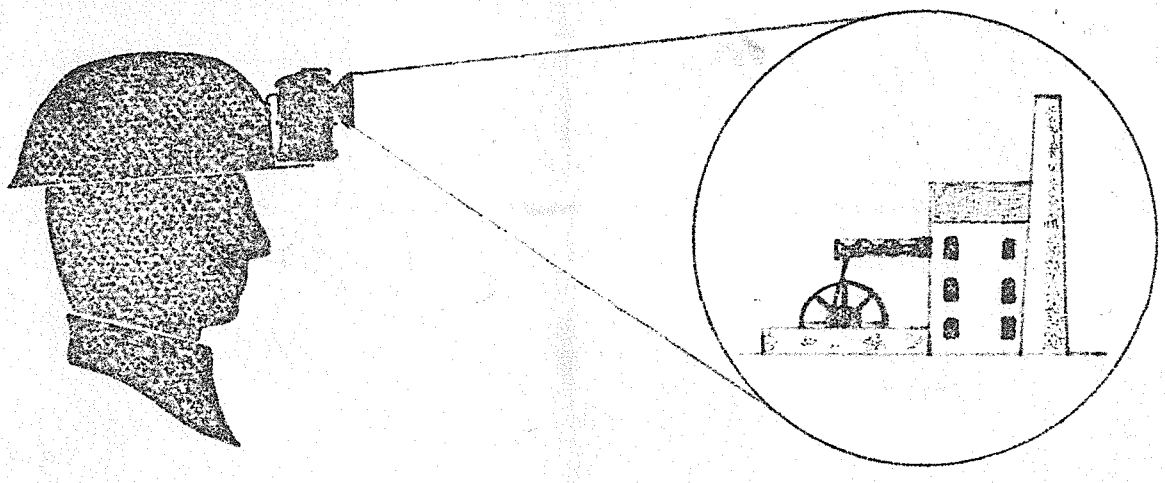
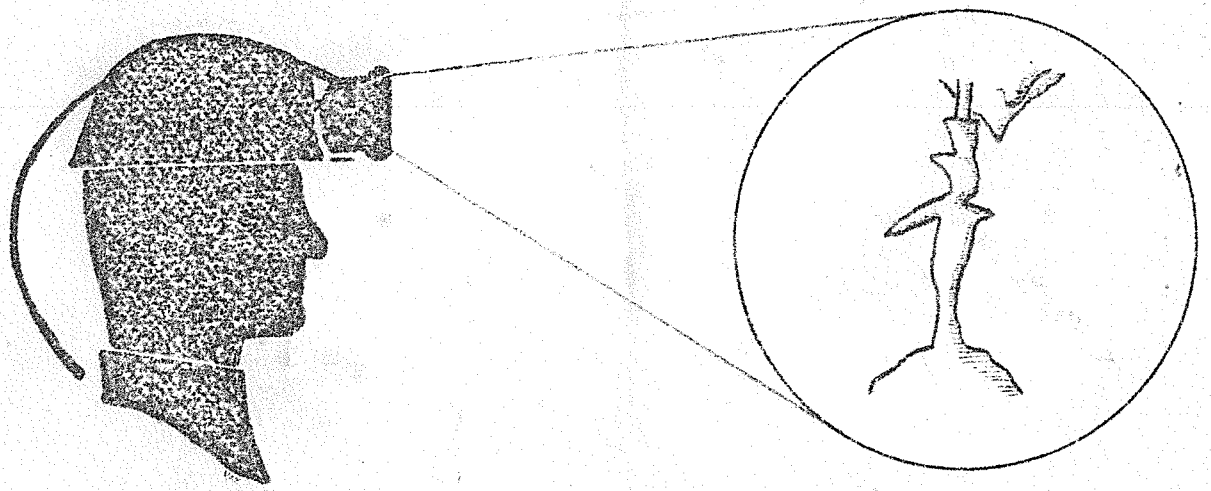
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No 29



PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP.



PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP.

Newsletter & Journal. Number Twenty-nine.

May 1968.

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Club Meet Report.

