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Publications.

MSG Journal no.4 has now been published and plans are being made for Journal no.5. If you haven't bought your copy of no.4 do so now (fantastic value @ 25p. from GS) Now is also the time to put pen to paper and contribute to no.5. Remember all contributors get a free copy.

Caving News

Recent work has been more by way of consolidation than extension.

Padmoor Cave has been visited on three occasions during the year; the first visit (AH,PFR,GS) produced a survey, the second (CC,JDC) produced muddy knees (poor things) and the third (PH, MGN, GS) produced a 5' extension after 80 mins of boulder moving! The fox was not in residence on this last occasion.

Windegg Mine Caverns survey has been completed. Twenty trips have been recorded, some 56 man (or woman) visits plus those made by AH (et al?) on 25 and 28/10/70 for which there are no accounts in the log. From the records available the line-up in the Windegg Stakes is as follows (surface trips in brackets) :-

GS 8, CC 6, PFR 5 (4), SH 5, AH 3+, RE 3 (1), CL 3, MGN 3. The survey will be published in Journal 5 - place your order now.

Jack Scar Cave has been extended by some 75' and a survey done. The extension involves 7" squeezes and tight wet crawls. The total length is about 420'.

Lovergill Caves - survey and new exploration has taken place with more still waiting to be done.

The upstream and downstream sumps in God's Bridge River Cave have been passed (CC,PH,GS) revealing 250' of new passage.

Newcastle Univ. Speleos passed the squeeze at the end of Priorsdale Cave and found a few hundred feet of new passage. Two further trips resulted in a score of Old Cave 130', Newcastle c.375' and Moldys c.25', a total of 630'. The squeeze is about 8" high and leads to large collapse chambers, ruckles, and an active wet tube with a desperate 'U'-bend, deep water and EBH-type passage leading to a sump. Mention of EBH brings us to the next item. The survey of EBH has been finished. For an eye-witness account of the epic trip read on

"The completion of the survey, and the forcing of Worm Sewer, are the two most urgent tasks - neither will be pleasant, but both are essential. Eller Beck Head may go a lot further yet"

August 70 MSG N/L

Due to EBH's magnetic personality it was not until 14 months later that its dankest recesses were again violated. A party of five took the road from Bowes, but
(continued a few pages further on)

Gregory descended the stairs, looked into the living room, and saw them. There were about ten. Their huge velvet covered bodies shone in the light of a great glowing pie on the floor. They had pointed semi-human heads horribly adorned with long hair, spectacles, and moustaches. In silence they stood, no longer needing to communicate with spoken words. Before he knew what was happening, one of the great figures was grabbing him. Oh no! Oh no! Gregory went into a dead faint....

It was warm and sunny when he came to by the roadside. A few white pastry crumbs still clung to his beard, but he did not notice them.

The End.

Eller Beck Head Surveyed ! (continued from before)

the more informed members scurried away to Trough Heads, laughing openly.

Graham S and Peter H started their survey from The Corner of the Flies and proceeded inwards. During this 'fulfillment of a moral obligation' a certain quantity of water was encountered. Due to the depth and temperature of this liquid environment unusual problems of communication were encountered, caused by involunatry jaw movements.

At length (we should know, we measured it) Disillusion Way was reached. This was mentally converted into a Drill Hall for warming-up exercises. Then, GS leading, the mud-choked end of the glutinous Worm Sewer was inspected. Some minutes work with the entrenching tool revealed a way on - accordingly GS pushed on. Unfortunately the unique fastening of his wet suit diverted n cubic feet of liquid mud down into his nether regions. Insult was added to injury when the passage fissured out after only six feet. At this we returned, mumbling.

So, the survey will be published in the next journal. For details of the novel vocabulary found necessary on this occasion please send an S.A.E. to the MSG librarian.

Other News.

The BSA Conference was a notable success dre largely to the immense popular demand for the CC/PFR lecture on Recent Discoeries in the Northern Dales.

The annual dinner was held at Castle Bolton and an excellent meal was enjoyed by all. After a brief slide show thirstier members adjourned to a different brand.

An expedition to Skye has resulted in many surveys and a report to be published in the next Journal.

Proliferation.

