

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

CIRCULAR TO MEMBERS

May 17th, 1965

Visit by party from Czechoslovakia

This is a reciprocal visit by a party of six distinguished cave scientists from Czechoslovakia under the leadership of Dr. F. Skrivanek, the head of the State Nature Conservancy in Czechoslovakia. The U.B.S.S. is the official host to the party while it is in this country, but other clubs are playing their part and also individuals. The party will be here from July 3rd to 18th. It will be in the Bristol area from July 3rd to 6th. The programme for this part includes visits to the University and to our own museum, visits to various snow caves and a visit to C.B. Cave. Various archaeological sites are to be visited.

On Monday July 5th at 8.0 pm. there will be a public lecture on the Caves of Czechoslovakia in the Geography Lecture Theatre. The lecture will include slides and films and an English translation. (It may be added that the caves in Czechoslovakia are very spectacular).

There will be, commencing in June, an exhibition about the caves in the City Museum, Bristol. This will be open for about a month. It will then go on to other places which will probably include Skipton and Cardiff.

After leaving Bristol the party goes to Co. Clare and then back to Yorkshire, Derbyshire and South Wales.

Cave Study

Under this title a course of 9 meetings of a class is being arranged under the Department of Extra-mural Studies, University of Bristol. The meetings will be held, subject to confirmation, on Tuesdays in the Geography Lecture Theatre from 7.0 to 8.30 pm. Details are obtainable from the Dept. of Extra-mural Studies, 20a Berkeley Sq., Bristol, 8. The lecturers will include a number from outside the University.

Archaeology

1. GORSEY DIGEUNY. A supplementary excavation of the entrance causeway between the banks was made over the Easter period. Two post holes were found marking the entrance. The original limits of the bank were determined on the west side of the entrance. No dateable objects were found on the primary turf level under the bank.

2. GATCOLBE, Long Ashton, Bristol. This is an almost unknown and forgotten walled Roman town covering at least 12 acres. A small scale excavation is planned there for June 14th to 26th under the direction of Mr. Barry Cunliffe, (Lecturer in Romano-British Archaeology); it is in part a rescue dig and in part a training dig. If you or any of your friends want to help, please write direct to Mr. Cunliffe (Dept. of Classics, University of Bristol).

3. PICKEN'S HOLE. The set programme for this site is from August 9th to 29th. The working party will be based on the U.B.S.S. Field H.Q. with transport daily to the site. The director will be our member Mr. A.L. ApSimon. If you are interested and want to help, write to Dr. E.K. Tratman and state the period over which you can help. This is open to friends as well as members.

4. CHART HOUSE ROMAN SITE. This dig is now scheduled for the early part of October and is expected to start on Saturday October 2nd. The director in this case will be Mr. Christopher Barrett. It is hoped to open up a further part of the grid in an attempt to find the main building

building of which so far about 30 ft. of corridor is known. The site is quite prolific. Most of the work will be at week ends and working from the Field H.Q.

5. PRIDDY CIRCLES. It is very disappointing to learn from the British Museum that the small charcoal samples from the ditch have proved to be technically unsuitable for C<sub>14</sub> dating.

## Caving

### Away Trips

### SOUTH WALES

On the week end of the 27th March, Oliver Lloyd, Don Thomson, Mike Wooding, Dave Savage, Keith Hanna, Geoff Wood, Steve Merlin and Helen Donogue went to South Wales and stayed at "Penwyllt Palace". On the Saturday Don Thomson took a party down Pant Mawr and after successfully negotiating the boulder ruckles found the "Chapel", which is very photogenic. It was judged so delicate by the South Walians who originally surveyed it, that it has been left out of the survey. Meanwhile the three diving members of the party, M.J.W., D.S. & O.C.L., joined up with Charles George and did some original exploration, not in the Hepste Cave, as we had hoped, since that was flooded, but in a new cave found by the British Nylon Spinners in the Taf Fawr called Ogof Pont y Meirw. The resurgence sump here is rather a long one and needs to be looked at again.

On the Sunday we went down Ogof Ffynnon Ddu by devious routes, meeting almost by chance in the Crystal Pool Chamber. From there we did the round trip by way of the RAWL Series, D.M.M.T's party going out by the escape route, O.C.L.'s party jumping the alpha ledges.

