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SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 24.

JULY 1958.

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- O.F.D. LEADERS LIST. Overleaf.

OGOF FFYNNON DDU LEADER'S LIST

Dr. E. Aslett, T.B Clinic, Courtland Terrace, Merthyr Tydfil, Glam.
T. Andrews, 135, Danson Road, Bexley, Kent.
T.K. Ball, Bronderi, Peniel Green, Llansamlet, Swansea.
R.L.B. Bennett, 13, Glanmor Park Road, Sketty, Swansea.
J. Bevan, 13, Cecil Road, Erdington, Birmingham 24.
Miss. M.M. Boughton, 21, Coniston Avenue, Sheldon, Birmingham 26.
W.E. Clarke, 6, Glynderwen Crescent, Derwen Fawr, Sketty, Swansea.
G. Clissold, Caravan, Plasnewydd, Llwydcoed, Aberdare, Glam.
B. de Graaf, 5, Tai North, Pennorth, Brecon.
N. Dilly, 53, Emery Street, Walsall, Staffs.
G.C. Evans, The Prince Alfred, Raglan Road, Plumstead, London S.E.18.
B.W.Fenn, 113, Sherwood Road, Hall Green, Birmingham 28.
R. Gregory, Sophia, Westminster Crescent, Cyncoed, Cardiff.
J.E. Hartwel, 116, Maes-y-dre, Glynneath, Glam.
P.I.W. Harvey, Llandough Castle, Nr. Cowbridge, Glam.
W.G. Harris, 17, Ford Road, Velindre, Port Talbot, Glam.
L.A. Hawes, 26a, Kings Road, Fleet, Hants.
D. Hunt, 19, Spring Street, Cadroxton, Barry, Glam.
E.G. Inson, 19, White Barn Road, Llanishen, Cardiff.
D.W. Jenkins, Dinmore, Dyffryn Road, Llandrindod Wells, Rads.
A. Jones, Victoria House, High Street, Glynneath, Glam.
J.C. Jones, Victoria House, High Street, Glynneath, Glam.
W.H. Little, 29, Wrekin Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warcs.
F. Morgan, 33, Dunraven Road, Sketty, Swansea.
D. Kemp, 17, Becmead Avenue, London. S.W.16.
H.J. Kerr, 46, Barlow Road, Levenshulme, Manchester 19,
J K. Platt, Castle Bromwich Hall, Castle Bromwich, Warcs.
C.L. Railton, 12, Chester Road North, Sutton Coldfield, Warcs.
T.N. Round, 25, Shaftsbury Road, Wednesbury, Staffs.
G. Sanders, Katoomba, Old Road, Birchgrove Swansea.
Dr. D. Thompson, 42, Pewley Way, Guildford, Surrey.
R. Smith, 98, Stanwell Road, Penarth, Cardiff.
G.O. Thomas, 6 Villiers Road, Ammanford, Carms.
K.W.L. Worthington, 3, Ashbrook Close, Denton, Nr. Manchester.

HON. SECRETARY'S HOLIDAY

The Hon. Secretary will be absent from July 21st. until August 17th. 1958.
If you require an answer to correspondence between these dates please get in touch
with the Hon. Assistant Secretary, Mrs. B. de Graaf, 5, Tai-north, Pennorth, Brecon.

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SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

Number 24.

July 1958.

1. CLUB NEWS

From D.W. Jenkins.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of both my wife and myself to thank all the many members and friends from other clubs who have written to us as a result of the recent cave accident in which I was involved. Also I would like to thank at the same time all those who helped to get me out and who assisted in any way whatsoever to make the unpleasant circumstances more easier.

Once again our thanks and gratitude to everyone.

David and Margaret Jenkins.

(A report of the rescue appears later in the newsletter.)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that subscriptions for the current year are now due. At the A.G.M. the motion that entrance fees shall be raised to 5/- and all subs. shall be increased by 2/6d. was carried - so that it only remains now for you to pay 'em at the following new rates:-

Junior members 7/6d. Members 15/- Joint (husband and wife) £1.

PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE NEWSLETTER

Last issue (no.23) as an experiment, a frontispiece was included in the Newsletter. It was prepared from an original photograph by means of what is known to the trade as an 'electronic stencil', and the total cost for 150 quarto copies was approximately 1 guinea, of which the stencil itself accounted for 15/-.

Following the success of this reproduction, the Committee has decided that photographs illustrating an article, up to one side of a quarto sheet, if suitable for copying by this process, shall be paid for by the Club. Thus you may like to submit several small pictures to make up a sheet, or one large one. Remember, however, to make allowances for sufficient margins and a binding edge depending on which way the sheet is to face. Since half-tones tend to be lost in this process, photographs should be bright and "contrasty", and be cut to the exact size at which they will appear.

The Committee also decided that if a member would like to see his favourite photograph as a frontispiece to the Newsletter there would be no objection provided it was included at his own expense.

The Hon. Editors decision shall in all cases be final - and if you think he's showing undue favouritism you can always give him the sack!

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members to the Club:-

W. Birchenough, Noyaddwilym, Llechryd, Cards.
T. Davies, Brynithon, 2, Gellidawel Road, Glynneath, Glamorgan.
D.L. Thomas, 14, Beechwood Road, Uplands, Swansea.
E. Harwood, 33, Worcester Road, Droitwich, Worcs.
A.B.W. Holroyde, Castle Bromwich Hall, Castle Bromwich, Nr. Birmingham.
D.R. Lewis, 36, Dalton Road, Seaside, Port Talbot, Glam.
B.W. Pickering, Belmont, Stamford Road, Bowden, Cheshire.
Richards-Coombs, E.D. Brynawelon, Banwen Road, Glyn Neath, Glam.
J.O. Robinson, 41, Coryton Rise, Whitchurch, Cardiff.
D.I.W. Turner, Thornycroft, Banwen Road, Glynneath, Glam.
B.J. Woods, Castle Bromwich Hall, Castle Bromwich, Warcs.
B. Walton, 6, Dolgerddon, Rhayader, Rads.

OGOF FFYNNON DDU LEADERS

The following members have been elected to the leaders list:-

Brian Fenn, Arnold Jones and Eric Inson. Members wishing to be considered for election to the list should apply to the Committee.

RECORDS OFFICER

Mrs. Anne Williams, 217, Cathedral Rd., Cardiff, is now keeper of the Club records, and all correspondence in connection with them should be addressed to her.

WELCOME HOME!

Clive Jones, from the perils of potholing in Cyprus. Let's hope he brought back a few tips from 'Dighenis' on how to get about underground.

VISITING CLUBS

The Committee has decided that in future, visiting clubs (not Caving Clubs) shall pay 1/- per head to the S.W.C.C. as well as to Mr. Powell; and that all parties over 10 in no. shall pay a reservation fee of 10/-, only to be repayable if one month's notice of cancellation of booking be given. In normal circumstances this sum will be deducted from the cottage fee.

2. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at the Gwyn Arms, Easter Sunday 1958.

Election of Officers and Committee for 1958.

