

THE PRESIDENT

The grievous void caused by the loss of our well-loved first President H.E. Balch, M.A., F.S.A., has been filled, and our thanks are due to Frank Frost for consenting to nomination for election to this important office. And not only for this are our thanks due to him. Time and again throughout the history of the Wessex Cave Club it has fallen to his lot to prove himself to be the right man in the right place at the vital moment. He undertook the secretaryship at a time of dire necessity. He sustained that onerous and tiresome task for over twenty years. Had he not done so the club would have ceased to exist. The survival of this Journal and the extension of the Headquarters at Hillgrove are but two of the many achievements in which his drive and persistence were the essential factors which inspired and secured the efforts of the members of the Club.

This was ever so with Frank. Possessed of great personal competence and considerable and varied technical skills, he has always been ready to place these qualities at the disposal of anyone whose proposals held any merit, seeking no personal credit for himself. His part in the first Wookey Hole Diving expedition is a case in point, and sets the pattern for all that follows.

The debt which the Club owes to him cannot be paid in fulsome praise. Nor would he wish it so. In offering the fitting tribute of appointing him its President, it is still the Club which will profit by reason of the wisdom, experience and sincerity with which he will fulfil his duties.

May we simply say, "Thank you, Frank."

We welcome the following new members:-

Miss B. Brisland, 15 Rectory Gardens, Solihull, Warwicks.

P.M. Giles, P.O.Mess, R.N.A.S., Yeovilton, Yeovil, Somerset.

P.N. Riches, The Priory Flat, Chewton Mendip, Bath.

Affiliated Club

Queen Elizabeth's Hospital School Caving Group, Bristol.

Subscriptions

Members who have not yet paid their sub. for 1961/62 are reminded that they will be named in the next issue of the Journal, in accordance with Rule 8, unless they send their 15/- (or 17/6 joint membership) to the Hon. Treasurer, 15 Hooper Ave., Wells, without delay!

Wessex Car Badges

Within the next month a number of Committee members' cars (and one bicycle) will be displaying metal badges decorated with a golden Wessex Wyvern. If any other members are interested in obtaining these the price is 32/6 post free. Please let the Hon. Sec. know your requirements, and as we can only order from the manufacturers in batches of six, an order will be placed as soon as this number of requests has been received.

U.B.S.S. Sessional Meetings – to which Wessex members are invited

Jan. 15th - Films (subject to availability):-

1. The Beginning of History.
2. Walkabout (Australian aborigenes)
3. Cliff Hangers (Climbing in the Canadian Rockies).

Jan. 29th - Some Caves in Australia by Miss M. Innes

Feb. 12th - The Oxford University Expedition to Northern Spain by Mr. W.J. Crompton.

March 12th - A.G.M. The Presidential Address will be about the Third International Conference on Spelaeology in Vienna.

All meetings 8.15 in University Geography Lecture Theatre.

Oliver Lloyd is showing the Cave Rescue film and giving a Caving Talk to the Junior Section of the Bristol Naturalists' Society on Friday, Feb. 16th, at 6.30 p.m. in the University Physiology lecture Theatre (enter quadrangle at top of University Rd. on right and enter door to corridor on left). Wessex members who have not seen the film, or who would like to see it again and hear Oliver's talk, are cordially invited to attend by the Society.

Club Meets

Saturday, Jan. 27th 7.30 p.m. Priddy Village Hall (near Church). Richard. Kenney will give talk, illustrated by colour slides, on the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey. Light refreshments will be available.

Sunday, Jan.28th. Hilliers Cave. Leader David Willis. Meet at the cave, 11.0 a.m.

Thursday, Feb.8th. 7.30 p.m. 61 Lower Redland Road, Bristol 6. An illustrated lecture by Harry Savory on "The Story of Steep Holm". (A visit to the island by the Club is planned during the summer months of 1962).

3rd March Agen Allwedd. Leader: Charles Bryant, 15 Filton Avenue, Bristol 7. A morning start is planned, necessary applications to the South Wales Nature Conservancy Board must be made through the leader at least one month in advance.

Saturday, March 10th. G.B. Cave. Leader Jim Hanwell. Meet roadside near cave entrance 11.0 a.m.

7.30 p.m. Kennion Road School, Wells, Lecture by Prof. E.K. Tratman "The Hydrology of the Burrington Area".

Sunday, March 11th. G.B. Cave. Leader David Willis. Meet roadside near cave entrance 11.0 a.m.

24th/25th March. Club Dig. Many offers of help have been received by Denis Warburton who plans to have everything ready for an early start on Saturday morning. All members are welcome to turn up as and when possible. A large tent will be on the site for shelter, changing, cooking, etc.

Easter. Yorkshire, Horton-in-Ribblesdale A tentative booking has been made at the Crown Hotel. Bed and Breakfast 17/6. Camping facilities are available near the Hotel, from which meals can be obtained if desired. Please contact Dr. Oliver Lloyd who has offered to arrange accommodation details and co-ordinate transport etc. Suggestions for caves to be visited will also be welcomed by Oliver (Withey House, Withey Close West, Bristol 9.)

We regret that we are unable to include a report of the A.G.M. in this Journal, but hope it will be available for the next issue. The Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure account for 1960/61 are, however, included, as is an up-to-date copy of the Club Rules.

The Officers and Committee extend their best wishes to all members for happy caving in the New Year.

Hon. Sec: P. Davies, "Morley", Silver St., Nailsea, Bristol.

Phone: Nailsea 9.

Hon. Treas: Mrs. B.M. Willis, 15 Hooper Avenue, Wells.

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

Wessex Cave ClubIncome & Expenditure Account

For Year Ending 30th September 1961

		<u>1960</u>					<u>1960</u>					
To	Subscriptions (inc. £1.2.6. arrears)	103	153	7	6	By	Headquarters -	Equipment	20	-	-	-
	Affiliation Fees	6	6	0	0			Repairs & Renewals	4	10	19	0
	Entrance Fees	3	3	0	0			Rent	5	5	0	0
	Donations	7	7	1	10			Lighting & Heating	21	42	5	11
	Headquarters Fees	74	109	17	0			Insurance	4	3	15	9
	Eastwater Hut Fees	5	8	6	6			Rates	5	5	8	0
	Tackle Fees	3	3	2	0			Property Tax	2	1	12	11
	Lamb Leer fees	1	1	4	0		Eastwater Hut	Repairs & Renewals	1		11	10
	Deposit Account Interest	2	4	8	6			Rent	2	2	10	0
							Tackle expenditure		-		16	19
							Cost of Journal		76		49	16
							Insurance - Third Party		11		10	8
							Postages & Telephone		2		4	8
							Stationery & Notices		5		4	13
							Bank Charges & Cheque Book		1		1	0
							Cave Research Group (2 years)		1		2	10
							Mendip Rescue Organisation		-		5	5
							Lamb Leer Rent		-			10
							Loss on Dinner		6		4	10
							Sundry Expenses		3			7
									169		172	11
							Balance – being surplus for year		35		123	14
									204		296	6
Total Receipts		204	296	6	6							6

Balance Sheet – as at 30th September 1961

Accumulated Funds –												
as at 1st October 1960	£94	10	9					<u>Economic Building Society Deposits:-</u>				
Add Surplus for the year	123	14	11					Deposit Shares	120	6	5	
	218	5	8					Realised Preferential Shares (Hut Fund)	95	0	0	215
Less	5	0	0	213	5	8						6
Hut Fund								<u>Midland Bank Ltd:-</u> Current Account				110
As at 1st October 1960	87	15	10									14
Add Transfer from accumulated funds	5	0	-					<u>NOTE:</u> The value of the Club's Headquarters				2
Interest on Deposit	3	6	8	96	2	6		and Equipment is not included.				
Subscriptions paid in advance				15	15	0						
Sundry Creditors					17	5						
				326	0	7						326
												0
												7

I have prepared the above Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure account from the records and vouchers of the Club, and to the best of my belief the same gives a true and fair view of the Club's affairs.

C.H. Kenney Chartered Accountant – Wells, 17th October, 1961

THE ANNUAL DINNER

The dinner was held again at the Star Hotel in Wells. It is a pleasant occasion after the A.G.M. to relax and meet one's friends and discuss what might be done during the next year. Each Dinner sees a few new faces and also some who are at other times rarely seen on Mendip, either because they live too far away or have retired from caving activities.

After the business of eating, the toasting got well under way with a speech by David Willis who, whilst giving us the toast of the Guests, gave us some good advice on co-operation. Ron Teagle replied on their behalf.

