

British settlement in Brittany can be used to model with predictive success the pattern of settlement in their native land.

Much hard work has gone into this book; it is sad therefore to have to say that it could have been so much better if it had been re-written and at the very least provided with an index and some genuinely informative chapter headings.

A. M. ApSimon

THE CAVES OF COUNTY CORK by Tony Oldham

Part 1 in a series THE CAVES OF IRELAND

£3.00 (40p) from Anne Oldham, Rhychydwr, Crymch, Dyfed SA41 3RB.

Tony Oldham has produced a very useful softback Index of the 48 caves and sites of County Cork. There are 31 area maps, cave plans and sections, though unfortunately a county cave location map is missing. Many of the maps too, are reproduced unchanged with their original magnetic norths, imperial measurements and poor quality reproduction. A little cosmetic work would have made them into fine surveys.

A quick leaf through these maps reveals the strong phreatic nature of most of Cork's systems. This is seen in its most extreme development in that incredible Cloyne maze with approximately 2½ km of passages crowded into a couple of hectares: the Cork Speleological Group survey continues bravely on. In all there are five sites with over ½ km of passages and a further six with 100m or more. Although some are active, this is usually due to invasion of a phreatic cave rather than to the development of a vadose system. So, this is real pushing country, a place where you can find digs galore and the chance to discover your own virgin passage.

An interesting section by Cian Ó Sé on the meanings of Irish place names includes, for the visitor especially, a guide to phonetic pronunciation. You can make yourself understood when asking for the cave of your choice!

Co. Cork along with Co. Waterford contains most of Ireland's caves with deposits, which have yielded Pleistocene fauna and Neolithic human remains. A brief chapter is aptly included on these important archaeological and palaeontological sites.

Since many of the Cork caves are (at first sight) comparatively easy, a brief note on caving practice (and cave rescue capabilities) is timely. Many of the users of this book will be local novices exploring their home territory. Mr. Oldham was most fortunate in being able to rely on the accumulated notes and advice of Jerry Aherne and his friends of the Cork Speleological Group, in compiling this essential work. It can only stimulate exploration in the area and I expect it to yield a rash of discoveries.

Here are some of the features of interest to be found in the cave descriptions:

The Dragoon trumpeter who entered Carrigacrump cave and got lost. He was rescued the next day after blowing loudly on his Bugle. The collapse of a suburban street into the Cloyne Town cave—this is now roofed with a metal cap.

Donnellaroska's cave which was a hiding place for Donal O'Keefe—the Outlaw of Duhallow.

The Killavullen cave occupied by a blacksmith within recorded times. And finally—

The Middleton cave system which passes beneath the birthplace of Paddy, Powers', Jamieson and other marvellous Irish Whiskeys. It is not true that the place is packed every weekend with Irish cavers praying for a big leak!

Gareth Llwyd Jones