President.	Dr. F.J. North. O.B.E., D.Sc., F.G.S., F.S.A.
Vice-Presidents.	Brig. E.A. Glennie. C.I.E., D.S.O. Mr. A.H. Hill.
Hon. Members.	T. Ashwell Morgan, Dr. A.J.R. Hudson, C. Powell, Mr. and Mrs. J. Barrows, Mrs. G. Price.

(cont.)

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Chairman.	Dr. E. Aslett.
Hon. Secretary.	D.W. Jenkins.
Hon. Ass. Secretary.	Mrs. V. de Graaf.
Hon. Treasurer.	L.A. Hawes.
Hon. Editor.	B. de Graaf.
Hon. Records Officer.	Mrs. A. Williams.
Tackle Officer & C.R.O.	G. Clissold.
Cottage warden.	B. Fenn.
Committee.	J. Barrows.
Hon. Auditor.	J.M. Davies.

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Membership during the past year has risen to 103 paid members. This includes 11 joint memberships and one nearly jointed. Of the previous years members only 6 did not pay their subscriptions and these figures speak for themselves in showing the vast amount of work put in by the Hon. Treasurer in his efforts to keep the membership up.

During September the previous Hon. Secretary, P.I.W. Harvey found that he was unable to carry on with the administration of his office with the result that a 'cabinet reshuffle' took place which led to myself being appointed Hon. Secretary and Brian de Graaf Hon. Editor and Records Officer. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the previous secretary for his past efforts and also the efforts of the Hon. Assistant Secretary Mrs. P.E. Harvey who also wished to resign but who was persuaded to remain in office until this Annual General Meeting.

On the editorial side newsletters have been published all of a high standard and this can only be maintained by the co-operation of all members with the editor. The 10th Anniversary Publication came out after several unfortunate delays. Owing to the high cost we had to put a charge on the book and the results of sales will be given by the Hon. Treasurer.

As many of you will know an unfortunate incident took place in Dan-yr-Ogof last Easter which, although it was nothing to do with the S.W.C.C., resulted in the caves on the Dan-yr-Ogof property being closed to us. This unfortunate state, I am sorry to report, still exists. It was felt by the committee that the best person to deal with the affair was Les Hawes and throughout the year he has been involved in protracted and frustrating negotiations. We have fulfilled every requirement that has been asked of us and this has resulted in the Club, its headquarters, members and guests being fully insured. This insurance, although it has not yet opened the door of Dan-yr-Ogof to us will be beneficial in dealing with reasonable landowners. The owners of Dan-yr-Ogof and Tunnel cave owe much to the cavers for the development of their caves and it should not be difficult to restore the happy state of affairs that used to exist. Our request is a simple one - we wish to enter those caves to further our knowledge of them not only for ourselves, but for other interested cavers throughout the country. It would not be a very difficult matter to solve this with a little helpful co-operation. Whatever the result may be I would like it placed on record that this Club owes Les Hawes a debt of gratitude which it will find very difficult to repay in not only effecting the insurance but in his patience and

forbearing in dealing with the parties concerned with Dan-yr-Ogof.

Also during the year dispute has risen over the right of way past Cerrig Haffes and so on to the moors. I am pleased to say that the refusal by the owners of Cerrig Haffes of allowing people to use the path is nothing to do with the cavers, and from what I have been given to understand it will not be long before the right of way is restored.

In November the A.G.M. of the Cave Research Group was held at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff and this was followed by a Club dinner at the Angel Hotel. The success of this was such that I have a number of requests that the dinner should become an annual affair. I would ask next year's committee to consider this matter.

The year has not passed without its sadness and it came as a great shock to us all to hear of the sad death of Don Coase who was a member of the Club for many years. Tragedy was encountered in the sad and untimely death of Len Garraway in Porth-yr-Ogof due to drowning. Although not a member of the Club he had applied for membership. Here I would like to take the opportunity of thanking on behalf of the Club all those who tried so hard to avert the tragedy.

During Whitsun the Cave Rescue Organisation was put into operation when it was thought that there might be someone injured in the Lesser Garth Cave. As most of you will know it turned out to be 'much ado about nothing' when three small boys were found fast asleep in a tent on top of the hill.

The only other incident was the misreporting of statements made by a member of the Club when some dogs were trapped in Upper Hospital Cave on Cribbarth. This led to some unpleasantness but the affair was soon straightened out.

The position of the quarrying above Ogof Ffynnon Ddu is somewhat obscure and all that I can say at the moment is that the whole matter is in the hands of 'higher authorities'.

The year's most outstanding result for the Club was the penetration of Boulder Choke in O.F.D. The attack was started by Clive Jones and pressed home by Gordon Clissold and Bill Little, ably supported by various Club members. Unfortunately the large passages which were to have led us to Pwll Byfre have not been found but I understand that progress is still being made beyond the choke.

The 'plum' of the year fell to our good friends and neighbours, the Hereford Cave Club, in their magnificent discovery in Agen Allwedd. On your behalf I take this opportunity of congratulating them and wishing them every good fortune in the future.

Digging has gone on in several places notably at Cwmdwr Quarry where some measure of success seems likely in the near future. Other digs have been hampered by inclement weather.

A problem which has become acute in recent months is that of visiting clubs and parties around O.F.D. The Hon. Secretary has now been given powers whereby he can ask all of the O.F.D. leaders list to lead parties up to a number of three in any one year. This is a great help but is not a complete solution to the problem which should be considered by the new committee.

(Continued on page 9)

REPORT OF THE HON. TREASURER FOR THE YEAR 1957/58

Mr. Chairman and Members,

In the preparation of this year's accounts, I was reminded how much we Treasurers have in common with the young lady with a new mink coat. She finds it difficult to describe to her friends and impossible to explain away to her colleagues. With this in mind, I have done my best to show the results of the year's workings without going into too much detail and I hope that you will not think that I am withholding information.

Dealing first with the Statement of Income & Expenditure, the Cottage Expenses show very little change in total to those of last year. The consumption of electricity, coal, and calor gas remains virtually unchanged. Last year we spent £6 on paraffin - nothing at all this year. I'm sure the Club would like me to thank those who, wittingly or unwittingly, have donated the paraffin that has been used during the year.

On the income side, Cottage Fees have increased from £63 to £94. A remarkable increase. The unit of charge (if you'll excuse the use of an immoral sounding term) is the bed/night. Last year, bed/nights totalled 720: this year 1,020 - roughly 40% up !! The significant fact though, is that the number of guest bed/nights increased by roughly 90%. I emphasise this point because it obviously has a considerable bearing on general Club policy with regard to visiting Clubs quite apart from the financial implication that our year's surplus is derived from this source.