Michael Thompson then proposed the health of the Club with a further short speech about club and inter-Club co-operation. Neither this nor the next speech were audible to the mass of those present owing partially to the rather poor acoustics of the room and also to the fact that they just did not speak up. This was a pity as both speeches were worthy of hearing. The reply to the Club was given by Dr. Donald Thomson who spoke of Frank Frost, our new President, in his capacity as Secretary, the post he so amply filled for many years. Dr. Thomson spoke for all of us present in thanking Frank Frost for his great service to the club and he wished him happy years as President.

The toast Absent Friends was left without embellishment and a great many people again thought of Frank Frost, who was unfortunately unable to be with us. After the dinner we were hounded out into the bar and then back into the dining room; this was rather unsatisfactory, but those who survived it were regaled with several songs and had good opportunity to talk at length with their friends.

WESSEX CAVE CLUB RULES

1. That the Club shall be called the Wessex Cave Club
2. That the objects of the Club shall be:
To promote the sport and science of caving by:
 - a) initiating newcomers into the best tradition of the game.
 - b) gating caves that are likely to be despoiled.
 - c) publications,
 - d) organizing gatherings to explore or excavate.
 - e) by arranging for Members to visit caves in districts other than their own.
 - f) erecting and maintaining huts where members can stay while cave hunting.
 - g) maintaining gear for the use of members.
 - h) maintaining for the use of members a library of books, literature and maps.
3. That the Club shall consist of Honorary Members and Ordinary Members who may be of either sex.
4. That the President, Vice Presidents and Honorary Members shall be entitled to exercise all the privileges of ordinary members, including the rights to stand for office and for the committee, and all voting rights. The President and Vice Presidents shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election.
5. That the affairs of the Club shall be conducted by a Committee which shall consist of a Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Assistant Secretary, Gear Curator and nine other members who shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election, and that the Honorary Secretary of any group within the Club be eligible to attend a committee meeting in an ex officio capacity, and may nominate a substitute to attend any meeting which he cannot attend personally. All members standing for office or for membership of the Committee must be nominated by two members of the Club. The Committee shall fill any casual vacancies. An Honorary Auditor shall be appointed each year at the A.G.M.

6. That the election of the Committee shall be by postal ballot, and that the Club year shall end on September 30th and the A.G.M. and Club Dinner shall be held during October.

7. That any person desiring to join the Club must be nominated by two members and elected by the Committee. A minor must obtain the written consent of his parent or guardian.

7B. That all applicants for full, joint or affiliated membership who are under the age of 21, must obtain the permission of his or her parent or guardian who will be required to sign a special form supplied by the Club.

8. That the subscription for Ordinary Members shall be 15/- per annum due on October 1st each year, and every new ordinary member shall be required to pay an entrance fee of 5/-. Any member whose subscription has become more than three months overdue shall be named in the next Journal, and if within one month the subscription has not been paid, the member's name shall be removed from the list of members, and notice to this effect shall be sent to the member. The subscription of a member joining near the end of the financial year may be deemed, at the discretion of the Committee, to cover the subscription for the following year. Married couples may become joint members paying an annual subscription of 17/6d. They shall enjoy all the amenities of the Club, except that they shall receive one copy of each journal issued, and one vote only.

9. That a charge of 1s.6d. (exclusive of any gate fee) shall be payable by any non-member who takes part in any trip on which Club gear is used. The size of the party shall be at the discretion of the leader.

10. That every person whether a member or not, making use of the services of a guide or guides, or taking part in any activity or expedition organized by the Club, or in which any member of the Club shall take part, shall do so at his or her

own risk, and that he or she, or his or her legal personal representative or assigns or dependents shall have no claim or right of action against the Club, or any member thereof in respect of any damage loss or injury sustained notwithstanding any negligence of the guide or any members, or the body of members of the Club.

11. That an extraordinary general meeting may be called at any time by the Honorary Secretary when required to do so by the Committee, or in writing by ten members of the Club. Two weeks notice must in all cases be given. Such a meeting may not pass a resolution, but by a simple majority of those present may draw up a resolution to be voted on by postal ballot within one month by the members of the Club.

12. That members using the Club's Headquarters shall leave it in a tidy and clean condition.

13. That no alteration shall be made to these rules except at the A.G.M. or by special resolution passed at an E.G.M. called at the request of the Committee.

14. Any person whose membership is deemed to be undesirable by the Committee may have his membership suspended by the Committee until, and not longer than, the next A.G.M., at which the member concerned shall have an opportunity of being heard. A three-quarters majority of the members present at the A.G.M. may expel such member.

15. That the Committee shall have the right to refuse the use of Club possessions to members when they consider it desirable in the interest either of the Club or the member concerned, but the member concerned shall have the right of appeal to the Committee against this decision.

16. That caving clubs or societies attached to schools, youth or scout organisations, etc., may become affiliated to the Club on the approval of the Committee. The subscription shall be 2s.6d. per member per annum. Only one copy of each journal shall be sent to each affiliated body. Note: "The concession given by this rule is normally intended for minors who are not wage earners. Wage earners and adults should only be admitted under the rule in the proportion of one to ten minors."

17. That members of affiliated bodies may become Ordinary Members of the Club when their application has been approved by the Committee and the annual subscription has been paid. The entrance fee shall be waived for members joining the Club in accordance with this rule.

18. That notices of motions for discussion at the Annual General Meeting shall be received by the Honorary Secretary not more than two weeks after the posting of the notices of the meeting. Such notices of motions must have the names of the proposers, and be circulated to the members at least seven days prior to the meeting.

19. That at each A.G.M. the Club shall decide on the sum of money that is to be placed for that year in the Hut Sinking Fund. This Fund is to be used only for major repairs or replacement of the main hut at the Club's Headquarters. The administration of the fund is in the hands of the Committee.

20. No part of the Club's funds shall at any time be distributed by gift, division or bonus in money, to or between any of its members. On dissolution surplus funds shall be applied in or towards the advancement of science in the fields of Spelaeology, Archaeology or Geology, or of any of them.