MountnWellinton Mine.

As we all remember very well,the descent of the 200 ft. hauling shaft was miserable,The lifeliners stood working in the driving rain - whose only advantage was to consolidate the loose gravel around the collar of the shaft.

This descent was divided into two stages of 100 ft. each stage climbed on opposite sides of the central partition of the skipway.This proceedure enabled two persons to climb safely at any one time,and greatly shortened the descending time.

The first push was the source of the stream.After several yards it connected up with bottom of the two 200 ft. shafts. One of these has 100 ft. of sound fixed ladder and it connects up with the second shaft.

We then ploughed on down the main adit level to a position by the 180 ft. concrete fenced shaft passing a large stope on the way.The water by this time was knee deep and we continued on,passing a second large inclined stope similar to the first. None of us had wet suits so when the water began to creep up above our waist we decided to back out and return to stope one.

Scrambling up the piles of deads was very much a one step forewards two slides back affair.When we reached the end of the stope we wished we had'nt bothered because it did'nt go.We examined some pits in the floor but they were blocked 15 ft. down,at adit level,by deads.

Time was against us and we went back to the entrance shaft and decided to have a look at the heavily timbered parts of the mine before climbing out.These timbers like all the wood-work in the mine were still in perfect condition.We continued on underneath them towards the strong draught which blew in our faces.Turning left at a T junction we crashed through many crusty mud dams and soon were standing at the bottom of yet another large stope.But it wasnt a new stope,it was the first one which we had looked at earlier.

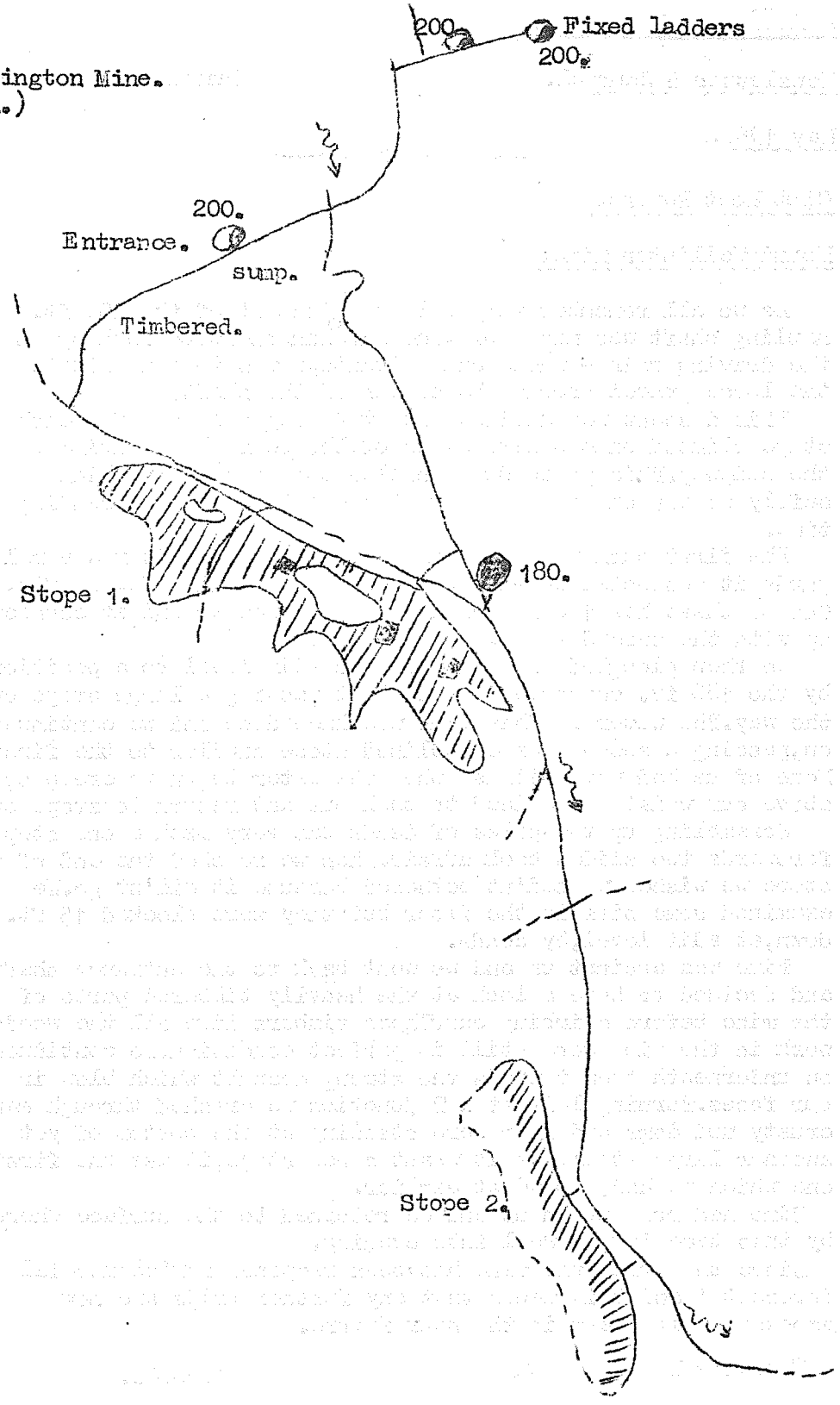
Time had run out on us and we returned to the surface where, by this time,it was well into evening.