General Expenses are down this year by about £10. This is due to two main factors. Last year we included a large amount of non-recurring expenditure which has no comparable item this year. More important than this, certain expenditure for which we had made provision did not materialise. Early in the year the Club authorised the purchase of a considerable length of rope ladder. Peter Harvey agreed to supply the ladder at cost of materials only, viz., £15. Unfortunately Peter has been let down (not to mention those of us who've climbed on the ladder) by his wood supplier, as the rungs proved to be not up to standard. Our Tackle Officer was subsequently forced to declare the ladder unfit for Club use and Peter has, on his own initiative, very generously returned the full £15 to the Club. This Report gives us a chance to place on record our thanks to Peter for this most helpful action on his part.

Income from Subscriptions is up by roughly £10 due to increased membership.

Under Special Expenses, you will see that the Club Dinner was subsidised to the extent of £13. The Tenth Anniversary Publication cost us £27 to produce. To date, sales of the Publication have realised just over £18. The unsold copies represent a somewhat doubtful potential future source of income and consequently no value is attributed to them in the Balance Sheet. The effect of this is simply that any copies we sell from now onwards will be clear profit for the year in which the sales take place.

(Over)

Turning over the Sheet, the first group of figures is simply the analysis of the figure "Revenue Balances Account" which appears otherwise somewhat mysteriously on the left-hand side of the Balance Sheet.

From the Balance Sheet itself you will see that the annual transfer to the New HQ Fund amounted to £43. 17s. 0d., bringing the total provision to date to £188. 14s. 7d.

Assets have been included at their written-down values and the heap of coal in the coal-house has been valued by the usual dubious process at £10.

Cottage Fees outstanding have gone up from £6 to £16. This has no particular significance since the amount is largely determined by the number of people who stay at the Cottage in February - the last month of the Club's financial year. This year we had one or two visiting Clubs in February and with the Cottage Warden away in Austria (we got him back with the aid of Interpol) the fees were not paid over until March. My only bind this year is in connection with guests brought to the Cottage. During the year several guests were brought along by members and their fees were not collected. Having to find out who brought them has made extra work for me - unnecessary work - and I would like to make it clear that the Club expects members to account for their guests' fees at the time of the visit. Whether they "treat" their guests or not is up to them, but it is essential that a member's signature appears in the 'collected by' column in the Cottage Book against the guest's name.

The overall position shown by the Balance Sheet remains favourable although the improvement hoped for at the beginning of the year did not materialise.

Future Policy: Based on what the various Club Officers consider it necessary to spend next year (after pruning by the Committee) it is clear that the level of expenditure will be as high if not higher than last year. The Club urgently needs lightweight ladder and nylon line. The traverse wires in O.F.D. have to be replaced. Further Cave Rescue Equipment is needed, and there are one or two further improvements overdue at the Cottage.

It would not be prudent, I suggest, to anticipate income on the level of last year. Income from Cottage Fees - our main source of income - is subject to many outside influences and fluctuations must be expected. The outlook is therefore one whereby income from Subscriptions at the present rate will not cover our General Expenses. To deal with this problem, I have recommended a small increase in the Annual Subscription (a matter which will be dealt with later at this Meeting) and I have recommended that the Cottage Fees remain unchanged for the coming year.

I would like to express my thanks to the other Club Officers and Members of the Committee for their full support during the year and indeed to all Club Members for their continued confidence in me - despite everything you've been told !!

Les.Hawes. Hon.Treasurer.
22nd March, 1958.

Statement of Income & Expenditure
for the Year ended 28th February, 1958.

Expenditure	£.	s.	d.	Income	£.	s.	d.
<u>Cottage Expenses</u>							
Electricity	4.	13.	8.				
Coal	21.	1.	4.				
Calor Gas	10.	17.	9.				
New Elsan	6.	17.	6.				
Two-Tier Bunks	9.	18.	0.				
Repairs &c.	9.	0.	1.				
	62.	8.	4.	<u>Cottage Fees</u>	94.	5.	0.
<u>General Expenses</u>							
Club Tackle	10.	4.	1.				
Printing, Stationery &c.	11.	19.	3.				
Third Party Insurance	6.	5.	0.				
Newsletters & Circulars	13.	18.	8.				
Postages	7.	16.	8.				
CRG Sub.1958.	1.	5.	0.				
Cheque Book & Bank Charges	1.	6.	0.				
<u>Depreciation:</u>				<u>Annual</u>			
Duplicator	5.	5.	0.	<u>Subscriptions</u>			
Club Tackle	2.	0.	1.	<u>&c.</u>	67.	19.	6.
	59.	19.	9.	<u>Donations</u>	1.	9.	6.
					69.	9.	0.
<u>Special Expenses</u>				<u>Club Dinner</u>			
Club Dinner	37.	14.	0.	Sale of Tickets	24.	14.	0.
Tenth Anniversary				<u>Tenth Anniversary</u>			
Publication (part cost)	22.	12.	3.	<u>Publication Sales</u>	18.	12.	0.
<u>Surplus for the Year</u>	30.	2.	8.	<u>Disposal of</u>			
				<u>Paraffin Drum</u>	2.	0.	0.
				<u>Interest on</u>			
				<u>Deposit Account</u>	3.	17.	0.
	£212.	17.	0.		£212.	17.	0.

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

Revenue Balances Account

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Transfers to New H.Q.Fund during year	43.	17.	0.	Balance at 1st March, 1957.	90.	15.	10.
Reduction of Credit Balances by disposal of Assets.	6.	0.	0.	Surplus for the Year	30.	2.	8.
Balance at 28th February, 1958.	91.	5.	7.	Increase of Credit Balances by purchase of Assets.	20.	4.	1.
	<u>£141.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>7.</u>		<u>£141.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>7.</u>

B A L A N C E S H E E T
as at 28th February, 1958

<u>Liabilities & Credit Balances</u>				<u>Assets & Debit Balances</u>			
	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
<u>New H.Q. Fund</u>				<u>Roneo Duplicator</u>			
at 1/3/57.	144.	17.	7.	at cost	35.	0.	0.
Transfers	43.	17.	0.	Less Depn.	5.	5.	0.
	188.	14.	7.	<u>Club Tackle</u>			
				at cost	10.	4.	1.
				Less Depn.	2.	0.	1.
				<u>Stock of Coal</u>	10.	0.	0.
<u>Revenue Balances Account</u>	91.	5.	7.	<u>Sundry Debtors</u>			
				Cottage Fees Outstanding	16.	9.	6.
				<u>Cash at Bank</u>			
<u>Subscription in Advance</u>	17.	6.		Current Account - Lloyds Bank Ltd.	26.	7.	4.
				Deposit Account - S.Wales Trustees Savings Bank.	188.	14.	7.
				<u>Cash in Hand</u>			
				Hon. Treasurer	1.	7.	3.
	<u>£280.</u>	<u>17.</u>	<u>8.</u>		<u>£280.</u>	<u>17.</u>	<u>8.</u>

(Signed) L.A. Hawes. Hon.Treasurer.
22nd March, 1958.

(Signed) J.M. Davies. Hon.Auditor.
29th March, 1958.

Continued from page 4.

Also associated with visiting clubs is the problem caused when a party fails to turn up. Weather and sickness cannot be avoided but in a Club such as ours when leaders may have to travel considerable distances and we may have to turn over the whole H.Q. to a Club it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the maximum notice of cancellation be given.

