pulse, cold clammy skin, reactions extremely slow, progressing to unconsciousness.

The same condition will lead to death and appears to be mainly psychological following exposure to wet and cold in a patient suffering from exhaustion and lack of blood sugar.

In the fatal case at Swildons, 17.1.59. the post mortem showed a terminal rt sided heart failure.

It would appear that in certain people - at some point of exhaustion plus cold and wet - they lack the will 'to live'. Very soon there appears to a 'point of no return'. - the control from the brain and mind cease, and in consequence, the body reactions, especially the circulation, cease to function, and death ensues."

Conclusions.

There is no doubt the abnormal increase in the size of the stream was due to the heavy rain, which, and this should be made quite clear, did not begin until after the party had entered the cave. From

the start every reasonable effort was taken to try to make certain all the members of the party were up to the standard required for this type of trip. There would seem to be no known method whereby it is possible to 'measure' a person's reaction to cold and exhaustion, but from an examination of other deaths caused by exhaustion during caving, it would appear that most of the people concerned were comparatively inexperienced cavers. It can therefore, be assumed that the more caving one does, the less will be the chance of a person reaching the dangerous condition outlined by Dr. Crook.

One point I must make and that is the ever increasing risk that will attend these efforts to extend the exploration of the major caves of Mendip. A simple accident could so very easily turn into a tragedy if it happens a long way from the surface, and even when conditions are favourable for long and highly organised trips involving diving, etc., the risk of exhaustion could become a very serious factor.

It may be a good plan to warn all members a party that they must inform some responsible person if and when they begin to feel exhausted, and I would go even further and suggest the appointment of a suitable member of the party to act as a 'welfare officer'. His duty would be to watch for signs of exhaustion and if such cases occur to take prompt steps to get the victim out of the cave.

FRANK FROST.

THE DEATH OF DEREK WILCOX.

The interest that is being shown by club members into the problems of cave diving has prompted us to publish this account of the tragic death of Derek Wilcox. It is based upon an account that appeared in the January - February 1959 issue of "Triton", the Journal of the British Sub-aqua Club.

Derek Wilcox died in his bedroom at home during the late evening of Tuesday, October 28th, 1958. He was experimenting with a piece of diving equipment which he had bought for about seven shillings at a surplus store. It was the Amphibian Tank Escape Apparatus, which was designed for a special purpose during the war by men who had been properly trained in its use.

Wilcox had modified the apparatus in a manner which was rather unfortunate. He was found dead on the floor of his bedroom next morning by his parents. It is clear from the way in which he had modified the apparatus that he did not understand properly how it worked.

This type of apparatus, if modified in a competent manner, is extremely suitable for reconnaissance cave diving PROVIDED that it is used by a diver who had been properly trained in its use and PROVIDED that he understands its limitations fully. Page 171 of number 72 of this Journal contains in briefest outline a description of the steps by which a proper modification may be carried out. No piece of apparatus, however, is as safe as the person using it, and proper training is absolutely vital. The Cave Diving Group specifies five hours underwater experience as a MINIMUM requirement before even a very easy cave dive may be attempted. When

cave dives are carried out in muddy water or in difficult caves a far higher degree of experience is considered to be essential. We mention these facts in passing only in order to put matters perspective.

The tragedy of Derek Wilcox illustrates again how dangerous it is to carry out diving experiments without proper guidance. All of us will send our condolences to his family and friends. As a postscript we cannot do better than to quote from a letter written by Derek's father: "I can only hope and trust that as a result of his death other enthusiastic sub-aqua swimmers may be prevented from testing out any apparatus by themselves."

It is a terrible thing to have happened and we all hope that this warning will not be lost on us.

O.C. WELLS.

Mud Stalactites in Swildon's Five.

Mud stalagmites are an unusual occurrence in British caves but are sufficiently well-known to have had several short papers and notes written about them in recent publications. But there do not appear to be any references to mud stalactites: Dr. Warwick in his summary and bibliography of 1953¹ does not mention them so that the impression is that they are very rare. However, a group were noticed and examined by Graham Candy and the author during survey work in Swildon's Five on November 8th last and are described here.²

Situation.

The mud stalactites were found in a single, very limited locality, twenty feet upstream on Buxton's Horror, (the Second Duck) where the roof drops from a height of four feet above the stream to only a few inches. Upstream of this point the passage is nearly straight for a distance of fifty feet, with the roof declining gently to the lengthy First Duck. They occurred only on a particular fin of rock which was a solutional feature in the roof. The fin was approximately six feet in length, three feet wide at its base, regular in form and had a well marked apex. This was directly over the deepest part of the stream channel and aligned with the direction of stream flow. Its height above the surface of the water dropped from about fifteen inches at its upstream end to six inches downstream.

