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The Association

The American Spelean History Association (ASHA) is an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society and exists for the study, dissemination, and interpretation of spelean history, and related purposes. All persons who are interested in these goals are cordially invited to become members. Dues are \$2 per issue of the *Journal of Spelean History*. Dues can be paid for up to 20 issues (\$40). Checks should be made payable to “ASHA” and mailed to the treasurer.

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The Journal of Spelean History (JSH) is the Association’s publication and is mailed to all members. JSH includes articles covering a wide variety of topics relating to man’s use of caves, including historical cave explorations, saltpeter and other mineral extraction, and show cave development. Members are invited to contribute material and to comment on published material. ASHA assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

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A NOTE ON THE HISTORY AND MATERIAL CULTURE OF BELLAMY CAVE, TENNESSEE

Joseph C. Douglas

Introduction

Bellamy Cave (TMY 1) is a large and locally well-known cave located in Montgomery County, Tennessee. The cave has a rich, multi-faceted human history, and it still contains significant cultural and historic resources which, combined with documentary and oral sources, allow the history of the site to be told. This history ranges from the prehistoric use of the cave to saltpeter and guano mining in the nineteenth century to recent scientific and conservation research. The cave was also involved in a highly publicized murder case in the 1880s; it was a popular social space and cultural curiosity for several generations, and it was an important adjunct for a domestic economy, providing cold storage of foodstuffs and serving as a water source. During 2006, 2007, and 2008, I was fortunate to be able to conduct limited field investigations at the site, while simultaneously delving into the archival record. This article is a brief note on the initial results of this work along with some recommendations for future investigations.

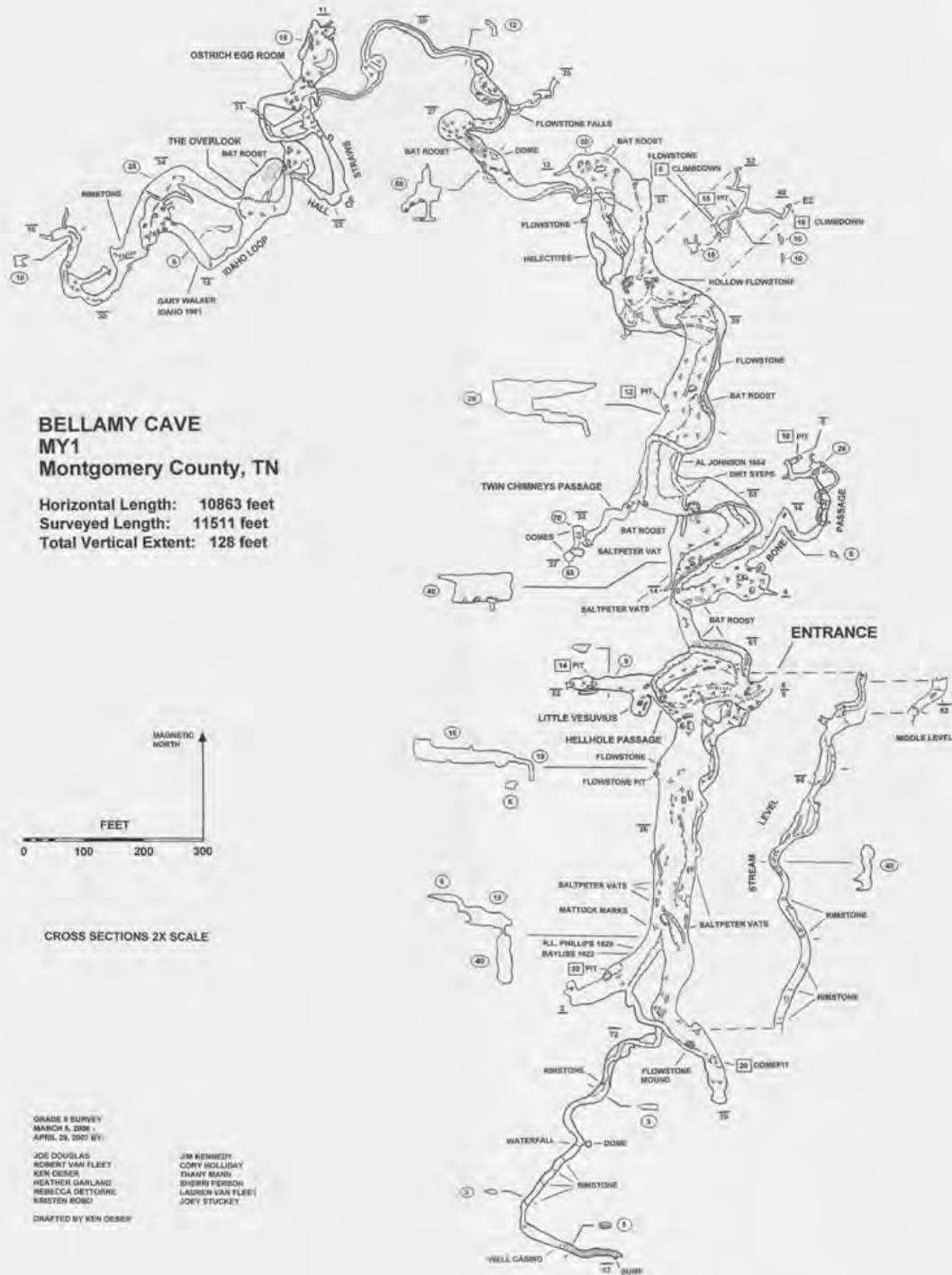
The Cave and its Features

Bellamy Cave is located in western Montgomery County, Tennessee, in the Blooming Grove Creek drainage of the Cumberland River, at an elevation of 500 feet. This is the Western Highland Rim physiographic province, which could be considered an extension of Kentucky's Pennyroyal Plain. The cave is developed in the Mississippian age Warsaw Limestone and is essentially an active stream cave with large and dry upper levels. The cave is 2.05 miles long with a vertical extent of 128 feet. The entrance is located on the side of a hill and slopes steeply into the first room and intersection. Straight ahead is a large upper passage heading south; to the left is the active down-stream passage which underlies the former, and extends beyond toward Blooming Grove Creek. Right goes to the upstream passage, where the stream runs in a deep trench through a larger passage. There are significant calcite speleothems throughout, and several active domes intersect the mostly horizontal main passages. A small second entrance, explored in 2005 and 2006, intersects the main cave in one of these domes.

The cave has significant biological resources. The cave biota includes blind fish, blind crayfish, and numerous

other invertebrates, including the Coleman Cave Beetle, found in 2005, which is known from only three sites in the world (all in the immediate area). Conservationists have worried longest about the bats at the cave, as Bellamy Cave hosts both summer and winter (hibernaculum) roosts for the Gray Bat. Even more remarkable, it hosts both bachelor and maternity colonies in the summer, though in different roost spots. At one time Indiana Bats were also reported from the cave but none are found there now. Concern for the dwindling Gray Bat population, down to a mere 65 individuals in 1974, led State (TWRA) and Federal (USFWS) agencies, and concerned NGOs like The Nature Conservancy and Bat Conservation International to work with the private landowners, first Frank Spriggs, then David Law, to fence the entrance and close the cave to all traffic to protect the bats. The Nature Conservancy and others continued to monitor the site, conduct regular bat counts, and sponsor additional research at the cave. Thus more or less protected, Gray Bat hibernaculum roost numbers eventually rebounded to 90,000 in 2002 and 126,000 in 2006. This is a notable conservation success, comparable to the recovery of the bald eagle, and part of the reason why the USFWS has recommended down-listing the species from endangered to threatened status. Summer Gray bat populations are currently estimated at 50,000, and several new roosts were located during a recent cartographic project.

Citing continuing concern for the future of the site, The Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy began negotiations to purchase the cave and surrounding 34 acres, which it successfully accomplished, with help from a private donor and a grant from the USFWS, in February 2006. In early 2007 TNC turned the cave property over to the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency to manage as a biological preserve; in the summer of 2007 a multi-agency effort by State and Federal agencies, NGOs, and private individuals built a more substantial fence around the cave entrance. While designed to protect biological resources, the new structure also helps secure many significant elements of historic material culture which are extant in the cave. Today it is Bellamy Cave Wildlife Preserve, owned by the State of Tennessee.



Courtesy of Ken Oeser.

Research

The presence of the bats complicates historical and archaeological research at the cave, as there are only two short windows when visitation is possible: two weeks in late April when the bats are awake yet pups haven't been born yet, and more importantly, the month long period from mid-August to mid-September when most of the bats temporarily leave the cave. Also, all research trips to the site must include a biologist or resource manager with a federal permit to work on endangered bats to avoid violation of the Endangered Species Act.