The year has been excellent as far as vandalism is concerned. This speaks well for leadership in O.F.D. I understand that there has been a case of vandalism in the new parts of Agen Allwedd by a London Club and the matter is being dealt with by the Hereford Cave Club.

In conclusion I would like to thank all the officers and members who have assisted me during my period of office and without whose help the task of Hon. Secretary would be well-nigh impossible

D.W. Jenkins

3. CAVE BOTANY AND BACTERIOLOGY

A short article in Newsletter No. 18., mentioned the work which had been started on the flora of caves. A full report of the results obtained so far in this work is being published elsewhere but as the investigation was carried out in caves in South Wales and with the help of some members of the Club, it may interest members to have a summary of the results.

The preliminary work was divided into three main sections:-

1. The flora of thresh-holds and the factors affecting this flora.
2. Bacteria to be found in the air, soil, and water inside caves.
3. Plants found inside caves and the potential flora in the soil.

The results obtained are best summarized under these three headings.

1. Plant lists for thresh-holds of caves in South Wales have been compiled together with details of substrate, light intensity and aspect. There is a definite effect shown by one or more of these factors in the thresh-holds listed.
2. Lists of the bacterial species found in three habitats are given and the possible sources of these bacteria are discussed, as is the effect of the cave environment on bacterial populations.
3. The potential plant population in caves as shown by the spores and resting stages present in the soil of various caves, is considerable. From controlled experiments it appears that light is as expected, the major governing factor in the vegetation of caves.

Following this preliminary work a new scheme for more detailed study has been commenced. The author would be grateful if members would send any botanical finds from caves to her, however battered or muddy they may be. She would prefer them in good condition, but after some experience of 'botanising and bug hunting' in caves, knows only too well the difficulties involved in bringing material out in good condition!

Many of the caves we visited to collect samples from are more suitable for worms or eels than for people laden with sampling bottles and tins. The

difficulties become even greater in wet caves, and there are not many caves in S. Wales that can be described as completely dry.

First of all, we collected specimens of the plants growing in the threshhold area and took readings of the light-intensities, pH, and humidity. The latter readings came to an abrupt end the day that the hygrometer descended a sharp drop in a cave by itself and without a lifeline! Then the business of collecting air, soil and water samples from within the cave would begin. For the air flora we used glass dishes (Petrie Dishes) containing a nutrient medium. These had to be carried in special metal cannisters which had to be kept upright. They were most unpopular, especially in tight crawls. Equally unpopular but not so fragile, were the tins for collecting soil samples. These were round tins about 3" high and $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter. We now possess a number of oval tins with round lids, due to thoughtless persons sitting, standing and in tight places, even, lying on them. Finally there were the 2oz. bottles with metal caps, easily carried in pockets but leaving nasty impressions on one after a flat crawl such as some of those in Porth-yr-Ogof.

If to all this impedimenta you add a photographer with a passion for flash powder, it will need but little imagination to picture our progress through a cave such as Ogof-y-Ci. in the lower end of that cave the baggage was passed along a human chain whose members were either sitting or lying in the stream, except for the leader. He always managed to find a convenient stopping place with a dry place to sit. To reach the end of the narrow, wet passage and find him calmly lighting a dry pipe with dry matches was one of the most trying things we encountered!

It is a continual suprise to both Kathryn Benson-Evans and the author that people will come caving with us and bear with our paraphernalia. Admittedly they make remarks about "mad scientists", suggest that we take up other lines of investigation, preferably above ground, and that we revert to caving without collecting specimens, but they still come and help, and we are very grateful to them.

Anne Williams.

4. A NEW CAVING AREA?

The limestone gorge of the Wye between Ross and Chepstow contains many small caves. Though none of them offers much in the way of sport some of them have been archeologically interesting e.g., King Arthur's Cave. Having lived in the district for the last six years I have had many opportunities of probing around in these small caves and perhaps by now I have visited all. The task has been surprisingly unrewarding and up to date not worth writing about.

Nevertheless the possibility of new finds in the Monmouth district has occupied much of my thoughts during recent years and at last, probing about not far from the river bank I came across an interesting looking horizontal crack which appeared to be worth exploring, and what is more appeared to be virgin territory. An extensive perusal of the proceedings, news letters etc, of the three clubs most likely to be interested in the area - the S.W.C.C. Bristol University and Wessex failed to reveal any mention of this find. Provisionally it might be called Monmouth Cave though the name is perhaps not particularly apt.

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The situation of the find is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ -3 miles downstream from Wyastone Leys (O.S. 1" Sheet No. 142) and approximately 250 yds., from the right bank of the river. The sun shining brightly at the time throw into dark relief a small debris-choked cleft which I had never noticed before. Probing it suggested that if enlarged the cleft conceivably might lead into a passage, but at this stage further exploration was precluded by lack of both time and material. The problem accordingly was shelved for a week.

In the meantime a few tentative enquiries were made concerning cracks and crannies in the vicinity, but at this stage I was particularly anxious not to arouse too much suspicion. The only information - for what it was worth - was that a small pit nearby had been filled up some five or six years ago. Later I found this to be correct.

Accordingly the following week saw me ready for an expedition. This time equipment and clothing were to hand and I had also the use of a new and most impressive powerful electric lamp. As I was particularly anxious to clear up the mystery before Xmas I lost no time in getting to work.

The crack appeared to be larger than before but perhaps this was wishful thinking. In any event the accumulation of debris was as bad as ever and it was essential to clear it away before attempting to enlarge the hole. This was not difficult but it was unpleasant - the muck must have been there a long time. At last enough of it was away for me to be able to see that the passage led in for a short distance horizontally before dropping down at right angles into a pit. Before this could be determined with any accuracy the entrance had to be enlarged and this was not going to be done without 'blood, sweat and tears'. Before the job was finished I'd seen all!

At last the passage was large enough for me to explore further and my supposition of a small pit near the entrance was an understatement. The entrance passage now led directly into a massive chamber, the floor of which was covered with debris which had obviously filtered in from outside.

Two facts surprised me; the immensity of the cavity and that it had not been discovered before, so near indeed was it to the surface. Some idea of the size may be gained when I say that my powerful 12 volt lamp failed to illuminate it entirely. The walls and floor are quite dark though a yellowish type of calcite is to be uncovered if scraping is persisted in. This is an arduous task but might repay the effort. There is as yet no sign of stalactite formations but enlargement of subsidiary passages leading off from the main chamber might prove interesting. Any volunteers?

Moving forward, progress was eventually stopped by a huge shining white block beneath which a tight squeeze can be seen. This is almost hidden by fill, but enlargement will probably be worth while. Water trickling down suggests that it communicates with the surface but subsequent exploration has not yet confirmed it. All the same I'm sure it exists.