Since this trip the mine has been reopened for'commercial interests' and this means that any further trips are now impossible,at least in the near future.

(Plan of mine overleaf.)

S.Poole.

Mount Wellington Mine.
(Plan.)



MEET REPORT.

Cligga Head Mine. - By D.Curry.

While visiting the area around Cligga Head and Perranporth on the north Cornish coast,K.Loze and myself had found numerous adits in the 300 foot granite cliffs.After closer inspection it was decided to run a club meet to this mine for a full exploration of its levels and shafts.

The meet was arranged for February 25th and despite the fact that the clocks had been put foreward one hour,everybody turned up on time - well nearly everybody.

There were 17 of us,our number one Land Rover,and a Morris Minor.The 17 consisted of Dave Curry,Norm -our number one,(Bob Cawthorne can tell you about him.),Hugh Browning,Patty,Phil, Taffy -our Welsh sea-faring friend,Howard,Susan,Cilla-our own Rusty,Bill,Roy,Dave - the Morris driver,or something.Pete and his friend,Rodney,Barry and Phil.

After precipitating 9 bodies,tackle and kit into the Land Rover, and 6 bodies,tackle and kit into the Morris it was discovered that 2 more bodies were meeting us on the Tamar Bridge.Consequently Hugh and Howard very kindly volunteered? to take Hugh's motor bike down to Cligga.N.B.It took us two hours to thaw them out.

Anyway - we had a cramped but smooth run down to Perranporth and then,after a few diversions across the glider club's runway we arrived at Cligga Head.Norm parked the Land Rover in an old quarry,which,by the way,showed some nice greissen bands in the rotting granite (See Dines page 437 plate IX.)

For the next hour or more everybody scrambled across the cliffs looking for possible shafts and accessible adits.The tide was on the turn and a few went down the cliffs to the beach to have a look at the sea-level adits.One part of the cliff face was eroded to such an extent that it formed a steep slope running down to the beach 300 feet below.The continual erosion by wind and rain had exposed some nice specimens of various copper,tin and wolfram ores. There was some very nice copper staining along the cliff face and in places the sea was a deep viridian colour.

After lunch we changed and discussed the way in which to explore the mine.It was decided that we should split up into two parties, one to explore the cliff adits and one to explore the sea-level adits.While Hugh took a party down to the beach Itook a party down the slope looking for a possible adit level.The slope was steep and it did'nt take long to reach a couple of promising adits about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down.The entrances were perched on a ledge and at right angles to one another.We tried the nearest one first. It consisted of a main level going back into the cliff with cross-cuts every 20 yards or so.There were one or two massive stopes which must have nearly reached the surface and were about 4feet wide.