I first visited the site on a brief trip in 1998, escorted by then-owner David Law, and managed to take a few notes. Likewise, I caught another glimpse of the cave's historic resources while accompanying a biological research team in 2003. But the current history project stems directly out of the recent cartographic project. As TNC evaluated the cave property for purchase, which included locating the stream swallet that eventually became the second entrance, they realized the need for a better map of the cave, both to relate the cave to the surface property but also to better document the resources and extent of the cave itself. There was a partial map of the cave by W. F. Cuddington and B.H. Denton, made in 1953, which appeared in Thomas Barr's *Caves of Tennessee*, but it was far from complete, showing about 3000 feet of passage, but not the downstream section nor any side passages. It also lacked passage detail. So in late 2005 TNC Cave Program manager Heather Garland asked Nashville caver Ken Oeser if he and his regular cave survey team would map the cave. Thus Ken and his crew, along with TNC staff and other cavers and biologists, surveyed the cave on trips during 2006 and early 2007, adhering to the available bat windows. The last cartographic trip was under the auspices of the State Wildlife Resources Agency, which supported the effort begun by TNC. I was able to accompany most of these survey trips, and while I did help with the cartography, I was also able to conduct historical and archeological research onsite. Then in August 2007, I put together a dedicated research trip with Professor Jan Simek and Alan Cressler of the University of Tennessee Cave Archaeology Research Team (CART) to further assess the prehistoric material culture in the cave and make recommendation for further research and management to the TWRA. Professor Simek and I returned to the site in August 2008 to look more closely at the archaeology of the saltpeter mining operation.

Prehistoric Visitation

Although the only hint in the documentary record of Native American use of the cave is a brief reference to a bare human footprint seen deep inside the cave by members of a recreational visit to the cave in 1877, the cave itself contains rich cultural material which tells of intense and varied human use of the site in the prehistoric past. The cave was an important site for American Indians especially during the Mississippian period (c. 1000-1550 AD), and there is evidence they not only explored it but also utilized it for ceremonial, mortuary, and other purposes. From my first visit to the site there were indications of possible prehistoric use of the cave. In 1998 David Law showed me a projectile point/knife found outside the entrance sinkhole, perhaps a modified Kirk point, while caver Thany Mann later reported a possible Woodland point at the entrance. Thany and I also saw worked chert flakes on the entrance slope in 2003, while caver Gerald Moni and TNC personnel (Cory Holliday and Heather Garland) independently reported suspicious bones and teeth in a side passage in 2005.

Despite these hints, the prehistoric material found since 2006 is still remarkable. First, there are many cane torch stoke marks, and associated deposits of cane charcoal, throughout the upper levels and most side passages. These were created by American Indians as part of their lighting technology; they brushed the burning ends of the bundles of river cane they used as torches against the walls to reinvigorate the flames. These early explorers saw all the cave passages shown on the 1953 map, and more. Three cane charcoal samples, one each from the bone passage, the upstream passage, and the upper downstream passage, were taken for radiocarbon dating using the AMS method in 2006. Results provided by Beta Analytical Inc. for the three samples overlap, indicating a 95% probability they date from the 14th or early 15th century. The intercept points of the radiocarbon age with the calibration curve on two of the three samples support a date in the latter part of the 2 sigma range, around 1400 AD, with the third slightly earlier. This places the deep cave exploration in the beginning of the late Mississippian period, a time of intensive prehistoric use of caves in the region.

Other physical evidence in the cave adds to the complexity of this story of deep cave exploration. While much of the bone material in the bone passage is clearly animal, some of which is still in situ, other bones and teeth in the passage appear to be human. While the cave was also used by a murderer to dispose of a victim's body in 1883, the condition and location of these bones and teeth, and the close proximity of stoke

marks and cane charcoal, suggest they are prehistoric. Also, there are several dug holes near the entrance chamber, in the slope leading to the downstream upper level, which appear to be looted burials. In one of these a Mississippian digging tool was found. Nearby are fragments of mussel shells, brought to the cave from the nearby Cumberland River as either domestic or mortuary goods.

Another indication that Indians used the cave for mortuary purposes is the presence of particular prehistoric cave art. Faint pictographs, located near the entrance and first noted by caver Lynn Roebuck in January 2006, were examined by the University of Tennessee CART in August of 2007. While a close study remains to be done, the pictographs include the “toothy mouth” motif, which is always associated with burial caves in the Mid-South. Finally, there is also evidence that prehistoric people mined clay in the cave; clay deposits were removed by hand in an area near a small pit in a side passage 330 feet from the entrance. This could have been for ordinary domestic use as pottery, but the underground source may have charged such a clay vessel with extraordinary power. Nearby is charcoal embedded in the clay surface of the cave wall, showing the unmistakable characteristics of river cane stoked from a burning torch. Clearly the cave was important in the late prehistoric past, and it still contains much cultural material to study and interpret from that period.

Extractive Industries: Saltpeter and Guano Mining

Euro-American and African American settlement in the area occurred in the last quarter of the 18th century as part of the larger Cumberland settlements. Originally organized as Tennessee County, North Carolina, at the time of Tennessee’s statehood in 1796, the cave was included in the now re-named Montgomery County. The county seat, Clarksville, is 10 miles to the east. By the nineteenth century, the Blooming Grove area consisted of rural commercial farmland with a focus on tobacco, with a widespread, but fragmented, iron industry mixed in. The population included the largest percentage (almost half) of African Americans of all counties in the middle Tennessee, mostly slaves working the tobacco fields and iron works. Based on evidence from Bellamy Cave and nearby Cooper Creek Cave there was also a substantial cave saltpeter industry near Blooming Grove in the early nineteenth century. Following common southern industrial practices, the saltpeter miners were most likely enslaved African Americans, toiling without recompense in an unpleasant and unsafe work environment.

After Dr. Thomas Barr visited Bellamy Cave, he unambiguously stated that “during the Civil War the cave was intensively mined for nitrate. The rotted

remains of several old niter hoppers can be seen in both branches” (Barr p. 328). But while the physical evidence on site supports Barr’s general description; the cave was a significant saltpeter mine, and the material culture Barr noted is still intact, there are reasons to doubt his chronology.

Bellamy Cave was exploited by a large saltpeter operation in which tons of cave dirt were mined and initially processed using leaching vats inside the cave. In the upstream passage, there are two clusters of saltpeter vat casts; one in the first room and the other a short distance further inside. Each contains three or four vats. There are also excavated areas (for the saltpeter dirt), sections of trails (including dirt steps), and torch marks from historic pine torches.

The upper level leading downstream was mined even more intensively. There are trails with both stone and dirt steps, well-preserved mattock marks in excavated areas, piled rocks, and possible tally marks. Even more significant are the remnants of the saltpeter leaching vats. First, there are two double piles of dirt which probably each represent double saltpeter vats. On a long ledge on the left side of the passage are at least five, and perhaps as many as seven, individual vats. In the center of the passage further in are three v-vats in a single frame. There are partially intact side boards sticking out of the sediment. Just beyond are four additional separate saltpeter casts. Finally, there are three more v-vats, originally contained in a single wooden frame. The presence of all these features, especially the two dozen saltpeter leaching vats, along with the noted variations in form, confirms Barr’s impression of Bellamy Cave as an important saltpeter mine.

But if Bellamy Cave was mined for saltpeter during the Civil War, as Barr indicated, it could not possibly have been for long, as Montgomery County and Clarksville fell to United States (Union) forces early in the conflict, shortly after the Confederate defeat at Fort Donelson in February 1862. Though there was a Confederate fort on the Cumberland River at the mouth of Blooming Creek, they made no effort to defend it. The Blooming Grove area remained under Union control throughout the war, though it was not without its share of bushwhacking.

Recently historians are finding that many cave operations casually thought to be mined during the Civil War actual date to the early nineteenth century. Several lines of evidence point to an earlier period for the saltpeter mining at Bellamy Cave as well, to the War of 1812 era (c. 1807-1815). There are hints in the documentary record of an early saltpeter industry; for example, tallies of flatboat manifests from Clarksville to Natchez/New Orleans from 1807 show that 1025 lbs.

of gunpowder were sent downriver. This almost certainly came from local production utilizing local saltpeter and charcoal, though the location of the requisite powder mill is a mystery. More telling, an article in the [Clarksville] *Weekly Chronicle* from September 8, 1877 related a great deal of important historical information about the cave, including about the saltpeter operation. The article related the visit of about 25 men and women, mostly from a local [Stewart] college led by a Professor Fessey and guided by neighbor and frequent, unofficial, cave guide and local “character” Riley Wiley. They toured the cave and also recorded old names and dates they found there, even identifying some of them. Importantly, the author noted that in the upstream passage “[t]here are five or six hoppers here, used in the manufacture of saltpetre a great many years ago. The boards and troughs in these hoppers are entirely decayed, and, except when broken, retain their original shape. Saltpetre was made here in 1812 by B. Bayless and others.” Both the condition of the mining artifacts in 1877 and the fact the information came from someone knowledgeable about the cave, Riley Wiley, lends credence to the early date given for the mining in the article.

The saltpeter operators thus could have been either Burrell Bayless (d.1828) or his brother Britain Bayless (1758-1834), both of whom were born in Halifax County, North Carolina, and migrated to Montgomery County in the 1790s along with other kin. Britain became a Justice of the Peace; Burrell, while also very involved in civic affairs, was especially active in real estate, buying and selling many tracts in the Blooming Grove valley. Both owned slaves, but Burrell bought several additional slaves during the period before and during the War of 1812, when he may have been mining Bellamy Cave. In the 1877 newspaper article the author noted the name “B. Bayless 1812” in the upstream upper level of the cave. There are several other Bayless names remaining in the cave today; while Burrell’s father in law’s name, James H. Brigham, has also been recorded in the cave with an 1812 date. Further research is needed to better document the saltpeter artifacts and to clarify which Bayless was mining the cave, and with whom he was working. We are fortunate to have any information on the operators at all, as in many caves the identity of the saltpeter contractors remains obscure.