Description.

The stalactites occurred as separate individuals numbering sixty to eighty altogether and fairly regularly spaced along the sides and apex of the fin. All those examined had the same

simple form. They were two and a half to three inches long and a half to three quarters of an inch wide at their bases,(see Fig.1.Page 212.) They were all well rounded and possessed a well marked fin on the upstream side. All were aligned parallel to the direction of stream flow. There was a very thin layer of mud of similar appearance between them. They glistened dully.

This latter factor led us in the first instance to suppose that they were calcite formations. But when finger and thumb pressure was gently applied to one it first bent through an angle of forty-five degrees or so, and then broke. The extent to which it bent before fracture seems to indicate a high degree of tensile strength. In this respect these formations are quite unlike the mud stalagmites commonly described, which are very weak structures.

When examined the broken section showed the stalactite to consist of a very dark brown mud of clay particle size, very even texture and homogeneous structure. There was no indication of accretionary layering.

Suggested Development.

The origin and development of these forms offers several problems, beginning with the origin of the mud from which they were formed. Ball & Waddon, describing mud stalagmites in Welsh caves³. attributed their formation to drips from mud deposited upon the roof by floods and falling immediately after the water subsides, before there is time for any drying and hardening in situ to occur. It is suggested that the stalactites developed from mud which was similarly deposited and are themselves basically residual features

of particular drips.

Being a low roofed section in a series of exceptionally low gradient the passage between the First and Second Ducks probably fills with water many times in the year. Floods of the scale which occurred late in last December are known to build up heads of water ten to twelve feet high in Swildon's Four, and so presumably also in Swildon's Five. Such a head may be sufficient to induce a generally rapid and turbulent flow through the particular section where the mud stalactites occur, sufficient to carry detritus of clay particle size in the main body of the water, and plaster it against obstructions such as the rock fin. Floods on this scale however, are unusual occurrences, being reported only three times in the present decade, whilst increases in the volume of the stream to two or three times normal flow (as on January 17th) are quite common. Such increases would submerge the rock fin and First Duck but with only negligible heads of water. In such conditions flow will be slow and therefore have little or no carrying capacity, as it was when the section was examined on November 8th.

Thus floods of the December scale would plaster the rock fin with an aggregate of sticky but fluid mud. Such is the form of this fin that when the water level fell below it again, the mud would run towards the apex and downstream and fall off in droplets. The stalactites are the residuals of the dripping action, held in position by contemporaneous drying,(see Fig 2.page 212). Such an explanation accounts for the upstream position of their fins (which are also upslope) and the very thin layer of mud seen between the formations. Subsequently the rock fin would be

frequently submerged by gently flowing water in low flood conditions of the January type. In these conditions hydraulic pressure would round the formations in the manner described and eliminate any minor excrescences which are not in the stream line. The accretion of colloidal matter to the mud accounts for the dull glint seen.

D.C. FORD. 14/2/'59.

References.

1. G.T. Warwick, 1953. "Cave formations and deposits".
Chap IV. British Caving, Page 62.
 2. See O.C. Wells, "Swildon's Five and Six."
Wessex Cave Club Journal, No.72, for an account of the operation.
 3. K. Ball. "The origin of mud stalagmites in Llethrid Swallet".
Cave Res Group Newsletter.Nos.56 &
- E.J. Waddon. "More about mud formations".
Cave Research Newsletter. Nos. 58 & 59.

FIGURE 1.