There were about a dozen ore shutes on our level, some of them in working order - as Howard soon found out. Near the far end of the level was a 150 foot shaft, this we think is Contact shaft. The cable runways and pipelines were still intact and the shaft at this level was approximately 20ft. square with a concrete surround and guardrails. There was water at the bottom but this must have been below beach level as the other party below had found the same shaft and were about 10 feet above the water. Wether it is tidal remains to be seen. There were a few minor shafts on our level also, one with a fixed ladder road. This unfortunately, and to Howards displeasure was rotten and unsafe. When we returned to the surface we met the other party from below and their story was relatively the same, - a maze of levels with crosscuts, stopes, and a number of ore shutes. After four hours underground the mine was still only half explored by both parties and it has been decided to make a return trip in the near future. Next time we will try Contact shaft with tackle and look for more levels from there.

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Cook's Kitchen.

Those of us who are acquainted with Cornish mines have no doubt heard of Cook's Kitchen, reputed to be the oldest mine im Cornwall. But perhaps few of us are aware of how it received its name.

It has been said that a man called Cook worked the brook at the foot of the hill streaming for tin. Because of his collection of mining implements, people said, "Cook had a place like a kitchen". This was eventually shortened to 'Cook's Kitchen'

A good lode was eventually cut in Cook's Kitchen, the discovery of which led to Dolcoath mine.

P. Evans.

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BOOK REVIEWS.

'Climbing Blind' by Colette Richard.

As the name suggests, this book is an account of the most enjoyable trips of a blind woman who was determined to conquer the heights and depths of the French mountains despite her handicap. It is a highly readable book which is uniquely interesting in the fact that she concentrates

MEET REPORT.

Phoenix United Mine.

Our first visit to the Caradon Hill area was at the beginning of April. On Caradon Hill itself we found very little of interst, the only shaft now open stank to high heaven so we steered clear of that one. We did find a flooded quarry which was deep enough to dive in.

It was decided to drive around the hill and look for more likely places. A shaft was found near a farm close to Upton Cross but the owners of the farm were not in. There was another shaft near Cheesewring Quarry just on the western side of the road to Henwood, and not far from the quarry dump. We rigged 150 ft. of ladder and found that the shaft was only 100 ft. deep with water at the bottom. There was another level at about 50 ft. on the other side of the shaft but this was choked with rubble.

Further up the hill about 200 yards south of the quarry we found a small hole. This was rigged with 120 ft. of ladder. About 20 ft. down it widened out into a large stope the bottom of which was invisible. Another 30 ft. of ladder was added and we reached a level at 130 ft. Armed with a further 30 ft. of ladder we continued along the level to the top of a rise. The rise opened out into the back of another large stope but the fixed ladder was unsafe and we made our way back to the surface. It was then 10 p.m. so we called it a day.

On Good Friday we went back to Phoenix and to speed thing up we rigged a pair of sheerlegs and lowered everything on that.

About 5 ft. from the 130 ft. level we reached a crosscut which opened out into the stope below after a drop of 50 ft. At the bottom of this pitch the character of the place changed somewhat. The stope had narrowed from about 20 ft. to much less. To the west it appeared to open out after a short climb, and to the east we were able to pass under the first pitch, but no further. Just below the third pitch a crosscut about 15 ft. long ended in a small hole about 2 ft. in diameter. Through this hole we could see we were lobking down from the back of another large stope. We could just make out the steeply sloping footwall about 50 ft. below and nothing else.

The last 30 ft. of ladder was belayed to a fair size boulder and someone had to sit on it for extra weight. One of the party was lowered 50 ft. to the footwall. Unfortunately due to his clothes steaming so much he could not see a great deal but there were indications that there was water about 50 ft. below.

As we had used all the tackle we decided to call it a day and head for the surface again. It was about 10.30 p.m. when we finally reached the top.

on capturing the atmosphere of the places she visits.For her, caving and mountaineering are enjoyable not for the spectacular sights but for the exhileration and 'living' of every inch of each journey.

Although she does not admit it anywhere in the book,her accomplishments are very courageous and I am sure her wish is that it will inspire others with considerable afflictions to participate in such sports.