While saltpeter mining, and the initial processing of the nitrate-laden sediments, was the most significant industrial use of the underground environment, it was not the only extractive venture at Bellamy Cave. There was a small scale, fragmented guano mining industry in Tennessee in the late antebellum and (especially) post-Civil War periods, when several well known caves with large bat populations were mined for guano for use as

fertilizer. And Bellamy Cave, like Hubbards Cave and Big Bone Cave, was one of these guano caves.

On June 12, 1884 a lengthy newspaper article appeared in the [Nashville] *Daily American* which, although focused on the cave’s role in a spectacular murder case, discussed below, also describes in detail a tour of the cave by a group of interested persons, including at least two journalists, M. V. Ingram of the *Clarksville Tobacco Leaf* and Owen Prentiss, a Nashville reporter and author of the piece. After describing the “myriads” of bats in the cave, Prentiss wrote that, “[t]he bat guano lies in banks and pyramids all over the cave, and at \$30 a ton, which it is said to be worth in the Clarksville market, there is probably enough of it to make a fortune for the enterprising man who will devise means for bringing it to the surface cheaply. It is now brought up on the backs of laborers, who sell it for from twenty-five to fifty cents a sack.” Prentiss also noted that their cave guide, B. J. Wiley (brother of Riley), had himself hired local African Americans to pack sacks of guano out of the cave. Contemporaneous with the Bellamy guano removal, Joshua Rice was mining nitrates from similar deposits in Dunbar Cave, Montgomery County’s other famous, large cave. According to Rice, cave guano was especially good fertilizer for tobacco. Presumably the Bellamy guano also supplied tobacco farmers in Montgomery and neighboring counties.

Cultural Curiosity and Social Space

In contrast with the profit-driven commercial mining of saltpeter and guano, Bellamy Cave was an important social and recreational space both before and after the Civil War, and indeed well into the twentieth century. The cave was viewed as a cultural curiosity, an unusual space well worth visiting. As related in the historical literature, groups of county residents frequented the cave, describing it in the language of a sublime wonder. “Nature’s Fantastic Museum,” is how Owen Prentiss described it in 1884, with majestic views and a “fairly palace” called Stalactite Hall. The 1877 newspaper account stressed the overall beauty of the cave, both in its scenic views and mineral displays. The social nature of these outings is also clear from the literature. A Knoxville newspaper account from 1884 described the cave as a “place of public resort, where neighbors have picnics and balls,” while Goodspeed’s 1886 history called Bellamy Cave “famous” and “largely visited by sight-seers.”

The many names/dates incised or smoked by candle on the cave walls and ceilings also attest to the cave’s social history. These historic inscriptions (excepting those from the War of 1812 period) range from the 1820s to the 1910s, while oral history suggests social outings to the cave continued into the 1920s and 1930s.

Many of the names are those of local residents, such as school pupil W. A. Dortch (1821) and postmaster B. J. Corban (August 1877). Only a few dozen names have been recorded so far, about 40, and additional work in documenting (and identifying) these historic cave visitors is needed.

A Hidden Space

Like many other American caves, Bellamy Cave not only was a source of commodities, a cultural curiosity, and a social space, but was also utilized as a hidden space, though not particularly successfully, as it was too well-known and too frequently visited. While much of the use of caves as hidden spaces in the southeastern U.S. revolved around moonshine production, at Bellamy Cave a murderer named William Morrow (and his accomplice, his brother Charles) turned to the underground environment to dispose of their victim, an African American sharecropper named Dick Overton. After William killed and robbed him at the cave entrance in 1883, the Morrows returned the next day and pushed Overton's body into the stream trench near the entrance room. But in May 1884 the corpse was discovered and a sensational news story and murder trial followed. The subject of a separate study, the murder at Bellamy Cave led to the first execution of a white man in Montgomery County, and one of the few cases where a white was executed for killing a black person in the post Civil War South. For the purposes of this article, the episode clearly demonstrates the use of Bellamy Cave as a hidden space.

Domestic Usage

The final major historic use of American caves, as adjuncts to domestic economies, is well represented at Bellamy Cave. Like many caves in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, Bellamy Cave provided cold storage for foodstuffs. There is at least one historic ceramic shard on the entrance slope, and another at the bottom of the entrance room; one is monochrome brown-ware while the other is brown backed with white. Their placement in the cool, dark environment is evidence of food or liquid storage. Likewise a wooden box placed just upstream from the entrance was likely used for the storage of high humidity tolerant perishables, like milk, eggs, or cheese. In addition to food, Bellamy was also an important water source. This domestic use was well developed. Iron water pipes extend down the steep entrance slope to a water heater container; pipes then continue down to the stream level. Electric wires were strung to the cave entrance and then down into the entrance room. There is also a ram-style pump in the entrance room, which powered water up the steep entrance slope. Although this usage is not mentioned by Dr. Barr or other written sources, the cave presumably provided

water for both domestic and agricultural use for many years, and the remaining artifacts clearly represent farm production activities in the mid-twentieth century.



Water container and pump.

Conclusions

Bellamy Cave has a rich history and a wealth of extant material culture extending back at least 600 years. This history tells of the complicated relationships American Indians had with the cave environment in the prehistoric past, an appropriate place for human interment and ceremonial art but also for deep cave exploration and the mining of clay. Additional research on all aspects of this early use of the cave, but especially the art and the clay mining, is recommended. For Euro-Americans, Bellamy Cave was also a multifaceted resource, tangled up in larger cultural beliefs. It was an industrial space, serving as a large saltpeter mine in the War of 1812 era. The cave was a sublime place of beauty, a natural wonder, and a cultural curiosity. But it was also pragmatically utilized for food storage and as a water source for a household economy. It was a social space, portrayed in the local press and utilized as a place of public resort, including picnics and cave exploration. But it was also a hidden space, where the body of a murder victim was deposited in 1883, which upon discovery led to a sensational and significant murder trial. For African Americans the cave was primarily an industrial work

space in both the antebellum period of bondage as well as after emancipation, and for the family of Dick Overton a place of personal loss where their loved one was killed. Thus many important themes in the history of American caves are represented at the site. Additional research on the historic resources such as the saltpeter mining artifacts, and a closer study of historic names, is also strongly recommended, along with more archival research. Bellamy Cave is an important historic and cultural resource, whose story, while not yet fully told, offers a revealing window into America's rich past.

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ROBBERS, TREASURE, AND CAVES

Colleen O'Connor Olson

Caves are magnets for bad guys. Caves have many uses for outlaws—they can hide out, stash stolen goods, hold social events with other bad guys, woo potential lovers while holding them hostage, make counterfeit money—the possibilities are endless.

Robbers tend to be bad, but Robin Hood, the legendary robber of Sherwood Forest near Nottingham, England, became a hero for stealing from the rich to give to the poor. A cave near Creswell is said to have been a hideout for Robin and his band of merry men. In one story, Robin Hood's arch nemesis, Prince John, heard about the cave and went there to capture him. The prince failed to find the outlaw because while John was poking around the cave, Robin Hood was at Prince John's Royal Palace at Clipstone freeing prisoners from the dungeon.¹

Robin Hood's American counterpart was David Lewis, who rode through the hills of Pennsylvania with his band of highwaymen in the 1800s looking for victims to rob. Commonly known as Robber Lewis, he called himself an "equalizer" and is known today as the "Robin Hood of Pennsylvania."

Indian Caverns, a show cave in Spruce Creek, Pennsylvania, was supposedly the Lewis band's hideout from 1816 to 1820. In 1820, Robber Lewis was wounded and captured in a gunfight while he was robbing a wagon train. While in the Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, jail, he caught fatal pneumonia. As he lay dying, he disclosed that he had a stash of \$20,000 in gold in a secret place. In a letter to a friend, Lewis wrote the money was in a "dank hideout room" near the Franklin Woolen Mill, which stood where the Indian Caverns' parking lot is today.

Treasure seekers searched Indian Caverns in vain for years. Now the cave passages are filled with tourists, not treasure hunters. Some people do not want to give up the idea that Robber Lewis's treasure is still in the cave; they believe Lewis sealed off the passage leading to his gold, so it cannot be found.²

David Lewis recorded his highwayman adventures in a diary, which Lewis's descendants gave the owner of Indian Caverns when it became a show cave. The diary portrayed Lewis as a charming Robin Hood type, though he was probably a typical bad guy. The diary was destroyed years ago in a fire.³

Peak Cavern in Derbyshire, England, is a respectable show cave where mild-mannered tourists enjoy underground tours. In days of old, the cave bore a less honorable name—the Devil's Arse, and a less honorable role—party place for beggars and thieves. Around 1621, the famous seventeenth century English writer Ben Jonson wrote a ballad that tells of the Devil's Arse being the site of the Beggars' Banquet, an annual gathering of beggars, thieves, and various disreputable types in the thirteenth century. Satan himself was even invited. The leader of this shindig was Cock Laurel, king of the beggars. Jonson called Laurel, "the most notorious knave that ever lived."