NOTES ON THE DRAINAGE OF THE BINEGAR-OAKHILL
DISTRICT OF EASTERN MENDIP.
J.D. Hanwell & M.M. Thompson

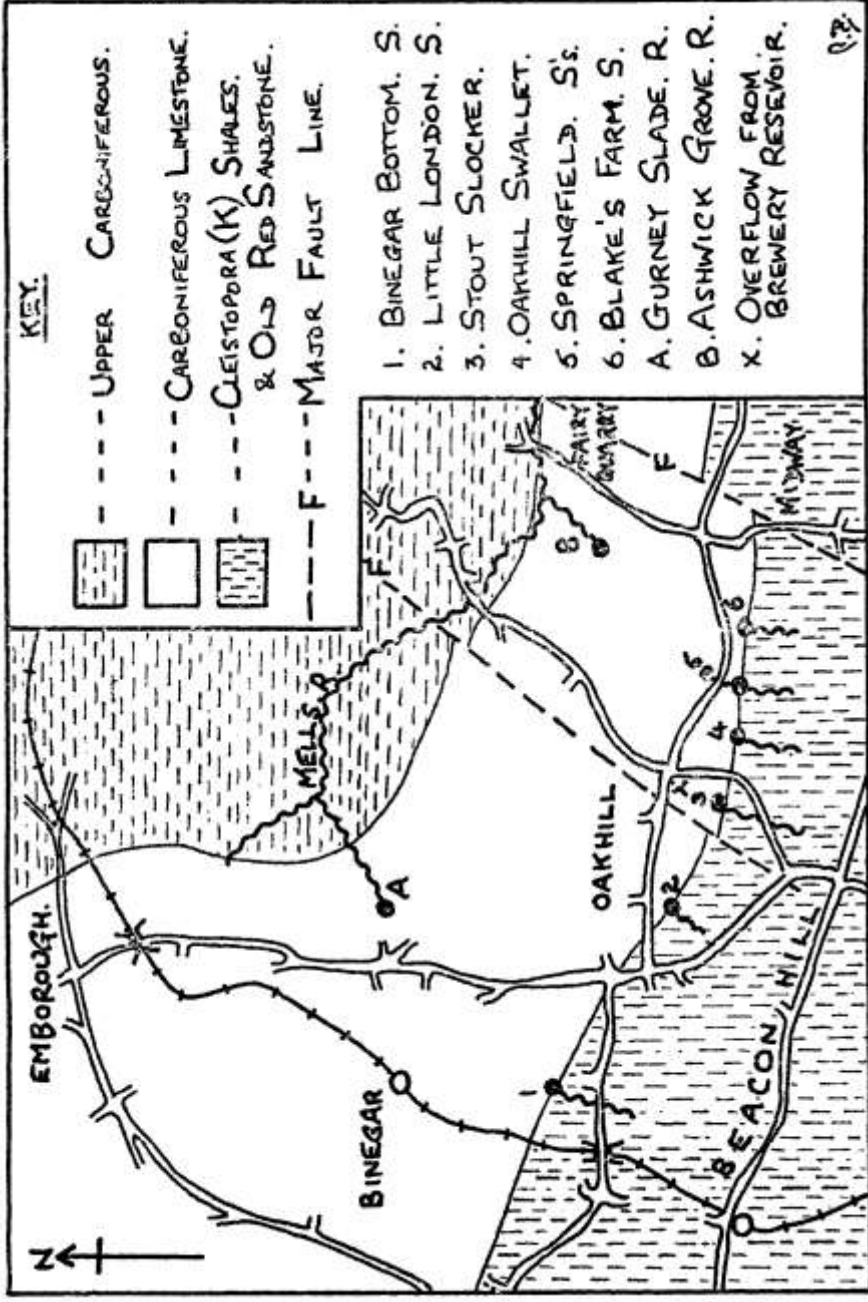
I Introduction

The following account examines systematically the swallets and resurgences of the Binegar-Oakhill District of Eastern Mendip. It collates the information gained from periodic working trips in the area, and concludes with tentative inquiries into the potentialities of cave development for the region as a whole.

II Location

The area concerned surrounds the villages of Binegar and Oakhill and is to be found on Ordnance Survey 1:63360 Sheet 166, Frome; or 1:25000 S.T.64 (see sketch map). Structurally it lies on the northern limb of the Beacon Hill pericline at the junction of the Lower Limestone Shales and the Carboniferous Limestone proper; and is bounded to the north by the deeply incised Nettlebridge Valley - one of the main drainage lines of the upper Mells River catchment area. The western and eastern boundaries are not so well defined, however, and it becomes necessary to anticipate the broad features of the conclusion before demarcating them. Essentially the western boundary can be taken to follow the old Somerset and Dorset Railway from Maesbury Castle through Binegar to Old Down, as structural and surface features indicate this as approximately accordant with the main watershed for the catchment area in question. The possible exception is that the boundary so drawn excludes feeding swallets around Emborough. Nevertheless despite apparent obvious connections based on surface evidence, structurally this area is highly complex (1). Well developed active swallets are known to exist here but as yet little can be determined concerning their underground alignment. Undoubtedly further work will

GENERAL DRAINAGE AND GEOLOGY OF BINEGAR-OAKHILL DISTRICT.



prove the case one way or another, but temporarily this small annex will be excluded from the regional considerations as a whole. To the east the boundary has been based on the secondary watershed, between drainage to St. Dunstan's Well (2), and that to further upstream on the Mells River. This parallels the Midway/Fairy Quarry road about a quarter of a mile to the west. The evidence for this stems from observations that to the east of this line cave development is centred around the resurgence at St. Dunstan's Well, whereas to the west evidence suggests drainage into the Ashwick Grove/Harridge Wood Valley. Although the St. Dunstan's feeding area also belongs to the Mells River catchment area it has been excluded from this discussion. It is considered that the greater knowledge of underground development here warrants a separate more comprehensive analysis, divorced from the more speculative aspects now considered for the little known area to the west.

III Drainage

The sketch map illustrates the relationships between geological structure and drainage. Basically it shows that water is canalised off the impervious Old Red Sandstone of Beacon Hill to sink in a line of swallets following the junction of the limestone shales of the Cleistopora (K) Zone and the more massive limestone of the Zaphrentis (Z) Zone. Underground drainage then follows, and resurges at two main points off the Nettlebridge Valley, i.e. the Gurney Slade and Ashwick Grove Risings. Here the Mells River has cut a deep valley along the strike of the rock, where a structural weakness lies about the highly compressed Upper Carboniferous Strata of the North Somerset Coalfield area. Nowhere is there a great horizontal or vertical distance between swallet and resurgence, but the focus of many drainage lines into two major exits presupposes marked collection underground. The following are accounts of firstly the main swallets, west to east, and secondly the two resurgences.

A. The Swallets

(i) Binegar Bottom Slocker. NGR 614481. Alt.748ft. Here a pronounced stream flows northwards from Maeshury Castle under the Whitnell Corner/Mendip Inn road to sink in a shallow open dry valley. This valley is joined by others and can be followed to Gurney Slade becoming more incised and ungraded. The stream itself fluctuates widely according to daily and seasonal rainfall conditions and has been observed to utilise dry and flood regime swallets about 20 yards apart. Such a condition would suggest comparatively recent active vadose development of the underground passages that exist near the sink. Down valley towards Gurney Slade, however, shakeholes are found which suggest that the underground passages are probably larger progressing further downstream.

(ii) Little London Swallet. NGR 625473. Alt.750ft. Narrow interconnecting passages are known here (3), and the feeding stream fluctuates greatly with rainfall variations. Undoubtedly this development at the sink is also very young in character, but like the previous slocker surface indications of larger underground passages are evident down-valley. The dry valley associated with this sink exhibits identical characteristics to Binegar Bottom, in that it can be followed for one and a half miles, through Oakhill to Ashwick Grove House ruins, becoming narrower and deeper. In Oakhill definite surface subsidence has been recorded twice since 1900. Firstly following the road surfacing, and subsequently opposite the school in laying the sewerage system. Such collapses would again point to the fact that considerable underground enlargement has occurred in this area, most probably associated with the fault line which outcrops nearby. None have been examined from the aspect of cave exploration, however.

(iii) Stout Slocker. NGR 635471. Alt.720ft. Following Whitsun 1957 Jim Hanwell obtained permission from Dowager Lady Marjorie C. Hothouse of Pondsmead House, to investigate this swallet and with members of the W.C.C., in the year that followed discovered an interesting network of passages. The well developed depression area of the original slocker had been infilled as a result of landscape gardening in the Pondsmead Estate c.1760, and the stream redirected to feed two artificial lakes at a higher level. The overflow was then ducted to Oakhill Brewery a quarter of a mile away, which was built contemporaneously with the estate. It was after the well known beverage produced here that the swallet was named. Once again the regime of the feeding stream greatly fluctuates, and so for periods of excess a controllable sluice was built to the swallet area which remained dry normally. During the 1920's however, successive seasons of high rainfall required this excess overflow sluice to be used persistently. Undermining of the unconsolidated infill resulted and two adjacent open collapses occurred. It was in this condition that we first explored the area. Initially entering the most easterly, one moved down a dirt floored bedding plane dipping 40° northwards for 15ft, and after a 12ft. vertical corkscrew was able to progress 60ft. along a high narrow joint determined rift. This narrowed to a terminal thick mud infill and became impassable - being about 30ft. below the surface. However, at the bottom of the corkscrew an inlet stream entered and flowed along the steeply inclined floor of a tight strike rift. After removing several jammed boulders it was possible to squeeze some 12ft. to see the water disappear down a 6ft. vertical slot about 4ins. wide. Without explosives this could not be penetrated. Mud and surface debris was found in pockets in the roof indicating that the strike rift at least flooded. This was subsequently demonstrated by operating the overflow sluice, so directing a sudden spectacular inrush of water.

The second collapse was also probed, but progress stopped by a complex ruckle; and later two other adjacent points showing promise were dug. The last unearthed an artificial culvert which gave access to a series of very narrow interconnecting rifts eventually joining the original passage and adding a further 30ft. in length. Work ultimately discontinued as explosives became necessary; however, much useful information was acquired. Firstly, despite a relatively greater amount of development, like the previous two swallets discussed, Stout Slocker exhibits features of very recent vadose formation. Secondly, development down-valley would appear again to be more advanced. The water piped from the artificial lakes to the Brewery is stored in a reservoir at NGR 635474 at an altitude of 708ft; the mean intake being 6,000 gallons per hour during the three summer months of 1957. Only a small percentage of this is now used in the brewing processes, and so the majority overflows (see map), It would seem from the records of construction in 1760 that this is allowed to sink freely in an old shakehole now built over. The location of this is identical with the dual road collapses mentioned in the description of Little. London, suggesting some underground confluence, and therefore re-emphasizing the possibility of considerable stream passages. This swallet has been accounted for at some length as recent agricultural redevelopment in the estate has required the infilling of the whole sink area.