Published by; Hodder & Stoughton,(551.44094.)

'History of Mendip Caving' by Peter Johnson.

A most intersting historical account of the development of Mendip Caving.Each cave is dealt with individually with only the larger caves and historically interesting sites mentioned.

The book is well written although the repeated use of a four letter word must have justifyably annoyed many Mendip cavers who are not members of the UBSS.I also found the constant criticism of the early Mendip explorers distasteful and for that matter unnecessary.

Nevertheless it will be a very useful addition to the caving clubs library.

Published by;David & Charles,(551.44094238.)

-Revac.

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Devon Cave News.

Baker's Pit Cave - B.P.Series.

Since the last report in the N/L there have been many exploratory meets but these efforts have been largely unfruitful.As was expected there have been no further major continuations,only internal interconnections.Yet the prediction of a link-up with the Glorious Devon Series is still a prediction,much to the surprise of all.A full report is being prepared and will appear towards the end of the year after the B.S.A. conference.

Bunkers Hole - Extension.

The D.S.S. have added about 400 ft. to the downstream series of the cave.The roof of the main crawl boasts a fine display of eccentrics which are believed to be of aragonite.It is a great pity that their location renders them highly vunerable to accidental damage.(More details in the D.S.S. Journal.)

Rabley Cave - Digs.

Dave Richardson,Phil Tozer and Steve Poole have registered the cave for an indefinite period.There are two sites,the first of which needed little digging but ended after a mere 8 ft.The second has so far been emptied for 8 ft. and although it is badly choked it has a strong intermittent draught.It will be intersting to see if the cause of this draught is reached.

LEET REPORT.

The PCG second annual dinner underground - Part 2.

Lower down the hill we had seen on a previous occasion an adit in a large gunnis,so we decided to whip down and inspect it.It went about 100 ft.Nearby there was a shallow shaft,full of springs and rubbish,and Bobbo and Bill decided to go in. Dave said it did'nt go but Hugh,Howard and myself had to go and look.Before we had gone very far it was evident that we would need some tackle ,so Hugh went back for some ."Won't be gone for more than half an hour." he assured those on the surface.While he was gone we whiled away the time by cracking some jokes.
A.B.C.D.E.F.
E.?
Don't mind if I do.

What are you going to do to back Britain ?.
Export ?
Don't mind if I do.

Suddenly the ledge we were standing on collapsed,leaving us floundering through a tiny hole in a tangled mass of arms and legs.Eventually Hugh returned,and we were off.The crawl led into a large stope,this we descended at sixty degrees for about 150 ft. A ladder was necessary for the last 20 ft,this brought us into an adit level with railway lines,and a beautiful specimen of an ore truck.It was still on the rails and in running and tipping condition.The makers name,Swinden of London, was visible,and the date showed it to be eighty years old.From here the only way down was via a rather horrid narrow ore shute.As none of us felt quite like imediate suicide we decided to go along the level.A climb over two nasty roof falls led to a continuation of this level,which we were able to follow ,over roof falls and collapsable ore shutes for several hundred yards,ending in an inevitable roof fall.All along this level we were passing the entrances to large stopes and there were a number of cross-cuts.In one place an easy downward climb led to another level and three stopes,but none of these led very far and we had to go back.A few suicidal climbs in these stopes showed other levels,but time and lack of tackle was against us and we had to leave the place half explored.

Even though this mine was really sporting,the state of the place is surprisingly crumbly and dry and a return trip is necessary. Back at the surface thevrest were not very pleased ,we had been gone for two hours and everyone was jealous.However we soon placated them with a few jokes.
It was quite warm down there.
Mild ?
Don't mind if I do.

After changing and loading up the vehicles we decided to ignore the breathalyser and meet in Bodmin where we spent a very happy hour reminiscing and cracking jokes.
It's quite a keen night out.
Crisp ?
Oh thanks I will.

Funny vegetation over there.
Weed ?.
No I don't actually,but thanks all the same.