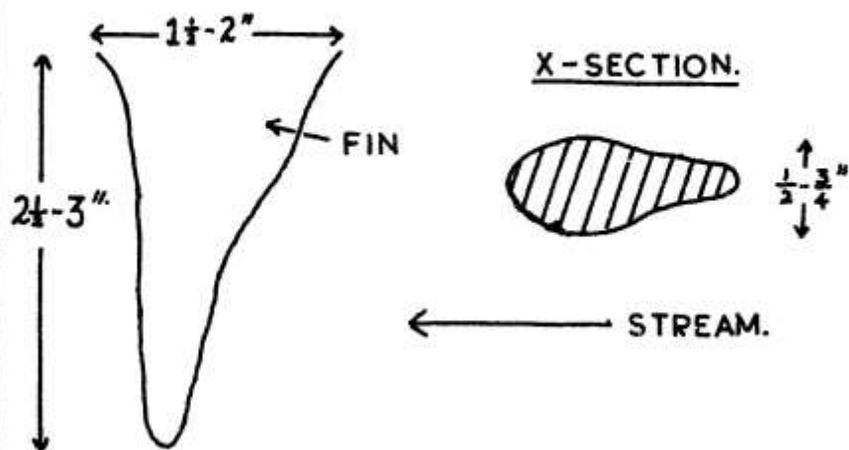
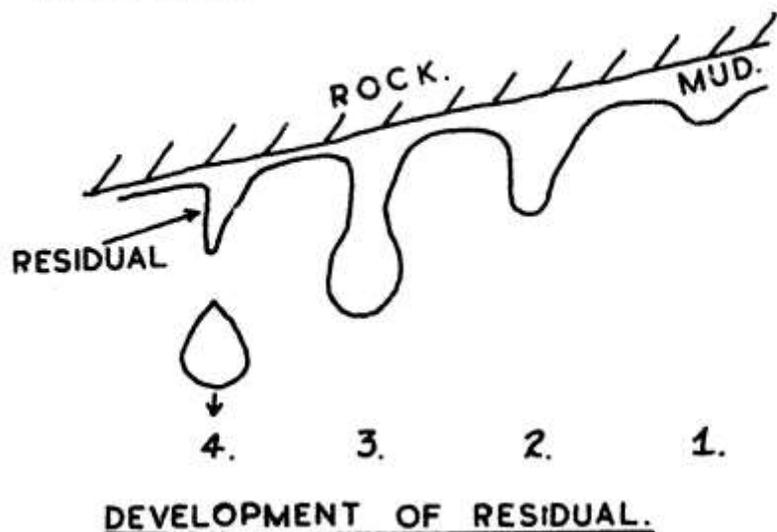


FIGURE 2.



GRJÓTAGJÁ

Last summer, the Wye College Icelandic Expedition spent four weeks in the north east of Iceland doing botanical, geological and tephra-chronological work. One of our Base Camps was at Lake Myvata, which lies in a highly volcanic region. The country surrounding the camp was of great botanical and geological (and tephra-chronological) interest. In between the pressing of plants, digging soil pits and fishing in the Lake, two of us managed to find time to do some very interesting caving.

Stretching east from the lake for about 1 Km is a broken lava field. Between the lava field and the volcano Hverfjall, is an expanse of flat stratified lava, in which there is a large fissure up to 10 meters deep, running N-S for several kilometers. This fissure is the result of a shock wave which, passing through the lava, has left the field at two different levels.

This cave has some very interesting phenomena. Water flows slowly through a series of deep pools from North to South. Grjotagja is the cavers paradise, for the temperature of the water is 105.5°F!!

The Local inhabitants have known of the entrance pools for about ten years, but it seemed that no exploration had been done. Accordingly, Pete England (Birmingham Cave and Crag) and I undertook the exploration and survey. Dressed in swimming costumes, gym shoes and string vests (we had to keep cool!), we forced about 260 meters altogether.

Throughout the length of the cave, which runs parallel to the fissure, were deep pools of clear

hot water, and although it was very pleasant to swim from pool to pool (c.f. Double Pots, Swildon's) our energy was very soon sapped, and our heads became muddled.

Some of the chambers were fairly large, with occasionally dry ledges to one side, but most of the passage was very low and uncomfortable. At two points we had to swim down narrow, low tunnels, with the water well out of our depth. The lava is very sharp, and covered above and below the water level with a peculiar grey form of "splash stal", reminiscent of limestone caves. Subsequent analysis has shown this stal to contain a mixture of compounds, including some - CO₃ sulphate, chloride, silica and possibly sodium.

Although looking highly dicey, most of the lava was in fact reasonably solid, except at one spot, which is now called Crunch Corner. However, Pete lived! At either end of the cave, are the water sumps. We think that the rising is connected to stream vent to the North, and in direct line with the cave. Beyond the downstream sump, however, it is difficult to say what happens to the water. We did notice warm water risings on the shore of the Lake Myvata, but whether or not they arise from the cave can only be proved by a dye.

It is certain that there is more cave to be broken into. The main difficulty is exhaustion in the stream filled chambers away from the entrance. Furthermore, a lot of time could be spent examining the nature of the water and occurrence of the "stal", and searching for fauna and flora. (although we found no normal "cave bugs", it is said that certain hot water bacteria exist, even up to 100°C) It is a very interesting cave, and there is a lot more work to be done there. So, if any weejee, lying in a steaming bath, asks himself why cave water is not hot well, here's your chance!.

R SAVORY

Post Prandial in South Wales.

Feeling conscious of the amounts of food and drink absorbed over Christmas, David Farr and Noel Cleve went to the South Wales Caving Club on December 27th to work some of it off. Transport was provided by David's antiquated Jowet Seven, "Dunka".

On Sunday morning we were roused at Six a.m. by Bill Harris, who brought us tea, and the news that the party was setting off for Pant Mawr. weather was inclement, to say the least, and the party never materialized (because of an epidemic of Hangover Vulganis), so instead we went to O.F.D.