(iv) Oakhill Swallet. NGR 638469 Alt. 730ft. Here under normal conditions a considerable stream flows into a large pear-shaped depression orientated along a north-south axis. A small ungraded tributary channel enters from the west, but contributes an insignificant amount of water except under periods of heavy rainfall. The actual sink is among the roots of a tree growing at the lowest point of the depression, and although

the uneven floor would suggest underlying boulders, no rocks are exposed. So the exact nature of the sink is unknown as there are no records or signs of excavation to date. The dimensions of the depression are second only to Blakes Farm among the swallets under consideration, which leads one to believe a comparatively well-developed cave system exists. Nevertheless, following the pattern of the rest it may be tentatively assumed that any passages exhibit relatively young vadose features.

(v) Springfield Slocker. NGR 643472. Alt. 660ft. Here a considerable stream flows off Beacon Hill under the Oakhill/Stoke St. Michael road by Springfield Cottages, and sinks at the head of an identical valley to Binegar Bottom. This dry valley can again be followed, becoming more pronounced until after half a mile it runs into the main Ashwick Grove-Harridge Wood Valley. Following Christmas 1959 the writers received permission to investigate the sink. Removing boulders where the water sank it was possible to lie in the streamway down a 10ft. long but narrow bedding plane dipping 40° northwards. After this the water followed a very narrow strike rift for 8ft. and further progress was limited by the rapid flow of the stream and a lot of gravel sediment infill. Once again recent vadose development is evidenced. First the O.S. 6" maps shew that as late as 1904 the stream sank some 100 yards further down valley, and secondly alternative sinks are to be found in the river bed further upstream. Nevertheless, valley features indicate more extensive cave development appreciably further downstream.

(vi) Blake's Farm Swallet. NGR 646469. Alt. 675ft. In this area extensive and complex collapse has occurred, giving a very large depression where two shakeholes coalesce (4). Essentially the passages here have developed vertically down enlarged bedding planes and joints. At lower

levels these are met by further rifts leading to vertical chimneys. Obviously part of the collapse area. The feeding stream eventually "sumps", but access to this is impossible at present owing to flood silt blocking the narrow squeezes at the approach. Again, therefore, the lower levels at least completely flood, and the passage features display recent vadose activity in weak limestone shales. The nature of the rock here would largely account for the large scale depression, rather than envisaging any complete collapse of well developed chambers or passages.

B. The Resurgences

(i) Gurney Slade Rising. NGR 631495. Alt. 588ft. This resurgence is about half a mile east of the village, and has been pumped to supply Downside Abbey since 1906. Before then it would appear that the water emerged from the foot of a small limestone outcrop, but now buildings obscure this feature. A 36ft. well was sunk originally to increase the yield; however the results were negative so a horizontal tunnel was blasted in a westerly direction. After 120ft. a sudden "strike" was made. So quick was the inrush of water that all the heavy equipment was abandoned, and since then the tunnel and well have remained flooded. The head of water is sufficient to cause artesian flow to a storage tank, and pumps are only necessary from this reservoir to the mains. On an average 56,000 gallons per hour is recorded, with extreme flows of 65,000 gallons and 25,000 gallons depending on rainfall. The nature of such a prolific "strike" leads one to suppose the tapping of some major underground streamway nearby. However, no surface evidence can be found to support this and only diving will prove the point. Tentatively one might suppose that any passages are almost entirely flooded for some 600 yards upstream, as during wet seasons Winter Well in Gurney Slade becomes temporarily active. Only 45ft. vertically separates the two outlets.

(ii) Ashwick Grove Risings. NGR 653479. Alt. 500ft. Although a specific reference and altitude has been quoted for convenience of location, in fact three important risings occur within a small area. To the north-east of the ruins of Ashwick Grove the main valley is joined by the Springfield tributary valley. From this confluence the transverse section assumes more gorge-like proportions, being flanked by prominent limestone outcrops. This pattern is quite typical of valleys around here. The valley floor contains the dried course of a small surface stream, most probably an overflow from the old well at the ruins. About half a mile from these ruins on the east side, the first rising emerges from several narrow rifts. After periods of heavy rainfall this flows very strongly, emitting several thousand gallons an hour. However, it ceases to flow following dry weather conditions. On the same side, 100ft. down valley, a second slightly smaller resurgence with similar characteristics joins the river. Thus swollen, the river passes over a weir where part is conduited to two collection tanks, and ultimately to a Bristol Water Works reservoir. The first of these tanks is also fed by the third rising, which is continuously active. Although little horizontal and vertical distance separates the three their flow regimes indicate that the first two are successive flood level exits, whilst the third represents the major outlet. Under dry conditions, therefore, the former might afford access to the well-developed underground river system which exists here. Possibly a parallel system akin to that recently entered in nearby Fairy Cave Quarry.

IV Conclusions

A similar pattern has been evident for the six swallets in question; namely that dry passages at the sink are narrow recent vadose developments, but that surface features down-valley in each case suggest the possibility of larger development. Without question this is substantiated by the fact that at least in

the latter five, underground drainage convergence can be postulated to Ashwick Grove. Indeed it is also probable that drainage from Binegar Bottom Slocker is also joined by that from the Emborough area, to emerge at Gurney Slade. However, as stated originally the latter area requires more examination if it is to be fitted concretely into the generalized underground drainage pattern of the Upper Mells River catchment area.

Probably, methods of water tracing could be usefully employed in the area as a whole to consolidate this initial inquiry. It would seem, however, that exploratory work at any of the young swallets would be laborious and impracticable. Rather more potential exists in a close examination of possible entrances down valley, or at the resurgences themselves. Indeed this is the case in the better known Hilliers/Stoke Lane/St. Dunstons area, where easiest access to the underground streamways has been afforded, not at the swallets themselves, but at sites downstream. This even applies to Stoke Lane Slocker concerning the evidence of early human occupation in Bone Chamber.

References

1. Welch F.B.A. Quart.Journ.Geol.Soc. Vol. LXXXV 1933.
The Geological Structure of the Eastern Mendips.
2. Barrington N. The Caves of Mendip. p. 44.
3. Barrington N. The Caves of Mendip. p.34.
4. Barrington N. The Caves of Mendip. p.13.
Surveyed 1961 B.M. Ellis, Shepton Mallet C.C.

THE MOOR PARK SANDSTONE CAVES

Maurice Hewins

General

For some time our group have been interested in the two small caves which are situated some three miles from Farnham at a place close by the ruins of Waverley Abbey called Moor Park. They are known locally as "Mother Ludlam's Cave" and "Father Foote's Cave". They both run in an easterly direction into a hill of horizontally bedded greensand.

During August of this year we surveyed both caves; in each case no measurement of the drop was made, but it can safely be assumed that this is of the order of 2 or 3 degrees at the most.

Mother Ludlam 's Cave

Description

This is the larger and most important of the two, and is more correctly called St. Mary's Well. Its entrance is on a level with the track which runs along the hillside some 30ft. above the River Wey. From it a stream which seldom, if ever, runs dry, emerges and flows down into the river below. The entrance to the cave is quite large and for the first 20ft. it is roofed by a magnificent stonework arch into which was built a gateway; the iron gates have now been largely destroyed. The entrance chamber with its floor of sand, goes back for 40ft., after which its dimensions diminish rapidly and to proceed further it is necessary to crawl through water on hands and knees. From here onwards the cave can be followed for at least another 150ft., during which distance the roof becomes progressively lower until the cave is less than one foot high, but the width at this point is still six feet.

On August 7th, when Terry Hall and I surveyed the cave, the furthest point reached was 192ft., from the entrance. The way on was

partially blocked by sand which had fallen from the roof. This must be the result of a recent fall because, in December last year, John Thomas and Dave Goodge passed this point and reached a place where the passage divided. No attempt was made to proceed further as that would have entailed squeezing through under a loose sand roof. It would seem likely that the cave continues to become smaller and smaller, as the formation of large chambers by solutional activity cannot be expected in sandstone.

The side passages that exist are of little importance. The two running off the entrance chamber coincide with the end of the stone arch and seem to be the remains of the spaces now filled with stone which have been artificially enlarged, probably by children. I myself can remember scratching the sand there with a stick during my misspent youth. The small passage on the left some 150ft. from the entrance is more interesting. Although it was dry when we were there it is probably another water inlet.

Historical

As might be expected, there are several local legends concerning Mother Ludlam's Cave. One of these is a version of the famous "Animal Through Trip" story. In this case a duck entered at Moor Park and re-appeared several days later near Guildford, some 8 miles distant. This story was well known at least as early as 1787, when it was published by Francis Grose in Volume 5 of his book "The Antiquities of England and Wales".

