

M E N D I P C A V I N G G R O U P

News-sheet No. 16

October 1962

LONDON CAVE RESCUE ORGANISATION There will be a practice week-end on 10/11th November in South Wales. All those interested please contact the Meet Secretary.

WITHYBROOK SLOCKER. Mention was made last month of a possible new extension of this cave made by the Wessex Cave Club, in addition to the new passage discovered by Allan Cowley and Dave Mitchell last year. On putting the facts before these two members they reply "It is absolutely beyond anydoubt whatsoever that they have rediscovered the passage in which we dumped our excavation material from our recent newly discovered passage down the stream.

The passage which we blocked and they dug out was originally opened by Messrs Browne in 1947, they found approx' 50ft of passage ending in a very small rift from which a stream could be heard.

As a matter of interest a pack of explosive was accidentally dropped down it and was never recovered".

AUGUST HOLE DISCOVERY An overnight digging trip was organised by Tony Knibbs, Meet Secretary on September 29/30th. They dug mainly in the Oxbows at the downstream end. After some eight feet of digging they broke into a small passage, adding in all about 20ft to the length of the cave.

Extract from an article in "The Times" in 1882, written by a correspondent of that paper on a trip down Lamb Leer soon after it was re-opened.

"In single file, each carrying a candle stuck in a holder of still clay, we crawled on for some minutes, went down another ladder, and after more progression on hands and knees, found the passage rising and spreading into an elegant Gothic Arcade"- "We stood up one after another".

"Some benzoline was poured out and ignited, and instantly the dull, grey wall was transformed into a radiant dome, built up tier above tier, of crystal pillars, by turns of purest shell pink and amber gold, over which fell in heavy folds a curtain of rich velvet brown, fringed with long pointed pendants of frosted silver, a trembling diamond on every point."

"A steep and tortuous gully, which was in many parts so narrow that we were compelled to proceed in the fashion of lizards through the mud."

"Looking up, I saw Mr McMurtrie, whose life is precious to Geology, hanging like a clough 80ft above my head, candle in hand, and slowly revolving."

"Having washed our hands in a pool of clear water, we sat down to a luncheon, which included everything usually provided at picnics, with the addition of salt and the limestone butter of the slopes above. We lay about the feast in various postures on the rocks, everyone covered with the bright red ocre mud. The two miners stood by, with boards stuck full of candles, and waited on us. Presently two members of the party retired out of sight and sang solos."

"A verse of the National Anthem was sung by the entire company".

M.C.G. Library. Over the period of the next two or three months it is intended that a list of publications held by the club be circulated. The publications will also be classified and catalogued so that information regarding any particular cave may be easily found.

Some books and surveys that were once held by the club have disappeared, mainly during the time the box was in the cottage. If anyone has any belonging to the club will they please give them to the Hon. Recorder. Also, if anyone has any books, surveys or pamphlets that they would like to donate to the club, the Recorder would be even more delighted to receive them.

As soon as the work is completed a lending system will be devised so that the publications will be available to any member.

REMEMBER 9th December On this week-end the Meet Secretary is arranging visits to Hilliers Cave, Balch Cave and G.B. A nice easy week-end with some caving included.

Hon. SECRETARY'S ADDRESS Apologies for a slight error in the last news-sheet. The address is 44 Boston Gardens. ~~XXXXXX~~. Brentford, Middx.

HUNTING LODGE SWALLET Report from Allan and Dave.
" Hunting Lodge is still going down and down, at the bottom of all the rubbish we have found a 20ft deep pot which is choked with cave earth and lumps of broken stal. Digging is still in progress (Oh'h my back !), Depth is now 105ft approx. Where is the club ! . Not at the bottom of Hunting Lodge ! . "

Any offers of help on this very promising dig will be more than welcome.

MALCOLM COTTER. Malcolm has arrived safely in Singapore with his wife Norma. His address is 40 Siglap Hill, Siglap 15, Singapore. He is already trying to form a caving club and is starting with "two Chinese, two Indians, two Europeans, two children - and the Cotter's.

The Motley Caving Group."

NAPHILL SWALLET This is the dig in the grounds of Wells Hospital. Allan and Dave report " We have now got a hole 20ft deep which looks like a cross section between Eastwater and Longwood/August entrance. The stream has increased considerably in volume and roars down in very impressive style. Most everyone in and around Wells seems to have found out that the M.C.G. are at it again. (Probably by the size of the hole.) Which by the way has a fence around it now, as directed by the engineer at the hospital and erected by the East Mendip branch". "We have diverted the stream at different times and can hear (and see) another larger stream and an entirely different one running below us. It will need banging to gain entrance, but will definitely be worth it. The two streams combined are somewhat like Stoke Lane in flood."

STOKE LANE SLOCKER Divers have passed the second sump and entered a large extension. The sump can be dived free.

LONGWOOD/AUGUST SURVEY Sheet 3b. The true length elevation and cross sections is now on sale. Price 3/6d. Members may purchase copies for 2/6d up to end of October. This /b sheet is a small cut version. In the near future a full length edition will be published, Sheet 3a. As it is so long, production costs will be high. Anyone who wants a copy at 7/6 should give their name to the Hon. Recorder. Mike Rennie, sometime this month.

Hon. Editor. Mike Rennie. 125 Cleveland Road, Ealing. W.13.