Not only was the cave named for and frequented by the devil, it apparently had a connection straight to Hell. A story tells of a goose that fell into a nearby cave called Eldon Hole and came out of the Devil's Arse with burned feathers.

Around 1650, Peak Cavern became more respectable, but no less colorful, when the Duke of Devonshire gave rope makers permission to live in the cave as long as they made rope to use in Derbyshire's lead mines. They lived and worked in an underground village. Some of the artifacts of the rope makers' village can be seen in the cave today.⁴

A Canadian legend tells of an Italian pirate named Deno who captured a British ship off the coast of Nova Scotia. The pirates killed all the British sailors, but Deno spared the captain's daughter, believing they could begin a happy life together as a couple. But because Deno killed her father and had other undesirable traits common to pirates, she did not feel romantic toward him and instead tried unsuccessfully to kill him. Deno ordered the girl to walk the plank, but a warship appeared and a storm arose, causing her killing to be postponed. The storm helped the pirates escape from the warship and blew their ship into the Bay of Fundy, near Parrsboro, Nova Scotia, where the beach was covered with jewels. The pirates, ever on the lookout for such an opportunity, went ashore to get them. This good fortune softened Deno's heart, and he again asked the girl to marry him. Feeling all the more unloving toward Deno, she said no. Deno took ashore, threw her in a cave, sealed it, and left her for dead. Today it is called Maiden's Cave.⁵

According to legend, a cave called Devil's Den (or Devil's Hole), near Newton, New Jersey, is an outlaw's

(or anyone's) ideal headquarters. During the American Revolution, New Jersey colonist James Moody remained loyal to Britain and became a spy for the crown. He led a band of Tories (other colonists who supported the British) in robbery and general havoc around New Jersey. One story tells of how Moody and his band robbed a farmer and escaped into Devil's Den. Five days later they still had not come out. They were discovered miles away in the town of Papakating impersonating American soldiers. Some people thought Moody and his men escaped through a secret exit in the cave.

Moody supposedly kidnapped Kittatinny, daughter of Native American leader Allamuchy of the Pequest tribe, and held her prisoner in his cave while trying to win her love. Kittatinny was fond of ice skating, so Moody reportedly made a subterranean roller skating rink for her (I do not think there were roller skates in the 1700s). According to an Augustus Schooley poem published in 1885, the roller rink didn't help with romance.

Lost her love of roller skating!
And one night when Ensign Moody
Came in late he found her body,
From the chandelier suspended,
Lifeless; hanging by a skate-strap;
Hanging o'er the grand piano,
In the middle of the cavern.

Devil's Den thus had not only a roller rink, but a chandelier, and a grand piano. But wait, there's more! In one section of the cave, Moody stored the Tories' armor and weapons. The personal living quarters of the cave had Turkish carpets, mirrors, sofas, bookcases, and a bust and picture of King George III of England. With a cave like this, Moody did not want just anyone wondering in, but trespassers were no problem. The entrance to the cave was blocked with solid limestone; to access the cave, Moody gave a whistle and the limestone swung open, then closed behind him.

Moody was eventually captured by American soldiers and had to give up his luxury cave life for prison.⁶

Jesse James, Caver Extraordinaire

If all the cave stories about Jesse James are true, the famous outlaw was the nineteenth century's greatest caver. His home state, Missouri, and his parents' home

state, Kentucky, are riddled with caves, so he had plenty to choose from.

Meramec Caverns, a show cave in Stanton, Missouri, was supposedly a regular hideout for the James gang, horses included, in the 1870s.⁷ Statues of Jesse and his gang can be seen along the tour route.

Mark Twain Cave in Hannibal, Missouri, is another show cave that Jesse James reportedly visited. In Jesse's day, it was called McDowell's Cave (Twain wrote about the cave in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; hence the modern name). Jesse James' name with the date Sept. 22, 1879, is scratched on a cave wall. One version of the story says that Jesse and his outlaw brother Frank James were considering going into a legitimate business. Jesse traveled from his home in Nashville to Las Vegas, New Mexico, to see about investing in a cattle ranch. The cattle business did not look promising and violence in the area discouraged him, so Jesse decided to stick with the familiar occupation of crime. On his way home, he stopped at Hannibal and visited McDowell's Cave. Like other tourists, Jesse James supposedly signed his name on the wall.⁸

Guides at Mark Twain Cave sometimes tell another version of the story when taking cave visitors past the chamber called "Jesse James Hideout." Jesse's cousin, C.E. Tucker, lived down the hill from the cave. After the James gang robbed a train near Hannibal on September 19, 1879, Tucker hid them in the cave. It was a good hideout because it was large enough for the whole gang, and Tucker could stand guard and warn them if the law came near.⁹

Robber's Cave in Lincoln, Nebraska, is also believed by some people to have been a hideout for many robbers, including Jesse James. Legend says he hid there after an 1876 robbery. The cave is said to have a room with a fire pit and a natural stone chimney, making it a comfy place for outlaws to bide their time. To make the story better, some claim the voices of ghosts of robbers and Pawnee Native Americans can be heard near the cave. In case that is not enough fun, a cave passage supposedly met a tunnel connected to a prison and the State Hospital for the Insane, allowing criminals and lunatics to use Robber's Cave to escape.¹⁰ Ann Billesbach of the Nebraska State Historical Society told me the Jesse James story is not true.¹¹ She did not discredit the ghost and insane criminal story, however. Do not bother trying to check out Robber's Cave, it was filled in and is now under a building.

Lost River Cave in Bowling Green, Kentucky, is said to have been a hideout early in the James brothers' careers. After robbing the Southern Deposit Bank in Russellville, Kentucky, on March 18, 1868, the James Gang reputedly used the cave as their den. Jesse

himself supposedly brought a doctor to the cave to treat a wounded member of the gang. Agents from Pinkerton's National Detective Agency were said to be posted at the entrance, waiting for the outlaws to come out. The James Gang escaped through another entrance.¹² Jesse James must have been an excellent swimmer and possibly carried scuba gear, since much of Lost River Cave is full of water. The cave can be seen today by tour boat.

According to one story, Frank and Jesse not only hid out in caves, but enjoyed a tour in Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. An 1800s tour group stopped at a cave room called Bandit's Hall, where a tourist asked if there had really ever been any bandits there. A man replied, "Folks, there's bandits in the hall now. I am Frank James and the gentleman sitting over there with Miss Rountree is my brother, Jesse."¹³ There is no evidence that the James brothers took a tour in Mammoth Cave, though Jesse did rob the Mammoth Cave Stagecoach in 1880.¹⁴

Alas, in spite of all the great stories about the James' boys cave connections, T.J. Stiles, author of *Jesse James, Last Rebel of the Civil War*, told me he has never seen a reliable account of them hiding in caves. Jesse and Frank had many relatives, friends, and sympathizers with warm, cozy homes throughout the cave riddled states of Missouri and Kentucky. Resorting to staying in damp, dark caves would have been unlikely.¹⁵

Counterfeiters

In the early 1800s, counterfeiting was a capital offence, so if one wanted to take up this occupation, a secret hideout was necessary. In 1822, several counterfeit \$50 bills were found in shops in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. A band led by Major James Childress set out to capture the counterfeiters. The party rode toward Walker County, where they believed the counterfeiters were. The men met John Prewitt, a respected citizen, whom they asked to join the search. Prewitt had just traded a filly for the black horse he was riding, and 100 dollars. At the mention of counterfeiters, he checked the two \$50 bills he had received for the trade. The bills looked suspicious, so he joined the pursuit. Prewitt left the black horse behind in case the counterfeiters recognized it.

The next day, the party saw a cabin. Childress and Prewitt went to check it out. A woman and two children were there; the woman said her husband was in Huntsville and she did not know when he would return. Suspecting that she was lying, Prewitt looked in the stable. He saw the filly he had just traded, along with several other well fed, groomed horses. Not only had they found the counterfeiters, they knew the

woman's husband was not away, because according to Prewitt, "It takes *men* to look after stock this way."

Childress and Prewitt joined the rest of the party and told them what they had found. Some of the men stayed to watch the cabin while the rest went into the woods to look for the counterfeiters.

The men saw the unusual sight of smoke coming from a crack in a rock near the top of a bluff. They figured the only explanation was that it came from the counterfeiters' hideout in a cave and began looking for an entrance.

The little girl from the cabin appeared carrying a bucket. Childress asked her where she was going. She said, "To the spring." They watched each other suspiciously. When she thought he could no longer see her, the girl dashed behind a waterfall where Clear Creek ran over the bluff. Childress and some of the other men followed her. The creek ran over a rock ledge, allowing a dry space behind the waterfall, where they found a cave. It was dark, but suddenly they saw a light that quickly disappeared.

"What is it Lizzie?" a man's voice said from the direction the light had flashed. "There's a gang of men here..." said the little girl. Feeling around, Childress and the others discovered a door made from planks and rawhide closing off the chamber the voices came from. After Lizzie came out, a man's hand reached out to shut the door behind her. Childress grabbed the man's arm and throat, pushed him to the ground and yelled for the others to follow him into the cave. Upon seeing four rifles aimed at them, the boss of the counterfeiters, a tall man named John Davis, said, "Don't shoot, men; the jig's up." The three counterfeiters were led away without resistance.