After this an uneventful drive brought us back to Plymouth, following the second of what looks like being a traditional meet,
That was a big rock that fell down that ore shute.
Heavy ?
No thanks I've had enough.

And I'm not surprised with jokes like that !.....

R.Cawthorne.

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Odds and .....

ALL MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE:

THIS WILL BE THE LAST NEWSLETTER ISSUED UNTIL THIS

YEARS SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE PAID UP.

Payments can be sent to H.Browning,37 York Rd.,Paignton.

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Apologies to Border Caving Club.

The committee would like to apologise on behalf of the Plymouth Caving Group for the inconvenience caused by our failure to play our part as hosts to the Border Caving Club on Easter Weekend.

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Congratulations and best wishes to Antony Sutcliffe on his forthcoming marriage.

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Complaints have been made concerning the dumping of litter and spent batteries in the new extension at Bakers Pit.Those responsible please clear the mess as soon as possible.

A Yorkshire Meet. - Easegill Caverns.

By R.Cawthorne (Hon.Sec.MUSS.)

One day in March last year I was present at a traditional MUSS meet - The Lancaster Hole -Easegill Caverns.This system,the biggest in Britain,is over 15 miles long and is situated on the border of the great counties of Lancashire,Yorkshire and Westmoreland.

From our hut at Clapham we travelled in the truck - an infamous Austin 7 tonner,to the end of the moorland track where it peters out into a rough sheep track near a disused farm.It was a really fine crisp day and we quickly changed and set off on the 1½ mile walk over the fells to Easegill Beck ,at the foot of Gragarett,our destination being the County Pot entrance to Easegill.Our party was contemplating a visit to the near and far series,quite a complicated trip.

There were five of us in all and on arriving we descended the ten foot entrance shaft,shut the gate and set off.The passage follows the floor of a descending rift for some way to the head of a 25 foot pitch.This was descended with no difficulty and a further short drop led us to "Broadway" a lofty passage directly under the border.From here we followed a sizable stream down Showerbath passage and Spout Hall,where an inlet fills the passage with a fine spray.From here we traversed Poetic Justice,an upward rift, into a short bedding plane crawl.Here a 20 foot pitch led into Pierces Passage ,a main inlet to the master cave. After a walk down to the master cave through a fair-sized stream we came across a river which we followed upstream to Eureka Junction.Continueing upstream we passed several boulder ruckles (house-sized grade 1 boulders) and past Stop Pot - the high level route to Lancaster Hole - to Holbeck Junction.From here we continued through a large bedding plane crawl and into the far series.

In the far series we visited Bradshaw's passage and Thackaray's passage as well as several large chambers whose names we did not know.The formations in Thackaray's passage are very profuse and similar to those found in Radford Caves.When we eventually decided to turn back we were close to Hiroshima,a large boulder chamber.Up to now we had traversed two miles of passage.We left at the same speed as we had come in pausing only to have a good look around the rear series.

After 5 hours underground we emerged and strolled back - still in the sunshine,to the truck to change and open a few bottles.Some while later the other party -the exchange from Lancaster to County Pot - returned and we all returned to Manchester after an excellent day's sport.