Grose also gave an account of the story of Mother Ludlam, a white witch who resided in the cave "once upon a time". This kindly old girl apparently used to lend pots and pans to the local peasants. She did this for several years until, as was inevitable, someone failed to return one at the promised time. This so upset Mother Ludlam that she moved house and was never seen again. The utensil that caused the trouble,

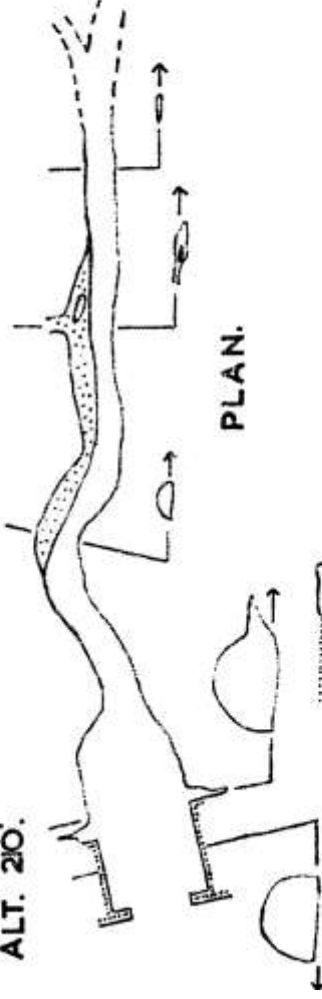
MOOR PARK CAVES.

NR. FARNHAM, SURREY.

N.G.R. S.U. 872/457.

MOTHER LUDLAM'S CAVE.

ALT. 220'.



PLAN.



SCALE
IN FEET.

0 15 30 45 60.

ELEVATION.

27.

FATHER FOOTES
CAVE.



PLAN.



ELEVATION.

SURVEYS BY M. HEWINS, T. HALL, RHALL & J. THOMAS.

a large copper cauldron, was taken to Waverley Abbey, where it remained until Henry VIII dissolved the monastery, and it was then moved to Frensham Church.

The earliest reference to the cave appears in the Annals of Waverley Abbey, A.D. 1216. This tells us that for 37 years the offices of the Abbey had been supplied with water by an aqueduct leading from a spring called Ludwell. When Ludwell ran dry in 1216 a monk from the Abbey called Brother Simon was given the task of finding a new source of water. He is reputed to have found several springs, dug their separate channels into one, and conducted their water under the River Wey to the Abbey. Brother Simon's waterworks was named St. Mary's Well by the monks.

Just how much of the cave has been made by man in general and Brother Simon in particular is difficult to assess, but it would seem likely that the large entrance chamber at least has been dug. It is, however, difficult to imagine anyone digging the bedding type passage at the back of the cave.

After the monks moved on, the cave seems to have become a place for inquisitive visitors. A drawing made in 1773 by Sparrow shows several ladies and gentlemen in expensive clothes visiting the cave. It is interesting to notice that there were bench seats inside the cave, where these people could sit and meditate. The stone arch had not been built at this time, however.

It is possible that excavation in and around the cave would throw fresh light on the subject. For example, if the water was conducted to the Alley underground, some traces of the pipes or channels may well remain.

In a History of Farnham, 1829, Smith claims that several leaden pipes were indeed dug up at the Abbey in 1740 under very ancient walls. Whether or not this evidence is worth very much is difficult to assess, but in one respect Smith did give us some new information. He stated

that in his day the floor was partly paved, and when we made a trial dig in the sand we came across a covering of red brick in several places at a depth of one foot.

Father Foote's Cave

Situated some 50 yards to the south-east of Mother Ludlam's Cave, and higher up the hillside, is the small cave known as Father Foote's Cave. It runs for 30ft. at a bearing of 100°. Its height varies from between 4' 5" and 2' 0" and its width from 10' 10" to 3' 6". The floor is of dry sand, and is to all intents and purposes horizontal. Placed on the hill as it is, above the level of the line of springs of which Mother Ludlam's is the largest, Father Foote's Cave would certainly seem to be artificial in origin.

One story, that this cave was the residence of a Hermit called Father Foote, would agree with this idea. However, an alternative story given in the Victoria History of Surrey, Vol.2, 1912, does not support it. This states that Foote was a lunatic who found his way to the cave. He was discovered next day in a distressed condition, and removed to the workhouse where he died.

ABANDON HOPE

Oliver C. Lloyd & C. Howard Kenney

The first reference to this part of Swildon's Hole was by Willie Stanton (1950), when writing about the Upper Mud Series and its connection with the Approach Passage in Swildons II. "The large passage" (Upper Mud Series west from the 50ft. chimney) "continues a short distance beyond the foot of the 15 Foot Drop before it is choked with sandy clay containing pebbles of Old Red Sandstone. It appears probable that this was the original continuation of the up-and-down-stepping passage" (this is the 'large passage' already referred to) "the water being diverted into the Approach Passage, a smaller affair altogether, by the choke. In this case this choked passage would appear to hold out some promise of continuing beyond Sump II, though the choke is likely to be very extensive. A trickle of water flows out of the choke."

On the 27th September, 1953, Howard Kenney and Willie Stanton started digging at this choke. They worked for 8 hours in most unpleasant conditions lying in the running water and already wet from Sump I, for at that time exposure suits were not available. Before leaving it they wrote the name "Abandon Hope" on the wall. It stayed that way until a few months ago, the only change being that the 15 Foot Drop became the 11 Foot Drop, no doubt as a result of more accurate measurement. This is the name which appears on all of Stanton's surveys since 1950.

On the 5th November, 1960, Howard Kenney and Oliver Lloyd reopened the dig, not so much on account of its possible continuation beyond Sump II as because it offered a likely connection with the new Double Trouble Series, which had recently been opened. It lay at the right level and was in passages of similar shape and formation. The dig was forced on the 4th February, 1961, by Kenney, Lloyd, David Houston and David Royal. It led to a large, uphill passage which went for a

hundred feet in a northerly direction, ending in a low mud choke, just under a rift taking a heavy drip over eroded stalagmite. There was a draught down the passage. It may be noted that the new passage leads away from Double Trouble and not towards it.

On the 18th February, 1961, Houston, Lloyd and Frank Nicholson dug at the final choke, while Richard Shuter did a C.R.G. Grade 4 survey of the new system, assisted by David Savage and Tim Hill. The final choke went rabbit-hole-wise for about 36ft. and then the walls closed together. There was no draught at the end, and one more Hope was Abandoned.

The new passage is surprisingly roomy, being in the form of a rift, of which the upper part is often separate from the lower. Access to the upper part may be had by three avens. The third of these takes a heavy drip and was climbed for about 40 feet after which it became uncomfortably tight. A further continuation is over the terminal rabbit-hole, where again it looks too narrow.

There has been a good deal of collapse in the walls, but where they have their original solutional surface, as for example near the middle aven about 8ft. from the floor, there is good scalloping which shows that the original direction of water flow was towards the 11 Foot Drop. This seems to be the opposite of what Stanton expected, and means that Abandon Hope is one of the major inlet passages to the Black Hole Series, comparable in shape with the passage between the Well Chamber and the Black Hole, and more important than the May Day Passages.