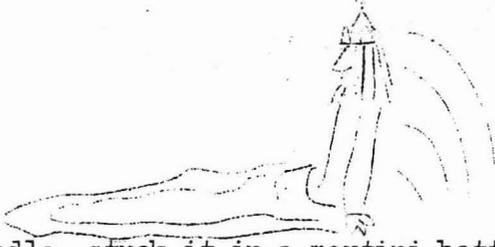
The Teesside arm of MSG has become a little more self supporting, and the most recent addition to our ranks could be described as the Derbyshire leg - recruited by PFR at his new abode in Sheffield.

Graham S. - Librarian.

Derbyshire branch - so far a few tentative afternoon visits to the Hazlebadge Pipe Vein caves and mines near Bradwell. Pictor End Cave (not mentioned in 'Caves of Derbyshire') was surveyed to 290'. For further work doubtless read later.

Through the debris of the fallen ceiling he came to the table, and blew the dust and inevitable cobwebs from the articles on it. An old rapidograph, an unused sketchpad, several enamel mugs, a knife, what appeared to be a marmite jar, a broken bamboo flute, and THE BOOK OF THE MOLE.

Eagerly Gregory took the book, and crawled into his sleeping bag, too exhausted to read it immediately. He fell into a very deep sleep at once, but distant voices intruded on his peace, along with snatches of mid twentieth century music. The voices became clearer and figures appeared, the Mol People of many many years ago. The cottage became full of light and noise, crackling frying pans, the laughing voices of the young, the old bamboo flute. Gregory recognised some of the tunes, Mr Tambourine Man, Strawberry Fields and others.



Gregory awoke with a start, the sinister words "It's your turn to clean the earth closet" ringing in his ears. It was still dark, but a shaft of moonlight lit up the small upstairs room where Gregory had decided to sleep. Feeling uneasy and restless now he lit an old gnawed candle, stuck it in a martini bottle, and began to read the archaic handwritten pages of the book of the Mole.

For hours he read, engrossed by the spell of the words. Bit by bit Gregory recreated a picture of the dead tribe, how it grew from a handful of strange outcasts, and the long struggles against the Invaders, and the hunch-backed Mole Killer, who was indestructible and was eventually walled up in the earth closet. The pressures became greater, and the Invaders came closer, until the day came when the few remaining Moldywarps came together for a great meeting, and pledged to meet but once a year in their beloved house. Leaving Winterings they descended to the village at the foot of the Gill for the first time in many years.

However, unknown to them, a great metamorphosis had come over them. The villagers fled in their dozens, until only the landlord Pat and his wife remained. They were fed the Sacred Pie of Truth, and left in silence for eternity.

Frightened and disillusioned the Moldywarps returned up the Gill, knowing they could never return to the outside world. For weeks they waited in the house, until one by one they left, and drifted across the moors high above the valleys, finally descending into the damp friendly passages they knew so well.

Almost panicking, Gregory came to the unbelievable conclusion. It was the night of the annual gathering of the Warps! But it couldn't be! That had been over a hundred and fifty years ago. What about Mad Pat? he thought. Spare part surgery? he feebly suggested to himself. No sooner had these jumbled thoughts flown through his mind than a distant flute was heard, and the sharp twang of a guitar-like instrument. They were coming.

Vibrations filled the air, as Gregory sensed the approaching throng. His vacuum-formed mind was unable to comprehend such things, as he gazed out of the window but saw nothing.

The next morning Gregory set off up the Gill, passing the rusting shell of the last Percivals' bus now laid on its side in the fast stream. The path through the wood was now overgrown with brambles and was barely discernible. The deeper Gregory went into the dense vegetation the stronger the sense of desolation and gloom became. Suddenly, he came out into the open, and became the first man for many years to look upon the Lost Lands of the Warp!

The narrow floor of the valley was boulder strewn, the foaming torrent rushing through it. Gregory's eye followed the winding and treacherous track climbing up to the skyline, and beyond. For a while he rested by the stream and consulted the old Moldywarp books, trying to ascertain his exact position relative to the ancient gathering place. Yes, he was certain he was nearing his goal!