### EASTER IN YORKSHIRE

Our party of six distinguished itself by doing more caving than any of the other Mendip parties, of which the B.E.C. was at the Flying Horseshoes and the Wessex and Shepton (20 - 30 of them) at the Crown, Horton-in-Ribblesdale. We were at Clapham. O.C.L. stayed at the New Inn, which was an advantage for the rest of the party, who camped, since it enabled us all to have drinks after hours.

On Good Friday we bottomed Grange Rigg and M.H.P.G. had the misfortune to get an alkali burn which laid him up for a few days. O.C.L. had hurt his hip the day before and hobbled down to Ingleborough Cave on a walking stick, where he acted as a cave guide for the rest of the day, logging up 5 miles of show cave in 8 trips.

Saturday was very wet, so that by the time we had got to the bottom of the 60 ft. pitch in Alum Pot, it was evident that we could get no further with the tackle available; in such conditions one needs a ladder for the cascade. That evening we met Dave Judson of the C.P.C. who asked us to join up with his party to do Ireby Cavern on Easter Sunday. This we did in one of the most enjoyable four hour trips in memory. We went down first tackling the pitches, his other party came down a few hours later and de-tackled. For the record (since Pennine Underground is not reliable) here is the tackle we used:

#### Ireby Cavern, tackle.

1st. Pitch. 28 ft. ladder with short belay (or none) to two eyebolts on the left.

2nd Pitch. 30 ft. ladder with short belay to an eyebolt on the left. Separate eyebolt on right for life-line.

3rd. Pitch. Wet. 40 ft. ladder. Short belay through flake on left, just beyond chockstones. 60 ft. life-line.

4th Pitch. 15 ft. ladder with a 2 ft. belay on right wall.

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5th Pitch ("Pussy"). 20 ft. rope for hand-line.

6th Pitch ("Well Pitch"). 25 ft. ladder with short belay to left. 60 ft. life-line.

7th Pitch ("Rope"), which comes immediately afterwards, needs a 10 ft. ladder and a short belay. We had not allowed for it and only had a 20 ft. waist length of thin nylon, which made the return journey unduly sporting.

The cave is not particularly difficult and gives one a good trip with plenty to do. It has some distinctly Irish-type meander passages.

#### Nearer Home

The Society created a record for the dig nearest to a pub when, on the 4th April, it started a dig in the back yard of the Hadley Arms on Coombe Down, Bath. With occasional draughts of cider we had soon piled up a heap, but after 3 ft. ran out of artefacts into undisturbed clay. We were shown this spot as likely to communicate with the stone workings, but it seems probable that a mistake was made. The idea was to do a survey for the architect to a scout hut being built in Firs Field, to find out how far below the foundations the mine gallery lay. The dig was abandoned the following week.

Members continue to dive Sumps II and III in Swildon's Hole, with and without breathing apparatus. Seven members have now free dived Sump III. Only one disliked it so much that he returned by way of Blue Pencil Passage. The first photographs of Swildon's III (Great Bell) were taken in colour during April and have come out quite well. The exploration of the far reaches of the cave, as mentioned in the last Circular, have made a little more progress. Four members have now been through Sump VI, but this is not a free dive. On the 20th March M.J.W., D.S. and D.P.D. bypassed Sump XI and explored Sump XII. This is in a steeply inclined strike rift, which was pushed for 80 - 90 ft. to a depth of about 40 ft., but neither then nor subsequently could a way on be found. A Grade 4 survey was then run from Sump XII to Swildon's VI. This shows that the cave is 540 ft. deep, which makes it the deepest in England. The total length of passage beyond Sump VII is about 1200 ft.

#### Future Trips

June 19th, to Yorkshire. The party will leave Bristol on the Friday and stay for up to 3 or 4 days camping. The agenda includes a possible Dissapointment - Bar or Flood Entrance Pots through trip. Names to the Hon. Secretary.

July 30th to Aug. 1st, South Wales, staying at Penwyllt, on the way home from Ireland. Names to Hon. Treasurer.

President, Dr. E.K. Tratman.

Hon. Secretaries, M.G. Norton and M.H.P. Green.

Hon. Treasurer, Dr. O.C. Lloyd.

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