In the cave were counterfeit bills and coins, dyes for making coins, and engraving tools for making bills. The counterfeiters had even taken the time to build a fireplace with a chimney, which gave them away in the end.

John Davis and another counterfeiter named Randall were sentenced to death, but Randall was reprieved because he provided information that helped convict Davis. Randall did not know this until he was standing at the gallows. The crowd that had gathered to watch him hang was disappointed that they would not see him executed. Randall sang, danced, and whooped, making him all the more unpopular with the crowd. When Randall was released from jail a month later, a mob took him into the woods, whipped him and told him to leave town and never return. Davis was hanged, but because of his more dignified behavior, the public had sympathy and even admiration for him.

If you want to see the counterfeiters' cave you'll have to hold your breath a long time. The cave and Clear Creek Falls are now under Lewis Smith Lake, created when the Lewis Smith Dam was built in 1961.¹⁶

Wyandotte Cave near Leavenworth, Indiana, was also supposedly a counterfeit operation's headquarters. According to Wyandotte guide lore, when the cave was being developed for tourism around 1850, three men asked cave owner Henry Rothrock for a job. Rothrock put them to work digging a trench in a low part of the cave to prepare it for tourists. The men worked at night, which Rothrock found odd, but he did not think much of it, since the cave is dark day and night.

The work was taking a long time, so one night Rothrock went to the cave to see what the delay was. He heard the men, but they did not sound like they were digging. Rothrock approached unnoticed and saw they were printing counterfeit money. Rothrock snuck out of the cave, got the sheriff and returned to the cave entrance to wait for the counterfeiters. Two of counterfeiters came out of the cave carrying a trunk of bills, so they were easily captured. The third man saw the sheriff and dashed back into the cave. The sheriff and his men searched the cave, but could not find him. Wyandotte Cave has only one entrance, so lawmen were posted there to catch the outlaw when he came out. But he never did, and his body was never found. If the counterfeiter knew of another entrance to Wyandotte, no one else has found it. Some believe he died in the cave and his ghost haunts Wyandotte today. Some cave guides and tourists claim to have seen the counterfeiter's ghost in a cave room called Rothrock's Grand Cathedral.¹⁷

Legends of counterfeiter/pirate John Swift have led many people to what is now Carter Caves State Park in Carter County, Kentucky, to search the caves and hills in vain for Swift's lost stash of silver. One version of the tale states that during the Civil War, Swift brought silver bullion he had acquired as a pirate to one of the caves in the area. Not wanting to reveal his true source (pillaging and plundering), Swift told people that he mined the silver. Some say counterfeiting tools have been found in the area. Swift's journal has supposedly been found several times by treasure seekers hoping it would lead them to the lost silver. Maybe the journal has been found so many times because frustrated treasure hunters keep throwing it away.

Cave-In-Rock State Park, near the town of Cave-In-Rock, Illinois, has a large, but short cave called Cave-In-Rock. The cave, on the bank of the Ohio River, is a popular attraction for sightseers. But in the late 1700s and early 1800s, Cave-In-Rock attracted a rougher element.

Samuel Mason is often credited for making Cave-In-Rock an abode for bad guys in 1797. To lure Ohio River boatmen traveling with flatboats loaded with goods to his cave, Mason, under the alias Wilson, put up a sign reading "Wilson's Liquor Vault and House for Entertainment." Thirsty, fun-starved boatmen were happy to stop. He robbed some of his "guests;" others he supposedly recruited to join him in river piracy. According to some stories, the cave was legitimately set up to serve guests and that is how it got the name Cave-In-Rock (Cave Inn Rock).¹⁸

The cave became so associated with river pirates, drunks, gamblers, counterfeiters, and other ne'er-dowells, that they stuck around after Mason left. Possibly the most famous Cave-In-Rock hoodlums were the Harpe brothers, Micaja (known as Big Harpe) and Wiley (Little Harpe), born around 1768 and 1770. The Harpes were so bad that even bad guys did not like them. Story has it the Harpes were at Cave-In-Rock with other ruffians when some boatmen stopped near the cave to repair their flatboat. A young man and woman from the boat hiked up the cliff by the river while the repair was being done. As they set romantically gazing down at the water, the Harpes snuck up and pushed them off the cliff. The couple landed on the soft sand below, amazingly unhurt. The Harpes thought this was all in good fun, but the other outlaws were not amused.

Another flatboat soon landed on the bank near the cave. The outlaws robbed and killed some of the passengers. In a second attempt to impress other outlaws, the Harpes took one of the survivors, stripped him, tied him to a blindfolded horse, led the horse to the top of the cliff, and chased it over the edge, killing the man and horse. The other hoodlums thought this was a bit too much, so the Harpes were ostracized from Cave-In-Rock.

The Harpes crossed the river into Kentucky to continue their criminal careers. They eluded the law for a while, but a party of men determined to capture them caught up with the Harpes in Muhlenberg County. One of the pursuers shot and wounded Big Harpe on his horse. Big Harpe rode away, but the posse caught up with him. Too weak to fight, he was captured. His captors shot him in the side and cut off his head. As a warning to other robbers, Big Harpe's head was placed either in the fork of a tree, on a sharp limb, or a pole, depending on which version you want to go with. The place became known as Harpe's Head and the near-by road is called Harpe's Head Road.¹⁹ Little Harpe got away, but did not cause as much trouble without his brother.

Bad guys in the far west supposedly took advantage of caves, too. Colossal Cave near Tucson, Arizona, has

what the tour guides call their “Bandit Legend.” Four robbers held up a mail train near Pantano, Arizona, in 1884. The train was carrying more than mail; the robbers took \$72,000 in gold and paper money. They headed into the Rincon Mountains and holed up in Five Mile Cave (now called Colossal Cave). Sheriff Bob Leatherwood tracked the outlaws to the cave and went in to arrest them. The robbers saw him and the bullets flew. Sheriff Leatherwood decided to wait for the robbers at the cave entrance. Two weeks later the sheriff was still waiting. A deputy came to tell him the outlaws had escaped through another entrance. Four men were seen 70 miles away in Wilcox having a high time at the Corner Saloon spending gold and laughing about how they had left the sheriff sitting by a cave in the desert.

Lawmen rode into Wilcox and found the robbers still at the saloon. A shootout began and three of the robbers were killed—after two weeks in a saloon, one’s aim is not so good. The surviving robber, Phil Carver, was arrested and spent eighteen years in the federal prison in Yuma.

Five Mile Cave was searched. The robbers’ secret get-away entrance, campfire site, some clothes, and food were found, but no money.

When Carver got out of prison he returned to Tucson, where Leatherwood was still sheriff. Leatherwood kept close watch on Carver, waiting for him to slip up. Carver returned to his old hideout at the cave. The sheriff followed Carver, but the robber foiled him again. When lawmen searched the cave, all they found were empty mailbags that had been used to carry money from the hold-up eighteen years earlier.

In the 1880s Arizona newspapers reported train robberies and that caves were suspected as hideouts for the robbers.²⁰ How close this legend is to the robbers’ real activities is hard to say.

Outlaws cannot afford to be choosy about their accommodations, so it is possible a few outlaws have ducked into caves throughout history. But some advice to robbers: caves do not tend to make good hideouts when running from the law. Unless the cave has a second entrance that you can escape through that the police do not know about, you are trapped.

A Treasure Hunt

Victorio Peak, at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, is a supposed treasure cave that has attracted attention from gold seekers, story tellers, and the media since 1937.

Doc Milton Noss, the man who claimed to find the treasure, was not an outlaw, but he was not a role model for honesty, either. He falsely claimed to be a doctor, hence the nickname. Story has it, Doc Noss went into a cave on Victorio Peak to escape the rain. He moved a large rock, revealing a shaft. Moving boulders solo in the dark is not easy, but his work paid off. He found a huge cavern full of Spanish documents, coins, jewels, religious artifacts, Wells Fargo chests, thousands of gold bars, and between 27 and 79 skeletons tethered to the floor (maybe Doc Noss could not count).

Noss and his wife, Ova, spent the next two years hauling out the treasure and hiding it in various places. In spite of all her work, Ova never got to see where in the cave the treasure was located or where on the surface it was hidden.

Noss hired an engineer to widen the passage leading to the treasure, but instead of widening the gap, he accidentally blasted it shut. This complicated things. Noss got financial backers and laborers to provide money and muscle to try to dig into the cave.

After several years of getting nowhere, Noss talked Charley Ryan into financing the mining operation. In 1949, Ryan realized there was nothing to mine. He wanted out of the mining deal, out of New Mexico, and Noss arrested for fraud. Noss was not pleased when Ryan told him this. Noss struck Ryan and threatened to kill him. Ryan shot him dead. Tried for murder, Ryan was found not guilty, based on self defense.

The hope to retrieve the sealed treasure in Victorio Peak did not die with Doc Noss. Ova Noss, relatives, and other treasure seekers kept on looking and digging.²¹

A prospector named Harry Snow thought treasure hunters had the wrong peak. He claimed a cowboy told him he had seen Noss go into a cave on nearby Hardscrabble Peak and come out later with mules packing a load. The cowboy went to the cave and saw a long stairway leading down, but he did not go far into the cave, fearing Noss would kill him if he were caught.