For some time I dug around and managed to remove a lot of the less solid looking material. Behind a much darker space can be seen and a further dig is obviously going to be worth while. Eventually I gave it up - the debris had

greatly accumulated, the passage was getting very tight and frankly I was fed up with the whole job. Already I'd spent more time than I'd intended. Accordingly I returned to the surface and laid down my tools. Of course the cavity will have to be excavated further, but for the time being I was quite content to put a temporary filling in the TOOTH and book another appointment for the patient.

Footnote:

From S.W.C.C. Newsletter No. 22. "The British Dental Association happened to be meeting in the Angel at the same time, and one of our lady members remarked that it might be possible to get quite a long way with a discussion on cavities before realising you were with the wrong party!" May the writer of the above article say "Dear lady member, how right you were!"

A Member.

5. EXPLORATION OF THE ST.HILARY LEAD MINES

Some little while ago I was chatting with one of my fellow workers about caves and caving when the subject came around to old lead mines. My friend, a resident of St.Hilary, suggested that I should go and have a look at their local mines.

A geological map of the area was consulted and St.Hilary was found to be lying in a limestone tongue extending down from the north of the county. A six inch-to-the-mile map of the area was then considered and to the west of St.Hilary, in sight of the winking lights of the new I.T.V. aerial, a number of shafts were marked on the sides of a dry valley leading down towards New Beaupre House. There was also a cave marked bearing the name of Ianto-Francis cave. My friend had also told me of tales of large caverns to be found down the mines, so a small group was assembled and on November 23rd. we set off towards St.Hilary with thoughts reaching Jules Vernes proportions.

We arrived at St.Hilary and we climbed a track, on the south side of the valley, past a small rock outcrop and our steeds, trusty of course, came to rest at the top of a shaft. That shaft being the nearest we decided to explore first. Sixty feet of ladder was dropped down (secured at the top of course), and a descent was made. Alas the ladder ended about six feet above a very shaky looking floor of rubbish consisting of everything from tin baths to motor car headlights and old radio sets. Seaton Phillips who made the descent decided that it was too risky to jump onto this unknown matted mess of wet soggy mattresses, flock type of course, so he came up and it was decided to go and have a look at Ianto-Francis cave and leave the ladder where it was.

A small level was found in the side of the valley which went in for about thirty feet, dead straight and totally uninteresting except for one bat, that is if you find bats interesting. Could this be Iantos hole? "No" said an interested bystander, local. "Ianto's Cave is 'igher up the wood an' folks do say as 'ow it goes thro' to Old Beaupre or Llantrithyd 'oll". Both distances being in the region of two miles, we assumed, making the usual allowance for local imagination, it to be about one hundred yards long. Actually it was about 75 yards long and it turned out to be a level that had undoubtedly been a natural cave that had been widened by the miners in their pursuit of the lead ore. The walls showed plenty of signs

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of natural formations. We went in for about fifteen yards and we came to the bottom of a shaft down which wood had been thrown. We soon got through this and the mine extended, through several crawls, to the bottom of another shaft at the bottom of which were old tin baths, motor car headlights, and old radio sets, and above our heads a ladder hanging down - our ladder!!

From a junction about half-way in, a further passage was explored and this brought us to the bottom of another shaft that was completely blocked by rubbish.

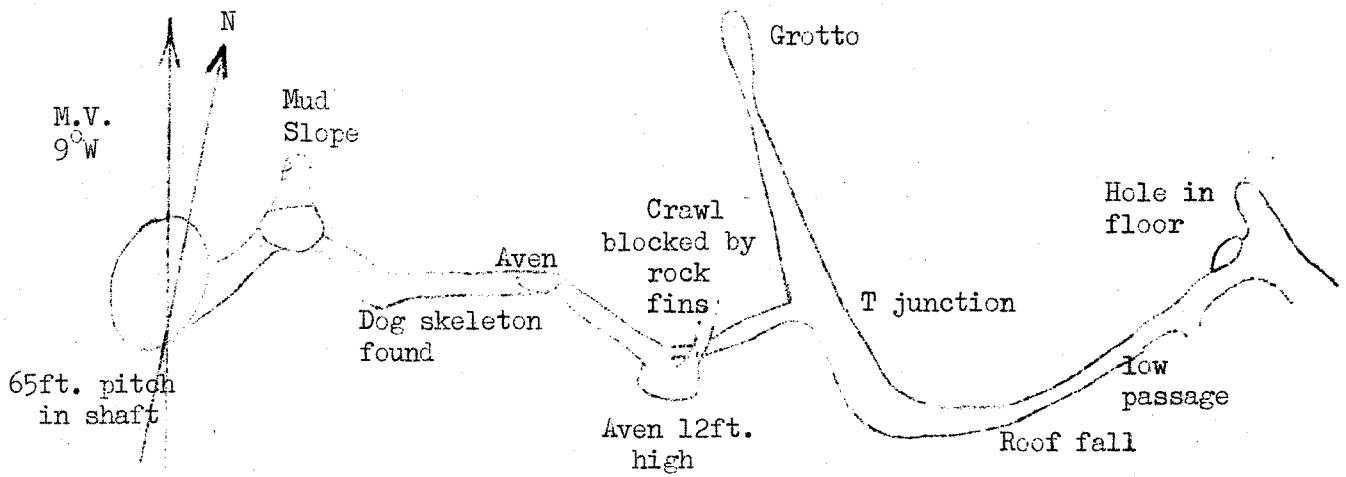
Next on the agenda was a rather large shaft bearing the name of Bell Mine. Mrs. Jenkin's white donkey fell down here in nineteen-twenty-four or was it five? R.I.P. Another local was encountered at the top of this shaft who told us a rather woeful tale of a party of Air Force chaps, from near-by St. Athan, who went down this shaft and began to die of suffocation at the bottom and who had to be hauled up so quickly that they were catapulted all the way back to St. Athan, so, undaunted we set off down Bell Mine. About forty feet down a platform of rubbish was encountered which looked insecure but which is, in fact, quite safe. A further pitch of twenty feet and a steep scree of ten feet landed us at the bottom. At the bottom were three passages, one to the right, one to the left and one straight on. Candles were lit and left in deep pockets, not ours, to test for the supposedly foul air and they were still burning several hours later. Because we were facing that way the centre passage was taken first. This was partly natural and very much not so partly artificial, opening out every now and then into small natural caverns. We came next to the bottom of another shaft and after surmounting a mountain of empty paint tins and old galvanised sheets we were able to press on. We soon came to a left hand, right angle bend in the passage with a narrow rift going straight on that was well calcined. We then came to the bottom of yet another shaft that was completely blocked: a length of about one hundred yards. It was not until we reached the surface again that we found that this last shaft was only sixteen yards from our first shaft at the end of Ianco-Francis cave, and it is quite reasonable to suppose that there is a connection between them.

The right hand passage was tackled next. This proved to be a short passage ending in a blank face fifteen yards or so long. A bat was found here that was unknown to us, among the many lesser horseshoe bats dwelling in the mines. It was about the same size as the lesser horseshoe but much lighter in colour, and it had a differently shaped face. The left passage was much the same as the right one, but a small junction led to rather a pretty grotto. That was as far as we got that day and no sound or sign of Mrs. Jenkin's donkey.