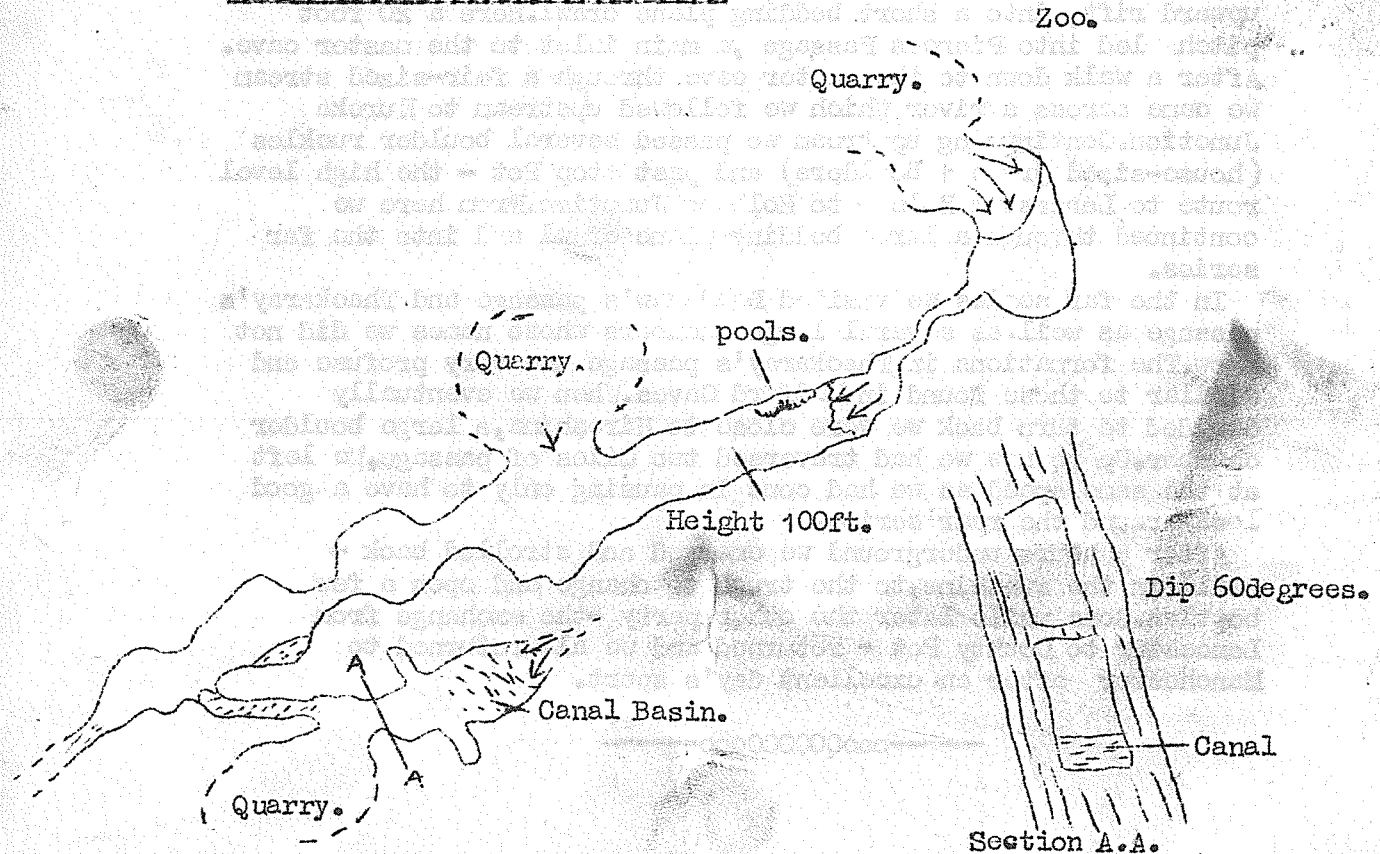
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DUDLEY STONEWORKS - By K.Loze.

Location;Stafford,Nat.Grid.Ref. 32/946910.

One weekend last term a group of six from college went to look at the mines at Dudley.On the Saturday we looked at these mines and on the Sunday we helped to push an old coal barge through the Dudley Canal tunnel.
The mines are to be found in the Silurian limestone which dips at approximately 60 degrees,and are situated below the hill on which the castle and zoo are standing.
The limestone was excavated along the strike of the limestone deposits,with the stope in most places being wide enough for the passage of barges into which the stone was placed.The stopes ranged from 40 to well over 100 feet in length and in places it was very similar to the stoping of Castle-an-Dinas near Bodmin.
We looked at what we thought were two separate mine systems but later were proved to be one .We were however defeated by deep mud which has accumalated in the tunnels in which the barge passed, so it was decided to make a second trip in the near future for a full exploration.For those interested there is a plate in "British Caving" of the Rimstone Pools of this mine.

Plan of the Dudley Stoneworks.



Pub by Plymouth Caving Grp. Hon Ed. 32 Park Ave. Devonport.