In 1968, Snow claimed he found the cave and went down about 1300 stairs. The last step was booby trapped! The step was round, so it would roll out from under foot, pulling a strip of rawhide attached to a bow and arrow. The rawhide was rotten, so Snow escaped death.

He claimed he spent two days and two nights in the cave, traveled 14 miles, and found piles of gold, copper and silver, some of which he took out. He said he made an exciting discovery, but would not say what.²² (A

booby-trapped cave with gold and silver is not exciting enough?)

Just for fun, suppose there are gold bricks, jewels, skeletons and other assorted goodies in a sealed cave in Victorio Peak. There are a variety of stories explaining how the treasure got there.

One story tells of a dying Spanish soldier who in 1800 confided to a priest named La Rue that he knew of a rich vein of gold north of El Paso, Texas. La Rue and the Native Americans from his mission left to search for the gold, found it, and mined it for several years.

Eventually, Father La Rue was missed, and Spanish soldiers went to find him. The soldiers somehow knew about the treasure. La Rue and his companions hid the gold and the mine, but the Spaniards killed them in their attempt to find it. The treasure was so well hidden, they never found it.

Some treasure hunters believe Noss's treasure cave is La Rue's mine or where the priest hid the gold. Believers in Noss's story often say the cave contains 100 tons of gold bars. An assay by Expeditions Unlimited showed the sandstone in Victorio Peak has one tenth of an ounce of gold per ton of rock. At that concentration, miners would have to mine three million, two hundred thousand tons of rock to get that much gold. La Rue and his men must have had some heavy duty mining equipment and been really good at hiding huge mounds of mine tailings.

Another explanation for the Victorio Peak treasure claims Emperor Maximilian of Mexico planned to take his riches and run from Mexico. Maximilian didn't make it out of Mexico, but his porters and mules hauling the treasure made it to Victorio Peak. The porters hid the treasure in the cave and died there with it. Another version claims that the gold was part of a German plan to try to keep the United States out of World War I. The German government sent the gold to Mexican Revolutionary General Pancho Villa to finance his attacks on the U.S. and draw the U.S. into a war with Mexico, keeping America too busy to bother fighting the Germans. The gold was stolen and hidden in the cave before it reached Pancho Villa. Others say the cave was a storage place for Apache raiders' loot, hence the Wells Fargo crates.²³

The last hunt for the treasure cave at Victorio Peak was a four year search beginning in 1990. After drilling bore holes, using metal detectors, making computer enhancements, digging hundreds of feet into the peak, and consulting everyone who claimed to know about the treasure, the party not only failed to find the gold, they could not find a cave.²⁴

Treasure or no treasure, the land belongs to the United States Army; the White Sands Missile Range is there. Even though Ova Noss and others have had special permits to search (in vain) in the past, treasure hunting at Victorio Peak is over.

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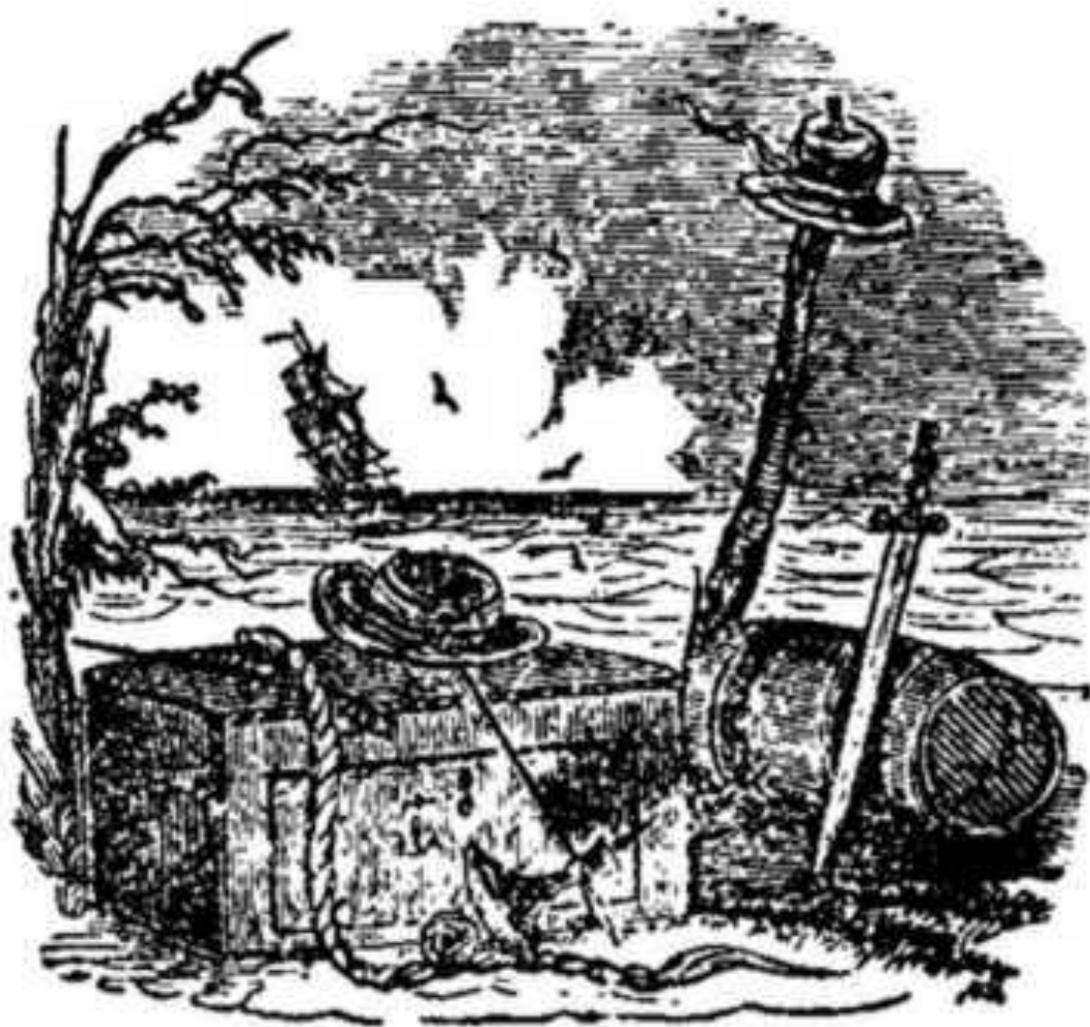


Illustration from *The Pirates Own Book*, by Charles Ellms, 1837.

NINETEENTH CENTURY ACCOUNTS OF PIRATE AND TREASURE CAVES ALONG THE NORTHEASTERN COAST OF THE UNITED STATES

Donald B. Ball

In the process of researching other spelean related topics, a small number of nineteenth century references were noted which concerned reports of various caves associated with tales of pirate plunder or other treasure. Akin to the lure of a holding a winning lottery ticket, such ageless tales are forever fresh in their appeal to a sense of both adventure and “get rich quick” wealth. Though emphatically *not* endorsing the pursuit of such trove as the singular means of establishing a retirement fund, it is recognized that such early accounts are informative additions to our knowledge of spelean folklore in the northeastern Atlantic states.

It would be remiss not to begin with the infamous pirate Captain Kidd (or Kid). As briefly recorded in the pages of *Miller's New York As It Is* (Anonymous 1866: 114):

The vicinity of Brooklyn possesses many points of interest; we can but name some of them.... Near Guildford, on a rocky peninsula, is the cave of the notorious pirate, Capt. Kidd; it is marked with his initials.

The venerable Captain Kidd was further discussed by John Fanning Watson in his *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania* (Watson 1870: II, 213):

A writer at Albany, in modern times, says they had the tradition that [Captain] Kid [the pirate] once visited Coeymans and Albany; and at a place two miles from the latter, it was said he deposited money and treasure in the earth. Two families, now of wealth and respectability, of New York, have been named to me as original settlers at Oyster Bay on Long Island, who became suddenly rich by their connexion with Kid's piracies. The story was, that they deserted from his sloop above mentioned, in the sound, after seeing the treasure deposited, and when the chief was arrested,

and the expedition destroyed, they profited by the exclusive gain.

Many incidental facts of that day show that the pirates often had their friends and accomplices on shore, acting not unlike the armed vessels off our coasts in the time of the French revolution, all of whom seemed to have accurate knowledge of fit prizes to sail, or expected to arrive. The very circumstance of Kid's having a family in New York inferred his family alliances, and perhaps, if we now knew all things, we might see, even now, some of his wealthy descendants.

Tradition, about and along Long Island sound, says, that the Sachem's head, and the Thimble islands, were the rendezvous of Capt. Kid—one of these rocky islands in the sound is called “Kid's island.” He deposited on Gardiner's island the same treasure which was given up to Gov. Bellermont, and of which there is a schedule in the hands of the Gardiner family at this day. It is said that a pot of \$1800 was ploughed up two or three years ago in a corn field, at Martha's Vineyard, which is supposed to have been Kid's money. Kid has been sometimes called William Kid, and has been so named in that schedule. *At Kid's island is a cave*, where it is said the pirates used to hide and sleep—inside of it is cut the letters R. K., supposed to stand for Robert Kid—a hole in the rocky floor, chiselled out, is called their punch bowl for carousal. Another little island is called “Money island,” and has been much dug for its treasure.