A second visit was made to St. Hilary the following weekend. This time we were accompanied by a group from the British Nylon Spinners Caving Club who were to explore Bell Mine. There are eighteen openings altogether, but most of them have been blocked with rubbish or tree trimmings for the whole side of the valley has been cleared of trees, and what is better than to have some kind soul to dig a lot of holes for you to put your useless branches down?

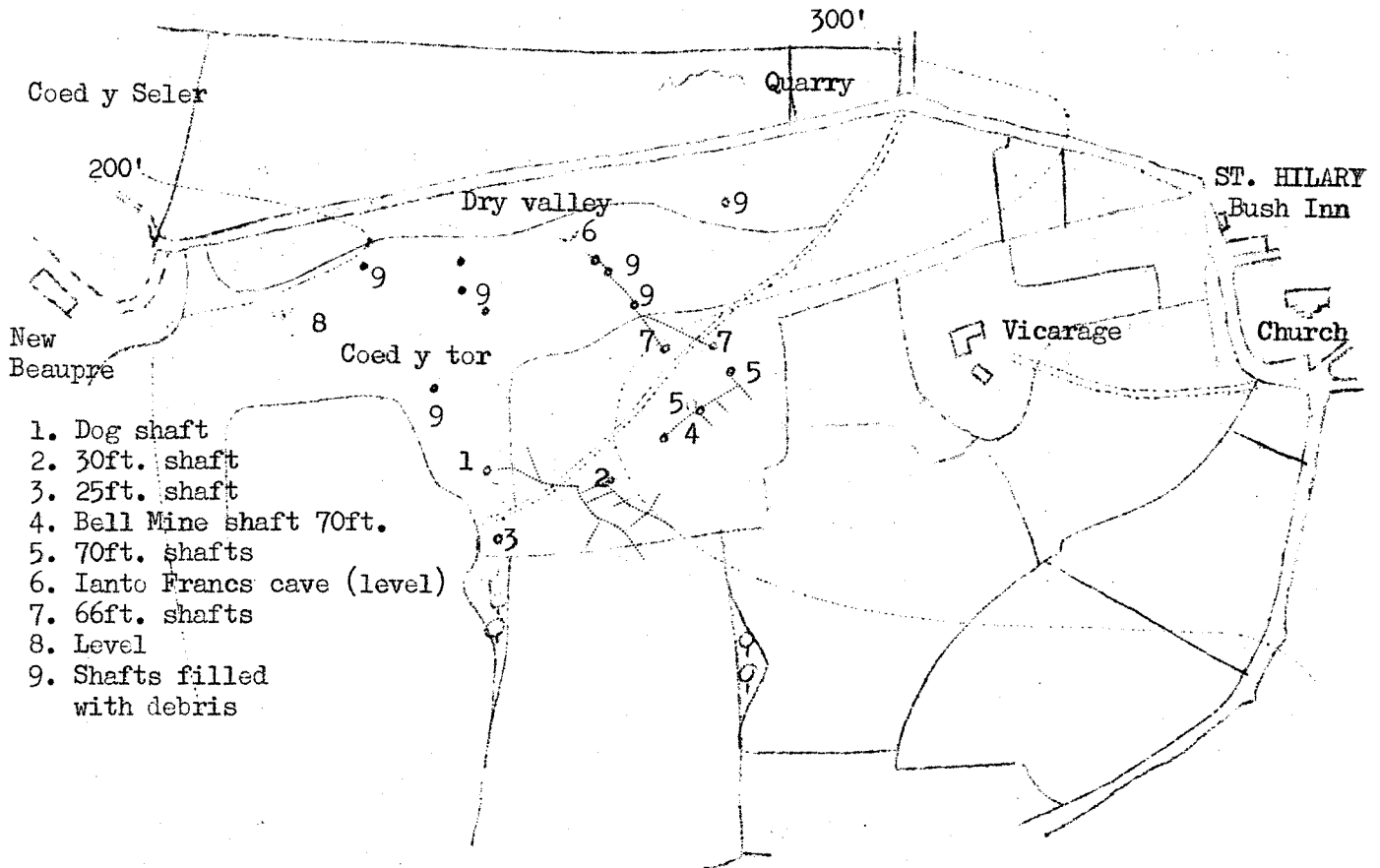
The B.N.S. crowd went down Bell Mine and we then let our ladder down a narrow shaft in one of the few spinneys left. Stones thrown down the shaft indicated a depth of about one hundred feet, so having eighty feet of ladder down off we went and we were surprised and pleased to find several feet of ladder piled up at the bottom. There were two ways on at the bottom so we chose the right hand

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DOG SHAFT, ST. HILARY. Scale: 1" to 20'.