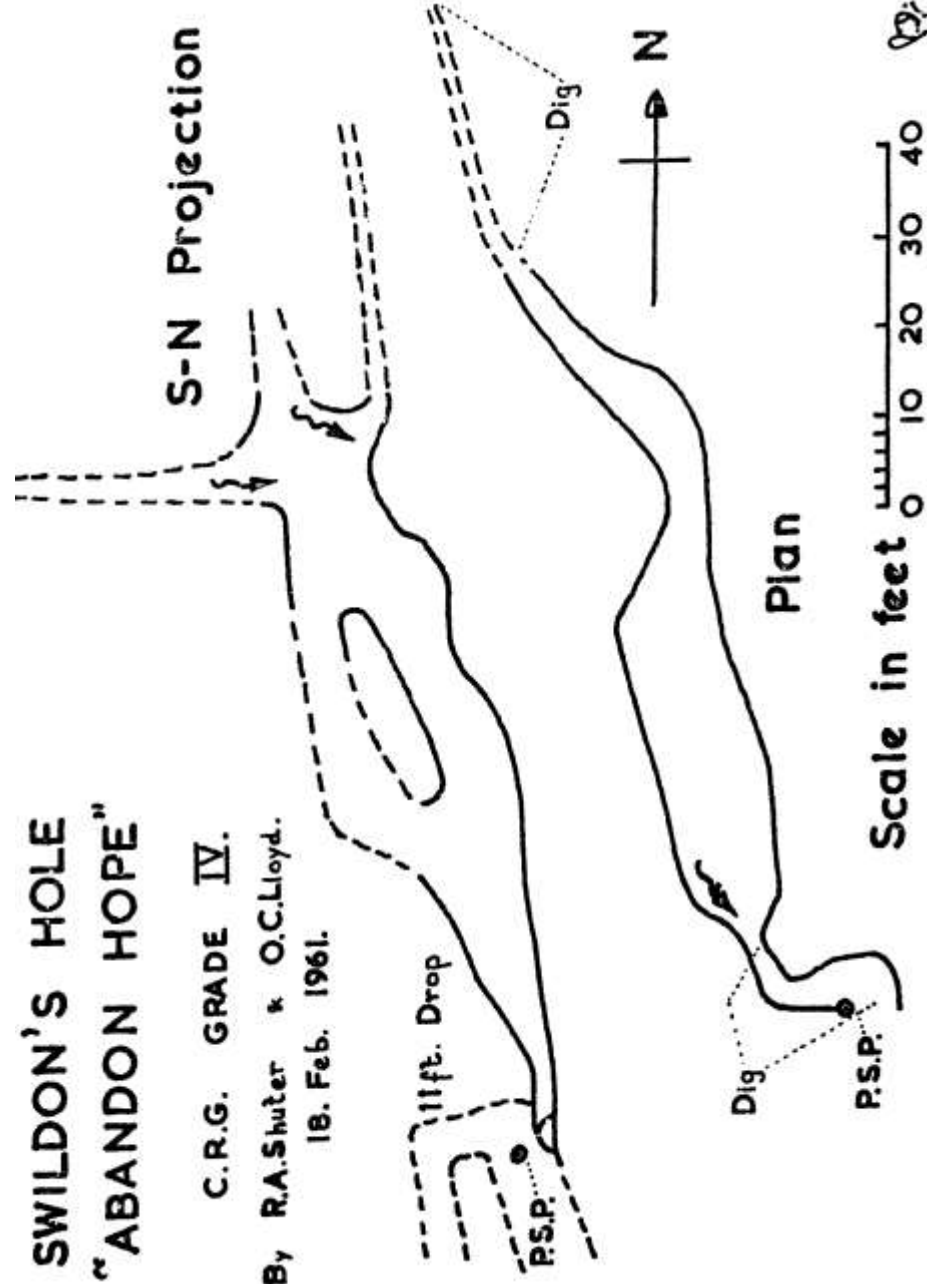
Derek-Ford inspected the passage with us on the 30th July, and said quite firmly that the terminal choke ought to go. "It will open up a new possibility of getting back to the surface, independently of the Black Hole." Maybe he is right, but it won't be easy digging, and the surface is 342 ft. above.

SWILDON'S HOLE "ABANDON HOPE"

C.R.G. GRADE IV.

By R.A.Shuter & O.C.Lloyd.

18. Feb. 1961.



The survey was made with a metal reinforced linen tape (to the nearest inch), a hand bearing compass (to the nearest 2 deg.), and a clinometer (to the nearest deg.). All magnetic bearings were converted to true bearings before calculating eastings and northings, and the plotting was then done direct on to squared paper from the Prime Survey Point (P.S.P. on survey), which was vertically below the lip of the 11 foot drop, 4ft. above the floor. The length of cave passage surveyed was 110ft. with a rise of 17ft. Actual distance between P.S.P. and last station was 92ft.

Reference

Stanton, W.I. Wessex Cave Club Journal No. 26. Jan. 1951, p.15.

MENDIP NOTES

Cheramodytes

Swildon's Sump III

In May 1954, when Balcombe and Davies carried out their exploration of Swildon's III, this sump was found to be impassable. It was a six inch slot with a muddy bottom, going down at an angle of 15 deg. However, the floods since then seem to have cleared it, for on the 14th October 1961 it was passed by Mike Boon, using his compressed air apparatus. He dived from Swildon's IV upstream to St. John's Bell, which was easily recognized by the belay point and guide wire left there by Balcombe and Davies. He says that Sump III is 25ft. long and 8ft. deep. I hear that the divers are seriously considering using this route for equipment needed in IV and beyond.

It is reported that Sump V is beginning to fill up again and will probably need re-digging by divers next year.

Jazz Festival in Gough's Cave

On the 13th October the Wells Journal carried a report that an all-night Jazz Festival is to be held in this cave early next summer, with dancing from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. Somewhere in the region of 800 young jazz enthusiasts are expected and tickets will be a guinea each. I am sure that most cavers will know what to do.

Colouring Tackle

In the last issue of this Journal, the Secretary told us of a bright idea the B.E.C. had had for each club to colour its tackle, so that it could be easily recognized. The Wessex had promptly chosen red, and even went so far as to begin by colouring its ladder-spiders a good, rich pillar-box red. He further reported, that the B.E.C. had made no reply. This is hardly

surprising. Clubs were asked to choose their own colour, and at least one other club (the U.B.S.S.) chose red - Bristol Red. If many other clubs have done the same we shall have no end of fun at the end of the next big rescue, scraping off the mud to find out which shade of red it is.

Vicarage Passage, Swildon's Hole

The fourth extension to Swildons Hole since the last edition of William Stanton's survey has rewarded the efforts of Oliver Lloyd and Howard Kenney (with the help of others) at Vicarage Passage high up in the roof of Swildons II at the sharp bend just before Creep 2. A two foot high tunnel gave access to the bottom of a loose boulder choke and after several efforts at chemical persuasion a way up through the boulders was opened. Oliver was the first to climb up through the boulders, and in doing so dislodged one of the larger ones which neatly sealed off the entrance passage. It is said that Oliver's Rescue Lecture is now 5 minutes longer in order to explain how a Secretary of a Rescue Organisation rescues himself. After this delaying tactic, the rest of the party, which included our Secretary, explored the new cave. There was approximately 400ft. of sizeable passage which ended in an unclimbable 20ft. drop. At least two side turnings were unexplored. The general direction is downstream and it seems very likely that there is a connection with the Trouble Series. The entrance boulder choke is at present dangerous.

Club Meets

On November 25th 17 members (including our Chairman, to whom our thanks are due for arranging this visit) enjoyed a pleasant afternoon's potter in the further reaches of Gough's Cave. The mud in these regions can be recommended for its consistency - just right for throwing!

The Lamb Leer meet on December 9th was attended by nearly 30 members and we understand that at one

time the quarry was almost completely full of cars, bicycles and people arriving on foot. The evening film show which followed attracted over 50 people to Priddy Village Hall for a programme of caving films enlivened by one delightful Ronald Searle cartoon. What a good job the "refreshments committee" were used to hungry cavers - all that remained of the platefuls of food and gallons of tea produced was one small bag of broken biscuits!

PEN PARKE HOLE CLOSED "Fledermausfanger"

In late September of this year (1961) the author visited the entrance of Pen Park Hole, Southmead, Bristol. Apart from the seven foot high fence, topped with barbed wire, and double padlocked gate, he also noticed that the entrance to the cave was somewhat altered. A concrete slab fifteen foot square had completely closed the cave.

The City Engineer's Department of the Bristol Corporation were obliged to take this measure following a rescue (1), which resulted in the City Fire Brigade being called out.

On the Saturday evening of the 12th August, 1961, 29 year old Mr. Peter Batey of 29 Cranmore Crescent, Southmead, and his brother Mr. Cuthbert Batey of 90 Crosscombe Drive, Hartcliffe, entered the cave with the intention of discovering where the Rev. Thomas Newnham met his death in 1775 (2). They arrived at the pitch in the Main Chamber, and Peter descended on a rope to the first ledge some twenty feet below. He then found that he was unable to ascend, so his brother sought help in the form of the Fire Brigade, who very quickly retrieved him from the drop.

Ever since the cave was first entered by members of the Wessex Cave Club on 12th January 1957, its future was uncertain. At the Cave Research Group meeting in Wells on 2nd May 1959, it was thought that the cave had been filled in.

Whilst most cavers probably regret the action taken in closing the cave, the Corporation have taken the only possible step, for no matter which type of "lid" is used, some unauthorised persons would undoubtedly break in at some time or another.

The cave has been open for 4½ years after having been closed for over 100 years (it was open in 1843 (3)), and it will be of interest to see when it is re-opened.

- (1) Bristol Evening Post 2 Star Edition, Monday, 14th August 1961. Top of page 2.
- (2) Wessex Cave Club Journal, No.75, Vol.5. July/Sept. 1959, page 285, first paragraph.
- (3) The Annals of Bristol in the 19th Century by J. Latimer, 1887. Page 269.