Further details on the life of Kidd appear in *Historical Collections of the State of New York* (Barber 1851: 336):

Gardiner's Island [off the coast of Long Island] contains about 3,300 acres, with a soil mostly of a good quality; the nearest point of distance to Long Island is three miles. Lyon Gardiner, the first settler on the island, was a native of Scotland. He belonged to the republican party, with the illustrious Hampden, Cromwell, and others.

The notorious pirate William Kidd visited this island, and buried a valuable treasure. From this circumstance, doubtless, have arisen the numerous legends respecting

the burial of "Kidd's money," in many places along the coast.

"Kidd, on his homeward passage from the West Indies to Boston, where he was finally apprehended, anchored in Gardiner's bay, and in the presence of the owner of the island, Mr. Gardiner, and under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy, buried a pot of gold, silver, and precious stones. On the 3d of July, 1699, he was summoned before Lord Bellamont, at Boston, and ordered to report his proceedings while in the service of the company; which refusing to do, he was immediately arrested, and transported to England, where he was tried, convicted, and executed at 'Execution Dock' on the 12th of May, 1701. He was found guilty of the murder of William Moore, gunner of the ship, and was hung in chains. Mr. John G. Gardiner has a small piece of gold cloth, which his father received from Mrs. Wetmore, who gave also the following account of Kidd's visit to the island. 'I remember,' she says, 'when very young, hearing my mother say that her grandmother was the wife to Lord Gardiner when the pirate came to that island. He wanted Mrs. Gardiner to roast him a pig; she being afraid to refuse him, roasted it very nice, and he was much pleased with it. He then made her a present of this cloth, which she gave to her two daughters; what became of the other I know not; but this was handed down to me, and is, I believe, as nice as when first given, which must be upwards of a hundred years.' It having been ascertained that he had buried treasures upon this island, commissioners were sent by Governor Bellamont, who obtained the same, and for which they gave a receipt."

Not even the property of a church was sacred to the thieves of a bygone era. As recorded in *Burt's Illustrated Guide of the Connecticut Valley* (Burt 1867: 196):

MAGOON'S POINT. On the east side of the lake you soon pass Magoon's Point, the grassy slope of which reaches down to the water. Excellent lime is burnt here, said to be the best in the country. An unexplored cavern exists in this locality, and it has been believed that a large amount of treasure stolen from a Roman Catholic Cathedral was secreted there. Indeed, there are persons who claim to have seen two massive gold candlesticks which were found buried in the road near the cave.

In reviewing the annals of Lynn, Massachusetts, for 1658, Lewis and Newhall (1865: 249-250) briefly remarked:

A few words should be added regarding the Pirates' Glen. This remarkable locality, though exactly the opposite of the Dungeon Rock in some of its principal features, being a deep ravine instead of a commanding elevation, still possesses rare attractions, notwithstanding its fame has become so eclipsed.

...On a recent visit I took particular notice of the old well from which the pirates are supposed to have drawn their supplies. It was certainly excavated by human hands and if the fact were once established, that pirates dwelt there, it might be fair to refer the work to them. But the reasoning which claims the existence of the well as proof of the residence of the pirates, is no more conclusive than that which claims the fact that the Dungeon Rock was riven by an earthquake and a portion projected [pg. 250] forward, as proof that a cave was thereby closed up and a pirate entombed alive, with his treasure...

With a touch of irony seldom found in such accounts, a brief notice (Anonymous 1847) entitled "Discovery of a New Cave" in the July 31, 1847, issue of *Scientific American* reported that:

A few weeks since, while some laborers were working in the lime quarry of Mr. Samuel Anan, of Fishkill, Dutchess county [New York], they discovered a crevice which was soon widened and an entrance effected: whereupon quite a large cave (about 50 feet in length,) exhibiting marks of former occupancy, was disclosed to their astonished eyes. Boards lying upon the bottom of the cave, and supporters to the roof, were found in a somewhat decayed state, showing evidently that they, as well as the cave, are of considerable antiquity. Pieces of rock also are said to have been taken out of the cave, exhibiting a strong resemblance to silver or lead; and its appearance warrants the belief that it was at one time, long since, occupied by human beings in some pursuit unknown.

There is a spring of water in it five or six feet deep, which is evidence that the cave is natural; and it is a singular fact, that just at the mouth of this cave is a stately elm tree, the only one in the neighborhood, suggesting the idea that it was planted there by the former discoverers, as a landmark to guide them to their treasure.

A closing account once again brings the reader full circle to the almost intoxicating lure of pirate and caves. As recorded in a notice entitled "The Latest Pirate Treasure

Delusion” (Anonymous 1868) published in the January 25, 1868, issue of *Scientific American*:

A correspondent of the *Hartford Times*, writing from Hazardville, Conn., Jan. 1st, says that great excitement exists among the Spiritualists in Scitico and Hazardville. One of the greatest spirit developments of the age, they believe, is about to occur, revealing to mortal man the hidden wealth and treasure which for three centuries has quietly rested in the earth, on the premises of Mr. Thomas Barrett, in the village of Scitico. The circumstances are as follows: A. D. Putnam, a lineal descendant of the revolutionary hero, who says he has recently been sent here from the State of California, through the influence of the spirit of Benjamin Franklin, has vigorously set to work three sets of men, night and day, paying at the rate of \$3 per day, in digging a subterranean passage, which he claims to lead to a cave under a large hill, which hill is close to the bank of the Scantic river, a little west of the Scitico stockinet factory, where the spirit of Benjamin Franklin assures him he will find valuables in the shape of diamonds and bars of gold to the amount of five millions of dollars,(!) which was deposited by Spanish pirates three centuries ago, who, after being hotly pursued, burned their ships at or near the mouth of the Connecticut river, taking their small boats and coming up the Connecticut, being closely followed. They took the Scantic as far as Scitico Falls, calculating on taking an overland route to Massachusetts Bay, but being attacked by the Indians, and two of their number being killed, they deposited their booty in what was called a natural cave at that time, covering the mouth of the cave with stones. Mr. Putnam says he shall enter the cave, if filled with wolves, angels, or devils; and if he is as successful in dragging from this subterranean vault the five millions as his great-grandfather was in unearthing a she-wolf, clairvoyant mediums will be above par in this place. There are a large number of persons visiting the spot daily, from far and near. Strangers, and those coming from a distance, will be furnished with a guide by calling at the shoe store of Mr. Thomas Barrett, the owner of the land. The disposition to be made of the gold is as follows: Mr. Barrett, the owner of the land, has one fifth; the Governor of the State, one fifth, to be used for educational purposes; a gentleman in Boston, one fifth, to be used for the Catholic Society, as the Spaniards

were Catholics; one fifth to the Spiritualists, and one fifth to Mr. Putnam.

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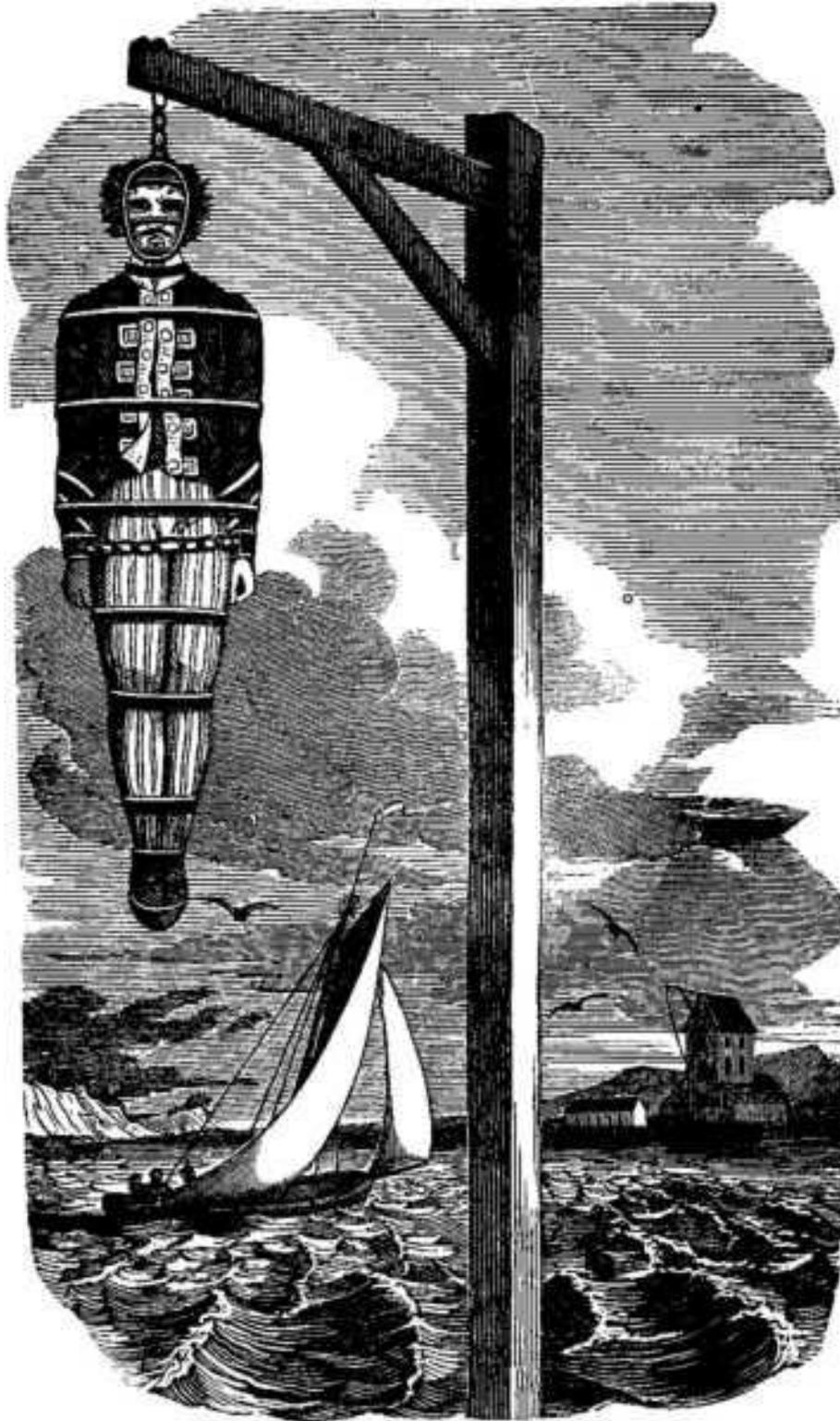
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“Captain Kidd hanging in chains,” from *The Pirates Own Book*, by Charles Ellms, 1837.