As he picked his way through the many rocks by the Gill, as so many had in years gone by, Gregory did not feel alone. The dark ominous hills, he felt, were closing behind him, trapping him. For several hours Gregory was forced to shelter in a hollow behind a wall from a heavy downpour. Sitting there, his mind was beset by primitive and unnamed fears. And when the rain stopped, he felt like the only man left on earth.

By the time Gregory was on his way again it was dusk, and dark formd writhed slowly behind the now-fallen walls, and amongst the remains of the old barns. He was a mere ten minutes walk away from the old home of the Mole People. Breathlessly, he stood at the top of the hill, and silently looked at the solid outline of Old Winterings. He approached the decaying gate, unopened for over a century, and tentatively entered the overgrown field in front of the historic place.

As he looked upon the crumbling house, it seemed as if the deepest of the shadows moved, and tiny spots of light became extinguished in the darkness. Time had eaten into the old house, and the peeling white door collapsed as Gregory's hand touched the door knob.

Once inside, by the light of his torch, Gregory looked at what he had dreamed of for months. Cobwebs covered everything and mice scurried everywhere. The first room he explored had a stone floor, now covered in green slime and fallen plaster. Exotic fungi decorated the walls and rotten beams, and for a terrifying instant Gregory mistook the remains of a rubbersuit for a man hanging from the rafters. Everything seemed to disintegrate at a touch, rope ladders which would not support a mouse, great antique chairs now skeletons of thin wire. In the little flagged kitchen the door of the food cupboard fell away like wet paper, revealing a foul mess of more fungus, old tins and bottles. An ancient pickled onion peered out from a cobwebbed jar, unmoved by the light it had not seen for decades.

Gregory moved on to the living room. The carpet was long gone, devoured by the damp, and the floorboards would soon follow. There still remained, clinging heroically to the wall, a copy of the famed Moldywarp survey of Smeltnill Beck Cave, and a grotesquely bright pink survey of Hard Level Gill Cave was preserved in its khaki frame.



The Legend of the Lost Lands of the Warp
and
Gregory's Search for Truth.

John C. Longstaff.

The time - some years hence. The hero - Gregory Cobble.

One day, whilst browsing in an old Ashby bookshop, Gregory came across some ancient manuscripts, concerning "moldywarp". Being flush, having just received the first installment of his college grant, Gregory bought all the Moldywarp Journals and hurried home, enthralled by the primitive charm of the strange covers. Before long he was engrossed in the writings, and soon came under the primeval spell of the Northlands and their secrets.

Of course, the word "moldywarp" was known to everyone from the much-used metaphor "sick as a moldywarp", but few knew of the derivation or real meaning of the word. Gregory discovered that a race of almost human creatures, believed to be descended from moles, once lived in a land far to the North, deep in the hills, and recorded their unique experiences in crude booklets, several of which he now possessed.



Ignoring the jests and laughter of his friends, Gregory set forth, leaving his university course in mining engineering, to find the Lost Lands of the Warp, and driven by a strange and ominous force.

Some days later Gregory arrived in a little grey town mentioned so often in the writings, and at once fell into conversation with some of the old ones. "Oh! I've heerd of yon moldywarps; in fact me grandfather once found one of their hats in a jaumble sale - fetched £120 when he sold it", said one.

Soon Gregory was heading west, spurred on by the knowledge that he was very close to the ancient gathering grounds of the Warps. A day later, and about seventeen miles from the town, Gregory found himself, exhausted, midst the tumbled overgrown ruins of a small village which lay at the foot of a rocky gill. Uneasily he explored the mysteriously deserted buildings, and eventually came upon an ancient sign, which at once sent Gregory's head spinning wildly. "This is it! I'm here.... The King's Head!"

Full of excitement and anticipation he burst into the bar of the apparently empty hotel, where he was shocked by the sight of two filthy cowering figures in a far corner, gibbering uncontrollably. Soon Gregory was able to calm the two crazed old outcasts, and discovered that they were Mad Pat and his wife, one time tenants of the King's Head. He told them of his quest, showed them the journals, and asked what they knew. "They came far in the past, and made us eat the pies!"

With that Mad Pat and his wife ran off, leaving Gregory even more mystified and not a little frightened. However he was far from ready to give up. He decided to enter the Gill, after he had had a good night's sleep.

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