We went upstream to the waterfall series and spent some time admiring the amazing helictites in the Canyon and the annexe, just off Crystal Pool Chamber. The Canyon is reached by way of a fine 70' pot, which is climbable, but we returned to Crystal Pool Chamber by way of a squeeze claimed impassable by Bill, who reclinbed the pot.

When we came back to the Waterfall Traverse we saw beneath us a turbulent stream, where previously there had been a dry passage. We managed to make a rather hair raising trip down to the chain at Lower Passage, and so were able to use the escape route.

We left the cave via the little visited Ogof Pant Canol. It sports amongst other attractions, a fine cold lake of excessive depth....

On Monday the weather was still inclement, and to savour it to its full extent we tramped onto the moors above Dan-yr-Ogof, and located the entrances to Pwll Dwfn for future reference.

We arose early on Tuesday and set off for Agen Allwed in "Dunka". The track leading towards it was once a railway line and the sleepers are still there. It was quite a sensation in Dunka!

Mike Hoopers article in Journal No.70 covers our impressions of the cave itself, but we also explored the rather fine main stream passage leading to Turkey series. It too, is liberally sprinkled with thbought inspiring piles of boulders. Bill Harris discovered a new passage and two fine avens; the place is at least five miles long now and mostly unexplored.

As an epilogue we might add that it only stopped raining on Wednesday, when we left, and to help things along "Dunka" broke a front spring. Nevertheless, it was a happy New Year, and our thanks are due to the S.W.C.C. and especially to Bill Harris for their hospitality and help.

N. CLEAVE.

KILROY

In recent years the graffiti of this multiple personality, Chad-like individual have appeared in a number of caves or at their entrances, It is well known that Kilroy is an elusive member of one branch of Her Majesty's armed forces. He is also intangible because of his multiple metamorphoses. Nevertheless, we hope that he will fly away or it may be necessary to inform his station commander that his men will find themselves locked out of Mendip caves unless Kilroy is brought to book. An alternative but quite impracticable mode of suppression of this disfigurer of caves would be just to

kill Roy.

Parkinson's Laws for cavers.

It is not generally appreciated that Parkinson's Laws, which describe so accurately the behaviour and attitudes of Government and other Offices, may also be applied to cavers and caving clubs. For the benefit of those who are not well versed in the original text we are reproducing some of the main points below.

The First Law for cavers states that the time by which a caver is late at a cave is in inverse proportion to the distance of his home from the entrance to the cave. Thus if a caver living in (say) Newcastle under Lyme (144 miles from Mendip) agrees to go caving with a person who lives in Priddy (144 yards from the nearest cave) then he cannot reasonably expect that the latter person will be less than 3 hours late at the agreed appointment. The solution is for the caver in Newcastle to invite the caver from Priddy to supper and then to forget all about it. Difficulties arise with the mathematics if the cave has more than one entrance, but these should not invalidate the general law.

The Second Law refers to caving huts and states that the activity of a caving club will be in inverse proportion to the splendour of its headquarters hut. Thus a club which operates in cars from a hotel cannot hope to compete with a rival club which operates on bicycles from an abandoned caravan. We look forward to seeing on Mendip the Ultimate Cavers Hut, with glass swing door, plush carpet in the entrance hall, internal telephones between bedrooms, and a well manicured receptionist behind the Enquiry desk. Needless to say, the caving activities of such a club would be zero.

The Third Law refers to caving digs and states that the importance of a dig becomes smaller as a greater number of people learn that it is taking place. The Fourth Law, of a more general application, states that the expectation of success in any venture varies inversely as the fourth power of the complication of the apparatus being used. The truth of these two laws is so self-evident that no further explanation of them will be needed here.

There are many, many similar such laws referring to the effectiveness or otherwise of cave surveyors, photographers, Committees, Treasurers and Hon. Secretaries, but to reproduce them here would serve no useful purpose.

We have indicated the trends, which was our purpose, and in any case we do not wish to lose all our caving friends so soon. It would be better, we feel, to leave them to the imagination.

PHILLITAS.
14.2.59.

BOOK REVIEW

CAVING IN AUSTRALIA

(Australian Speleological Federation) (1958)

4to., 23p., map, bibliog. (Obtainable from E. Hamilton-Smith, C/o Brotherhood of St. Lawrence, 67 Brunswick St., Fitzroy, Melbourne, N6. Australia at 2/6 p.f.)

This little book was prepared for the International Congress of Speleology, held in Italy last year, to introduce Australia to the other Delegates. Caving became widespread there only after the last war and it is still in its golden age for many open caves in distant deserts or dense bush are now being found for the first time. The book describes the various caving regions (which are shown on the caver map) and there is an account of the present state of speleo research in the country.

T.R.S.
14.2.59.

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