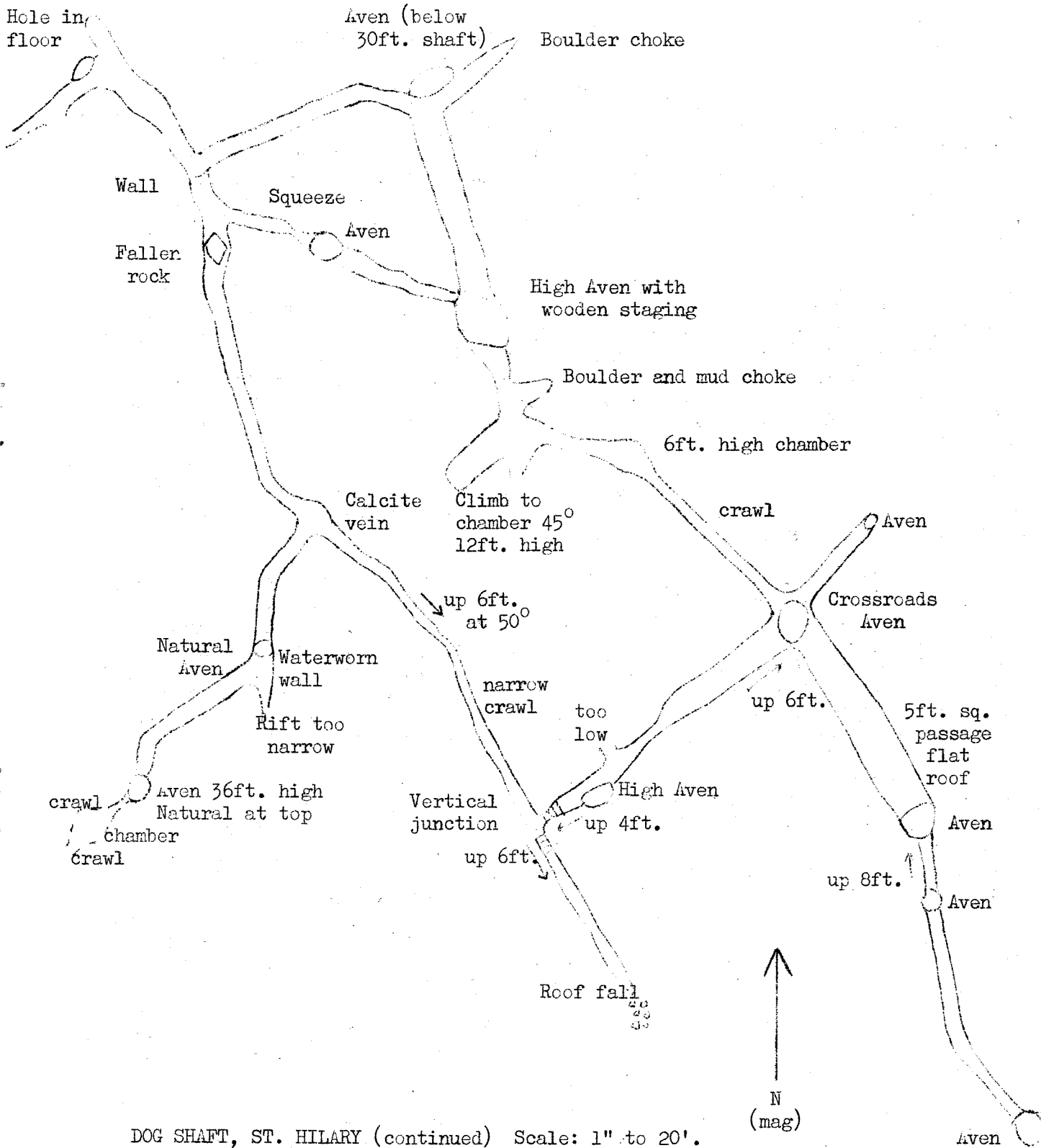
CONTINUED OPPOSITE



$\frac{1}{4}$ mile (approx.)

LOCATION DIAGRAM

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DOG SHAFT, ST. HILARY (continued) Scale: 1" to 20'.

one and set off along that.

After we had gone a short way, we came upon the skeleton of a dog laid out in the same order as when it lay down to die. Pressing on we came into quite a large cavern with a passage to the right, which went in for a short way, and to the left a passage - natural - through a horizontal rift with a rather shaky entrance. The passage was lined with stal' bosses etc. The rift soon opened out into a passage at the end of which we found another dogs skeleton laid out as before. We then made our way back to the shaft and entered the left hand passage where we found yet another dogs skeleton intact as were the other two, so we decided to name this series "DOG SHAFT". We had to leave this passage unexplored as we were pushed for time.

The next weekend Mel. Davis had a good old scout around St. Hilary and found a shaft on the top of the wooded north side of the valley which we all explored the following weekend. This shaft went down for fifty feet and ended up in a small cavern with a small natural passage leading off. We went through a squeeze and ended in a small natural chamber with a rift passage leading on, but this, alas, was blocked by boulders and although we managed to loosen them the roof of the chamber shook, rattled, and rolled when we attempted to move them. We left them where they were and beat a hasty retreat.

We also tried the shaft near the bottom of the valley on the south side. This we decided would be the most likely place to find natural passages but all the shafts were completely blocked by wood.

On the 18th. of January we went back to St. Hilary to finish our exploration of Dog Shaft, and this time we took a compass and a tape with us. We carried out a rough survey of Dog Shaft left hand series. We went in past the skeleton of the dog and we soon came under a well water worn aven going up for about thirty feet or so. We climbed this for about twenty feet but it was getting smaller and it did not lead anywhere except up. A short way on, another aven was discovered to the right of the passage. This one was also well water worn and much wider than the last but only about ten or twelve feet high ending in a horizontal rift.

Pressing on a little further we came to a 'T' junction, the left passage went in for a short way and ended in rather a lovely grotto, the right hand one was the main passage and after a short way it divided. We took the right hand fork over a wall, and followed the passage which after a crawl ended in a five foot pot, with a passage leading away from the bottom to the left. This brought us into a fair sized chamber with one which was completely covered in Dogs Tooth calcite. The passage went on and we came to a cross roads. To our right a wide passage with a very flat roof, which went on for a short way and ended in a very high aven. Straight on, another aven, and to our left, the passage continued and brought us back to the wall where we had started. The length of the system was about 600 ft.

The three of us would like to thank Mrs. Davis for her help in life lining us and for having warming fires ready for us when we came up. She has found another use for old branches other than blocking shafts.

Some of the things that we noticed in these mines and others now follow, all of the skeletons that we found in Dog Shaft were lain down on the left hand side,

do all dogs die this way? The mines followed seams of Dog Tooth calcite in which we assume that the galena was found, for there was very little evidence of it. The methods the miners used to climb the rifts to work them are quite interesting. The method is to place small logs of wood across the rift and form a stairway or working platform. I am sure that if the mines were worked to-day, the miners would always be on strike for the mines are full of tight squeezes and low rough passages.

As a result of all of these visits, we have found that the area does not hold any great caving attraction, but it was well worth it for the mining interest, and it was jolly good ladder practice and what is more, we all had lots of fun.

P.S. The Coal Board has a place for you.

W.C. Ford.
S.C.L. Phillips.
M. Davis.

6. CAVE RESCUE OPERATIONS IN O.F.D.

On Saturday 12th. April, 1958, David Jenkins was taking a prospective member, Bill Birchenough, around the Waterfall Series in O.F.D., and while negotiating a 15ft. pitch near Idol Junction, at approx. 1 p.m., David fell and was rendered unconscious. Bill realising there was little he could do by himself successfully, found his way out of the cave, and reported the accident (1.45 p.m.)

- 2 p.m. The Club's C.R. Doctor contacted.
Bill re-entered O.F.D. with Margaret Jenkins and John Barrows.
- 2.15 p.m. Jean Clissold, Ruth and Howie Barrows collected the rescue equipment and contacted Brian Jones to inform Club members digging at Sink-y-Giedd of the accident.
- 2.45 p.m. Brian made a record run and passed on the information to the digging members
- 3.30 p.m. Dr. Edward Aslett accompanied by Tom Davies and Arnold Jones entered the cave with the First Aid haversacks.
- 3.45 p.m. John Barrows left the cave and informed the remainder of the Sink-y-Giedd party of the position inside the cave. The party consisting of John Hartwell, John Bevan, John Barrows, Bill Little and Gordon Clissold proceeded with the stretcher, slings, ropes etc., to the scene of the accident.
- 4 p.m. David was found in a semi-conscious state and obviously suffering with shock. After a hurried consultation with Edward it was decided to move David out as soon as possible in case of more serious symptoms developing. Bill Little went forward to rig the pitches and secure hand lines where necessary. David was placed in the stretcher and the long journey out commenced. The movement through the Waterfall Series was so slow and exhausting that a relief party was imperative.
- 6 p.m. A relief party called out.
- 6.30 p.m. Waterfall reached and the party strengthened by David Hunt and Brian Jones. In spite of the party now being fairly strong it could have been improved by two more members to help belay over the Waterfall Pitch. This was soon negotiated and the party made good progress down stream.
- 7.30 p.m. The party had reached a point between the 2nd. and 3rd. pots and were relieved by a party consisting of Tom Round, Brian de Graaf, Brian Dale

Noelyn Davies, D.T. Gregory, J.H. Edwards and Ray Bennett. Further call out of rescue personnel cancelled.