EFFECT OF THE HEAVY RAIN OF AUGUST 1961 ON
FOUNTAINS FELL, YORKSHIRE
E.J. Waddon

During the third week of August 1961, exceptionally heavy rain fell on Fountains Fell, Ribblesdale, 2 inches of rain being recorded in one hour. According to a local farmer, a three foot high wave of water swept down Fornah Gill, in which during the last few years the Northern Pennine Club have conducted many successful digs, perhaps the most important being the discovery of Magnetometer Pot. The entrance shaft to this pot is in the middle of the stream bed, a few yards below a stone wall, and is made of old steel oil drums. The wave of water demolished the stone wall, and displaced the oil drum shaft so that it is now canted over at an angle. The way on from the foot of the entrance pitch is a descent via a rift. As a result of the flooding this is now threatened by a large pile of unstable debris, which will have to be made safe before any further major trips into the pot are made. Higher up Fountains Fell, Gingling Hole has also suffered from the floods. The wet canal has been completely drained, presumably by the washing away of obstructions. Only once before is this known to have happened, in the late 1930's. The picturesque formations of the Stalactite Chamber at the end of the cave have been spoilt by a deposit of mud, probably left by the water which surged out of the canal.

AN ADDITION TO HENSLER'S PASSAGE -
GAPING GILL HOLE, INGEBOROUGH

E. Hensler

The 1960 Whitsun meet of the Bradford Pothole Club at Gaping Gill gave me a long awaited opportunity to explore and survey the right hand upstream passage at the west end of the master cave in Hensler's Passage.

Mike Boon and I joined the diving party which had planned an operation downstream at the two sumps and we entered through the newly opened-up connecting passage from East Passage beyond Mud Hall. The equipment consisted of a 75ft. steel tape, prismatic compass reading to half degrees, with the station points marked by candles.

With few exceptions, the new passage was very low and broad and not unlike the original crawl from Booth Parsons Passage except that it was liberally provided with mud and wetness which added to the difficulties of surveying underground.

With the efficient and patient help of Mike, who led with the tape end and candles, I struggled with the compass on a tripod which was either too high or else refused to stand up at all when splayed. Using a cord the tape was drawn forward after each measurement. We noticed a draught blowing towards us down the main route though none was observable in the side branches. The survey finished at a boulder choke where rocks had fallen from above and this we attacked vigorously, for it was here that the draught blew strongly but variably.

After working for a while we heard voices beyond the choke, but our shouts were ignored or were unheard and the sound trailed away into the distance. We were most excited by this observation for it proved a virtual connection which, if cleared later, should provide another entry to

the system and also a closing loop to the surveys.

After a while we decided that it might be unsafe to pull out any more rocks from below in case of a fall-in, and that it would be better to return another time, with a party on the other side, assuming the plot of the survey showed us approximately where it lay.

Another interesting result of our trip was the establishment of a definite air flow connection between the high aven in Hensler's Passage and a depression on the moor above, which we had located the day before by surface triangulation. Before going down the winch route we arranged for someone to make a smoky fire in the depression at a point where we had found the air was being drawn down at the time of the survey. This was timed so that we were able to observe the effect as we passed across the base of the aven. To our great joy we smelt the smoke strongly from the fire 420ft. above even before we reached the aven bottom. It seems reasonable to postulate a very deep pot or series of pitches virtually one above the other leading from the surface. On a previous visit I had observed pieces of peat lying at the foot of the aven.

On the 28th May 1959 I fired two rockets up this aven in order to get some idea of the height and the second rocket rose at least 100ft. before passing out of sight. The stick did not come down.

I returned to Gaping Gill the following Whitsun determined to press to a conclusion the investigation of the choke. Meeting Christopher Hawkes in camp I arranged with him for us to work together, and we organised another party consisting of Nigel Clark, Robert Vinsen and Hugh Williams, all of Newport, Mon., to wait in the area of South West Passage

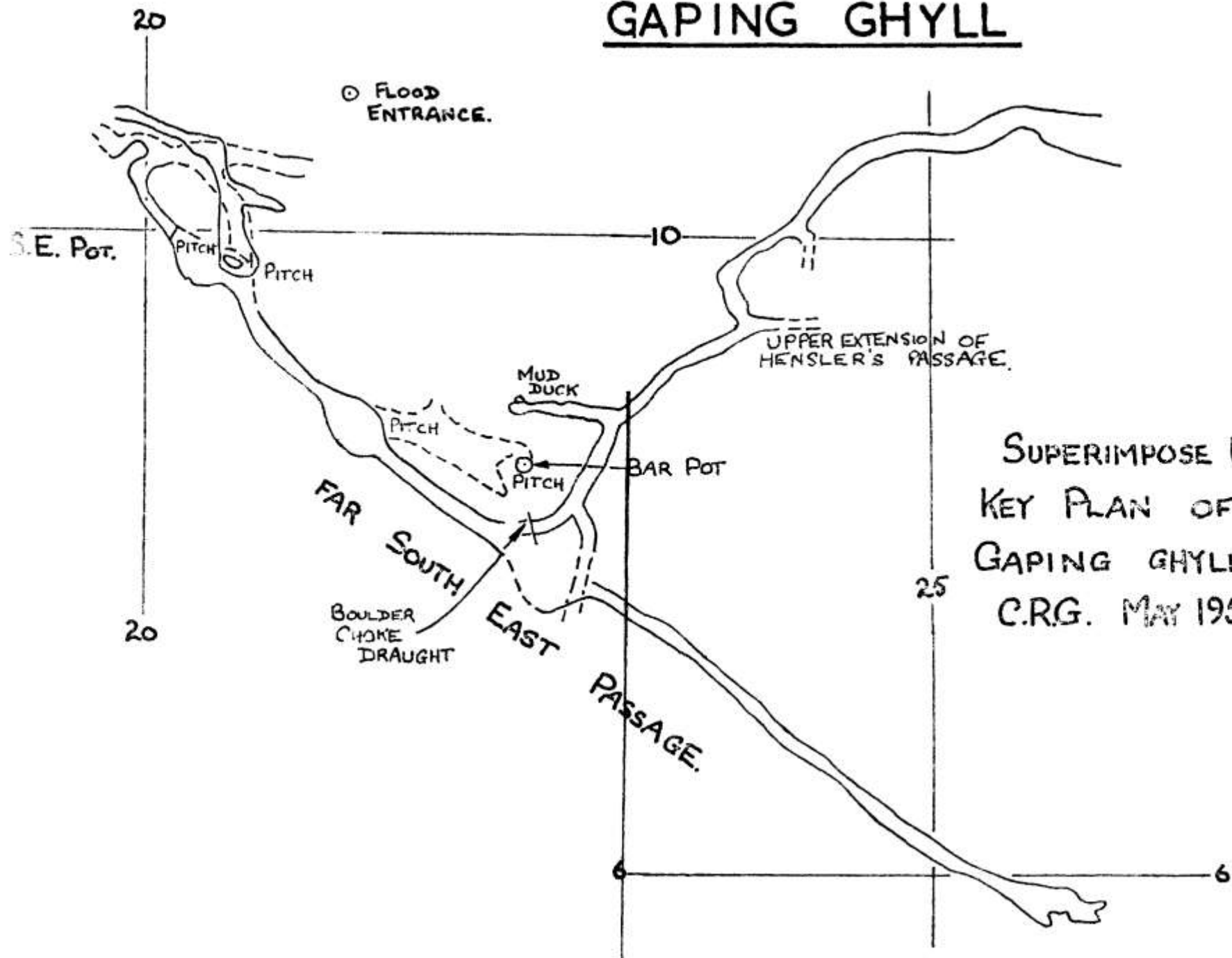
somewhere near the point predicted by the survey plot. An approximate time was agreed for the rendezvous.

In addition to the work at the choke, I had gone prepared to measure if possible the height of the aven using a hydrogen-filled ballon. We chose as our route into Hensler' s Passage the crawl used on the previous Whitsun but this time it was a veritable muddy sewer, well emulsified by the passage of many bodies.

The first attempt at inflating a balloon was abortive. Fortunately we had extinguished our acetylene lamps, but the second one held up well and grew to nearly 24" diameter before the gas began to run low. The buoyancy was good, something like 3½ ozs., and it rose vigorously on a linen thread to a height of 103ft. before halting. We hoped to persuade it to go higher and hauled it down a bit, but on releasing it again we were disappointed for it reached only 90ft. and then became firmly stuck. So we abandoned it, leaving a dangling thread to mystify others.

We stowed the cylinder and accessories in a safe place and hurried on to the choke. Just before this the passage forks and I took the left hand branch, forcing my way through a very tight squeeze and finishing up in an impossibly tight spot. This might be cleared down by scraping the clay away but working conditions are very cramped. Meanwhile Christopher took the right hand branch and within minutes I heard him shouting that he heard voices beyond the choke. By the time I had backed out and got near him he had squeezed himself beyond the point we had reached previously and was heaving out rocks at a great pace. Within half an hour we were both able to join the other party, thanks to their efforts from above in shifting away some large boulders which lay over the hole.

GAPING GHYLL



SUPERIMPOSE UPON
KEY PLAN OF
GAPING GHYLL.
C.R.G. MAY 1952.

We found ourselves in the passage beyond Bar Pot near where this passage peters out, and perhaps about 100ft. to the north west of the pitch.

So many were waiting to go up Bar Pot that Christopher and I decided to return the way we came, pick up the cylinder, and get out via Disappointment Pot. This we were able to do thanks to the ladders of a B.S.A. party.

This exploration proved again the usefulness of surveying when trying to predict possible connections between systems.

BOOK REVIEWS

MA VIE SOUTERRAINE by N. Casteret
(Paris, Flammarion, 1961)
8vo., 332p., illus. about £1. 1s. 0d.

This autobiography covers the whole of Casteret's life, from his first visit underground when he was five to his latest major expeditions at the age of sixty-two. Some new exploration is described but necessarily such a book retells many of the incidents related elsewhere. Here, though, the emphasis is different: there is more on the human and personal side of the explorations and the book gives considerable insight into Casteret's character. It accentuates his love of all energetic sports, for he believed in fitness for its own sake and, in his younger days, he was an almost fanatical enthusiast at cycling, swimming and football, as well as cave exploration. It was the same spartan mind as made him enjoy his solitary dives in Monte span that sent him into the mountains for long periods with only bread and cheese - a thirteen pound loaf and a whole Dutch cheese marked off into daily portions. Casteret's almost religious reverence for caves shows through all his writing and this book in particular brings out the simple fascination he finds in caves and everything to do with them - a fascination that serious cavers often forget in their preoccupation with details.

The recent major explorations described are all in the Pyrenees. In Pierre Saint Martin there was progress upstream in 1960, but still the end of the cave was not reached. The formidable winch descent down the entrance shaft is no longer necessary now that the hydro-electric engineers have tunnelled direct from the surface to the very lowest chamber and no doubt, in time, this part of the cave will be opened, to the general public. A new survey gives the size of this bottom chamber, the Salle de la Verna, as 650ft. by

590ft. and 490ft. high along its whole length - surely the largest single cavity in the world. There is also a description of five successive seasons' work (1956-60) in the very deep caves of the Arbas Massif. Connection there between the Gouffre Pierre and the Puits du Vent has given a depth of 2156ft. for the combined system, which thus becomes the 4th deepest cave in the world.

Though this is a book of memoirs by a now elderly man, there seems no sign of his retiring. He had resolved to give up major exploration at 60, but already he has given way several times to temptation. His 60th birthday, by the way, was spent in the 1614ft. deep Gouffre Raymonde, where a photograph shows him cutting the cake.

T.R.S.

BRADFORD POTHOLE CLUB JOURNAL No. 3 1961

4to., 91p., plan, sections, illus.

(Obtainable from A.N.Patchett, Woodlands, Halstead Drive. Menston, Ilkley, Yorkshire, at 4s.6d. p.f.)

Contains straightforward accounts of new and not so new explorations in Gaping Gill, Clapham Cave, Penyghent Pot and Christmas Pot. More than a third of this issue is occupied by an enjoyable but quite irrelevant description of life in the antarctic.

T.R.S.

THE BRITISH CAVER Vol.34 1962 (1961)

4to., vi + 98p., map, plan.

(Obtainable from G. Platten, Rotherfield, New Milton, Hants, at 8s.0d. p.f.)

The latest issue of this 24 year old Journal is largely a compilation of descriptions of caves and disused mines reprinted from various books and the publications of some eleven clubs.

There is some original material but the main value of The British Caver is in making more generally accessible reports from the typewritten newsletters, etc., of so many clubs. The cost of subscribing independently to all of these would be enormous. Of particular interest in this number is a Mendip Caving Group report on their excavations in Cooper's Hole at Cheddar.

A few copies are believed to have been issued with some pages blank or missing.

T.R.S.

DIE HÖHLE 12. ii - iii, 1961

(88p., Obtainable from Verband Österreichischer Höhlenforscher, Wien II, Obere Donaustrasse 99/Stiege 7/1/3, Austria, at about 5s.0d. for a set of four issues).

This double number contains abstracts of the 155 papers read this last summer at the 3rd International Congress of Speleology. Well over a third of them were contributed by Iron Curtain countries including Russia, but in all cases the abstract is given in English, French or German. Most of the papers are on rather narrow fields of study but they will interest the appropriate specialists in this country. Marjorie Sweeting writes on solution rates in some British caves, but the abstract does not explain her conclusion that the solution rate tends to be greater in summer than in winter. A.A. Ogilvie of Russia discusses the geo-electrical prospecting methods used for locating caves in the Caucasus and Siberia.

T.R.S.

SHEPTON MALLET CAVING CLUB JOURNAL (Series 3)

Nos. 1 & 2, 1961

4to., 18p., 23p., plans section.

(Obtainable from F.J.Davies, 10 Bramley Road, Street, Somerset, at
ls.6d. each, p.f.)

As the editor of this journal has proudly pointed out these two issues consist entirely of accounts of original exploration in Mendip and elsewhere. In No. 1, Shatter Passage and Double Trouble in Swildons and a dive at the Rodney Stoke Rising; in No.2, Swildons VI and VII and more on Double Trouble, and a small cave in Fermanagh. There is also a description of the 'Nymphargus' air breathing apparatus used this year in diving Swildons sumps V and VI.

T.R.S.

SOME SMALLER MENDIP CAVES Vol. 1 by R.D. Stenner, S.J. Collins, B.M. Ellis & C.A. Marriott (Bristol Exploration Club Caving Report No.6, Oct. 1961)

4to., 26p., maps, plans, sections.

(Obtainable from B.M.Ellis, 41 Fore Street, North Petherton, Bridgwater, at 3s.3d. p.f.)

The latest B.E.C. Caving Report deals with six caves and digs on Mendip. There are detailed descriptive accounts of Tankard Hole and Hunters' Hole, with plans and sections; both of these, incidentally, had been abandoned by the Wessex Cave Club before the B.E.C. started their successful work there. Alfie's Hole is described more briefly and there are reports on the digs at Vole Hole, Vee Swallet and Fairman's Hole.

The history of excavation and exploration is given in each case, together with the National Grid Reference and a list of the tackle required.

T.R.S.

PROC. UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Vol. 9. No.2. 1961

(92p., map, plans, sections, illus. 15s.0d.)

This year's issue contains only two cave articles. One of these is a detailed study of a primitive plant found in Wookey Hole, still not identified but probably an aquatic fungus; the other describes Pollcragreagh in Co.Clare.

T.R.S.

AU COEUR DES MONTAGNES by Pierre d'Ursel
(Bruxelles, 1960)

8vo182 + (i)p., plan, sections, illus. £1.2.9.

More than a hundred pages contain a good account of the twenty-four year exploration of the Cigalere cave, discovered by Casteret in 1932. Exploration being upstream all the way has required the successive climbing of 26 waterfalls before the terminal sump was reached some two miles from the entrance. D'Ursel 's book has been anticipated by a rather better one by Griotel on the same subject (see review on this Journal, 6, 76, p.60) but it makes enjoyable reading.

The rest of the book describes new exploration and photography in some comparatively minor caves in Belgium and France; they would have been more appropriately written up in one of the cave journals, but are quite pleasant space-fillers.

T.R.S.

THE GYPSUM FLOWER by P. Bair
(London, Eyre & Spottiswoode 1959)
8vo., 189p., 12s.6d. Also
(London. Pan Books, 1961)
8vo., 159p., 2s.6d.

Caves in fiction do not often play an important part in the story, but here the cave is the centre of the whole tale and more than half the book is devoted to happenings underground. A Pyrenean cave, used as a German store in 1944, is raided by the Maquis and a group of people is still inside when the entrance is demolished. Their reactions, life together and the ultimate escape of a few of them are well described and the book is recommended without hesitation. The green gypsum on p.81 is intriguing, too.

T.R.S.

THE CASTLE AND THE CAVE by Winifred Finlay
(London, Harrap, 1960)
192p., map, illus. 10s. 6d.

A children's novel of no great merit. A young English governess in the Dordogne visits Padirac and Lascaux and is finally trapped in another cave where her small pupil has been making his own 'prehistoric' paintings.

T.R.S.

THE CAVE by R.P. Warren
(London, Four Square Books, 1961)
8vo., 351 p., 3s. 6d.

This horrible novel (reviewed in the Journal, Vol.6, No.76, 1960, p.63) has now been issued as a paper-back. Someone must like it.

T.R.S.