9.p.m. Entrance reached and rescue concluded.

The above diary is a fairly accurate account of the rescue activities for the purpose of informing how much time was spent with each part of the rescue. The rescue team had many conditions in their favour which helped so much in the rescue being successful and carried out in such good time. The most fortunate condition was the state of the stream, which was very low. Next, the close proximity of the cave entrance not only to habitation, but also to a 'phone. Once again "Y Grithig" was used as a rescue base with many thanks to John and Sylvia Barrows for their great help. Next, the large number of members caving in the area, the speed in which they were contacted by Brian Jones and the original report of the accident by Bill Birchenough. During the rescue many failings in the cave rescue organisation came to light and I feel the following points may be of some help in case of a future rescue.

1. Two persons were on the trip. One was an experienced caver with an intimate knowledge of O.F.D.; the other was on his first trip into the cave. This I feel was a rather weak party which could have had a tragic ending and stresses the need to make sure ones party is strong enough for the cave being explored. Leaders are recommended to point out the route taken, in case of a mishap, so that others may make a safe exit by themselves if necessary.
2. In the past accident the injured person had to be left on his own, and on gaining partial consciousness had moved a little distance. In this state he could have sustained more serious injuries by falling again. Members are recommended always to wear a waist loop which could be used to belay the injured person to a rock and prevent further movement.
3. The first party of rescuers was formed by members who were at the Club's H.Q. for the weekend. This party was digging at Sink-y-Giedd and had left notice of their destination and were swiftly contacted. The relief party call out was not quite so successful as so many members could not be contacted by the police. Members are advised to leave a note of their whereabouts when at the cottage, on the notice board. Those who are not at the cottage, if it doesn't cause too much trouble, should try to inform someone where they can be contacted. It is suggested that members familiarise themselves with the site of local digs in case of being called on to act as a messenger. I hope later to have a system of marker pins stuck in an O.S. publication to mark the site where a weekend party can be contacted, in case the dig is unknown.
4. Members are requested always to keep caving kit handy. Do not rely on others to supply lighting, but keep refills for emergencies. Additional kit not already recommended by previous C.R.O.s, is I believe, a waist loop; this I think is a definite necessity for all members. It is pointless being called on to life line an injured person down or up a pitch if one has not the means to belay oneself securely - improvisation often takes time. Whilst stretcher carrying in the Waterfall Series I found little distance was covered before ones thirst became acute, and feel that the additional weight of a water flask would have been worth while.
5. The Neil Robertson Stretcher which was used had many drawbacks and many alterations are required to make it more effective for cave rescues. The stretcher was far too small and the injured caver needed his feet protected with padding which had to be refixed many times. The head carrying loops practically strangled David at times due to their fixation so low under the stretcher. A more rigid stretcher would have been far better to move up and down boulder slopes, across pots, and to place on the ground whilst the stretcher bearers took a rest. The ropes under the stretcher snagged every projection when it was required to be dragged. Points in favour of

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the stretcher were - its lightness, pliability whilst still acting as a splint and protection for the casualty. I feel this stretcher would be excellent if it were longer and could be placed in a more rigid skid frame when required.

6. The system of two wardens was used, one going forward to "recce" the route to be taken and rig the pitches, the second to control the movement of the stretcher; this worked fairly well. Points noticed which could have improved the movement were, less handlines, for these unfortunately tangled the stretcher party at times, and there should be a member to keep contact between the leaders to inform the stretcher party which route to take and keep the first warden supplied with sufficient tackle. Suggestions are always welcomed by the wardens in charge but members should keep in mind - too many can confuse the movement of the stretcher. If a stretcher bearer wishes to stop to regain his balance or has to look for a foothold etc., it is best to address the warden in charge, not any person who may be listening. These points naturally depend on how many persons there are in the rescue team. An ideal number on a rescue similar to the last would be:-

No.1. Warden with assistant.

No.2. Warden in charge of the stretcher party.

6 - 8 stretcher bearers.

1 member to retrieve tackle.

6 relief bearers who will also maintain contact with the surface etc.

This makes 18 rescuers in all which necessitates a phase 2. call out for any similar rescue. The strain on the first team was far too great and in future members are advised to call out a relief party as soon as possible.

7. The press was represented at the rescue and an official statement given. Unfortunately various unofficial facts were given later and instead of what could have been good publicity for the Cave Rescue Organisation the stories printed were of a sensational nature. If members are approached by reporters after an accident I would stress the need to refer them to the member who is giving the official statement.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the rescue party for their fine support in making my task an easy one and carrying out a successful rescue, also the support given by those outside the cave, the police and the Ambulance party, without whose help the task would have been more difficult.

IMPORTANT Members are requested to forward information on the time it would take them to reach the club's H.Q. in case of a rescue Call Out. This will enable the rescue organisation lists to be split up into appropriate phases of Call Out and prevent unnecessary travel by members reaching the scene of the accident after it has been concluded. This information is required as soon as possible to enable new rescue lists to be printed.

Gordon Clissold.

At a recent Committee Meeting it was decided to emphasise the point, that whenever a party going into O.F.D. includes a person who is not familiar with the cave, that party should consist of at least three people. Hon. Ed.

7. SOME MEDICAL NOTES ON THE ACCIDENT

Preliminary.

Concussion: an unconscious or dazed state from which the patient can be temporarily roused; pallor and coldness of the extremities, especially of the nose and ears; slow, weak pulse; normal pupils, reacting to light.

Compression: increasing headache, unconsciousness becoming complete; rising temperature; slow, full pulse; deep snoring respirations; dilated pupils, not reacting to light; paralysis. Compression indicates haemorrhage into the skull, causing pressure on the brain. It is a most serious condition and the patient should lie in a surgical ward, lest the indications for immediate operation to save life arise.

If there is intracranial haemorrhage the patient will pass gradually from a state of concussion to that of compression. Just possibly he will recover from the concussion (and even cycle home) and only later develop compression, and even be found dead in bed next morning.

Concussion is associated with shock, which accompanies any severe injury. There may be occasions, if the injury does not require urgent surgical aid, when it would be wise to allow the patient to recover from his shock before getting him out of the cave; the man-handling of rescue could cause fatal collapse in a deeply shocked patient.

Report.

Our casualty was not deeply shocked but there was a possibility of compression supervening at a later stage. The indications for action were clear:-

1. Get him out of the cave and into the reach of surgical aid, should this be necessary, as soon as possible.
2. Disallow any exertion as this would increase the intracranial bleeding, if any.

Actually David Jenkins showed some improvement just before being lowered down the Waterfall pitch. There was only one disquieting sign (apart from the continuing headache) and this was his pulse rate which had further slowed from 60 to 48, there was still need for haste. By the time we had left the Stream Passage, I was reassured; his pulse had recovered and it appeared that his main symptom was exhaustion.

E. Aslett.

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