Letter to the Editor Regarding the Passenger Pigeon

I read with great interest "Daniel Coxe's Avian Saltpeter" contributed by Greg Brick, which appeared on page 30 of *The Journal of Speleological History* Volume 43, No. 1, Issue 135, January - June 2009. This thought provoking article triggered memories concerning some of my caving experiences about the now, as of one P.M. on September 1, 1914, extinct passenger pigeon. September 1, 1914 being the date of the death of "Martha". (More on Martha later.)

During the excavations into the Pleistocene deposits of the Kingston Saltpeter Cave, (GBT 11) [see Note No. 1] Bartow County, Georgia, fossil remains of the passenger pigeon were unearthed. These 13,000 years old specimens were studied and identified by David W. Steadman of the Florida Museum of Natural History.

Fossil remains of *Ectopistes migratorius*, the passenger pigeon were located in the main dig also known as the "Door To The Pleistocene" of this cave during the intensive paleontological phase of the study during the early 1980's. There were 35 identified specimens recovered. These recovered fossil elements were hand carried to the Louisville Museum of History and Science in Kentucky. Here as Ronald C. Wilson, professor at the University of Louisville, Belknap Campus preformed the initial sort of the specimens I was allowed to study the actual taxidermic remains of several individual passenger pigeons. [see Photo No. 1] How exciting it was to hold examples of fossils of this extinct animal in one hand and in the other a fine example of the preserved creature.

Fossil elements were also recovered in the nearby deposits of Ladd's Lime Caves, (GBT 10 and 384-389) also of Bartow County, Georgia. (A. Wetmore, 1967)

I have encountered roosts of the modern domestic pigeon or Rock Dove, *Columba livia* on ledges during cave trips while reppelling into the pit entrance of at least one of the now disconnected segments of this network of caves. Disconnected now due to past quarrying activities. Eggs were seen simply lying in the open on ledges high above the floor with only a twig or two or small stone holding the egg or eggs in place on its' precarious perch! Curiously unfledged squabs or even young juveniles would seemingly be doomed if leaving the nest site before learning to fly or being fully developed.

This evidence of the passenger pigeon and modern domestic pigeons in cave circumstances and in light of the afore mentioned article brought to light by Greg Brick leads me to wonder about the contribution passenger pigeons made to the rich deposits of saltpeter to the Kingston Saltpeter Cave in ancient times. Of course predators could have accounted for these recovered remains,

Surely the massive flights of these birds through out this area of Georgia could account for the formation of some saltpeter at this location. I live very close to Pigeon Hill, a shoulder of the famous Kennesaw Mountain, a segment of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park here in Marietta. Flights of sky blackening proportions have been related in this area in the past. The birds demise was attributed to the need for feathers for women's hats...only to satisfy fashion!

Now for a little bit about Martha! Martha, destined to be the last of her kind, was captured sometime during the 1890s. She may have been the offspring of a pair of captured pigeons in Wisconsin. She was brought to the Cincinnati Zoo. She was obtained from Professor C.O. Whitman of the University of Chicago who claimed that all of his birds originated from Wisconsin. Whitman claimed that he had sent a female to the zoo in 1902 to be with two old male birds. Her true age was never known but was thought to be between 14 and 29 years old! However, reputable line of thought placed her at about 12 years of age.

There had been a standing offer of \$1,000 for a mate for Martha for the last fifteen years of her life. But alas. it was not to be for Martha was the last of her kind. Her prone body was discovered on the floor of her cage at one P.M. on September 1, 1914 some fifteen years after the last of the great Wisconsin flocks passed into history. Martha was frozen into a three hundred pound block of ice and shipped to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. for examination and safe keeping.

With World War I in full tilt in Europe the grim and tragic news of the passing of an entire specie at the hand of man was related on page 3 of The Cincinnati Enquirer instead of what would otherwise have surely been front-page news.

It is sadly ironic that this great bird, once known as the "blue meteor", who ordinarily flew at sixty miles an hour but could reach one hundred miles per hour is represented by a lifeless taxidermal Martha. Proud to the end...how sad. What a gross statement for "modern" man to write their history with!

Note No. 1... These identification numbers are from the "Data Listing" of April 18, 2009 of the Georgia Speleological Survey.

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Larry O. Blair

Larry Blair studying a specimen of the extinct passenger pigeon, Louisville Museum of History and Science, Louisville, Kentucky, 1982.



Select List of Historical Papers

from the 15th International Congress of Speleology, Kerrville, Texas, 2009

(Owing to space limitations, the abstracts are not reprinted here; get them on-line at: <http://purl.fcla.edu/usf/dc/k26.77>.)

The presence of Floyd Collins in the Mammoth Cave (KY) area today. John M. Benton

The myth of the American Cave Man. Greg Brick

Speleophilately: Some odd cave stamps. Jacques Chaber

38 years of publication of the Speleological Abstracts. Patrick Deriaz, Reno Bernasconi

African Americans and the use of caves as hidden spaces in the antebellum and Civil War South. Joseph C. Douglas

Evolution of speleology in Costa Rica. Carlos Goicoichea, Gustavo Quesada, Andres Ulloa

Over 130 years of study and research of Schellenberger Ice Cave and the ice caves at Untersberg (Berchtesgadener Limestone Alps, Germany). C. Grebe, J. Ringeis, A. Pflitsch

Josef Anton Nagel and his 1748 manuscript about his cave expedition to Carniola (Slovenia) and Moravia (Czech Republic). Stephan Kempe, Klaus Suckstorff

Early cave visits by women and the travel accounts of Lady Elisabeth Craven to the Grotto of Antiparos (1786) and Johanna Schopenhauer to Peaks Cavern (1803). Stephan Kempe, Christhild Ketz-Kempe, Erika Kempe

Visitor inscriptions in the old passage of Postojnska Jama (Adelsberger Grotte)/Slovenia. Stephan Kempe, Hans-Peter Hubrich

The oldest printed cave maps in the world. Massimo Mancini, Paolo Forti

Cave conservation through the arts: Carlsbad Caverns National Park's art gallery. Lois Manno

Human use of caves in Martinique and Guadeloupe Islands, West Indies. Claude Mouret

The map of ancient underground aqueducts: A nationwide project by the Italian Speleological Society. Mario Parise, Roberto Bixio, Ezio Burri, Vittoria Caloi, Sossio Del Prete, Carla Galeazzi, Carlo Germani, Paolo Guglia, Marco Meneghini, Mariangela Sammarco

Venezuela's Chaima indigenous community and its relation to national speleological practice. María Alejandra Pérez

Arch Spring and cave. Jack H. Speece

Spelean history revealed when naming features for a cave survey. Jenny L. Whitby, Kath A. Bellamy, Julia M. James

The National Speleological Society Museum: History, progress, and future directions. Amber J. Yuellig, Craig Hindman

CAVE CLIPPINGS

A MARYLAND CAVE John Friend's Old Hiding Place—The Cavern to Be Explored [Oakland Correspondence of the *Baltimore Sun*.]

A few days ago while looking over the descriptions of a number of military lots located in Garrett County the writer noticed that military lot No. 1470 was designated as beginning at "John Friend's Saltpetre Cave and Powder House." Senator R. T. Browning, who had been the owner of a military lot beginning at the same point, was asked if he knew anything about the cave. He said he knew the spot well, as it was only a short distance from the residence of his grandfather, the late Meshack Browning, the noted hunter. When asked if there was really a cave at the point mentioned, he said: "There is a very large cave there, which I have been in, and I will describe it for you the best I can." The cave was called John Friend's Cave because it was discovered by John Friend, who settled at what is now Sang Run in 1765. He was the grandfather of D. Harrison Friend, ex-Judge of the Orphans' Court for Garrett County, who is now quite an old man. His descendents constitute the most numerous family in the county. Tradition says this cave was used by John Friend as a hiding place from the Indians, of whom there were quite a number in this section at that early period.

The mouth of the cave is a circular opening in the rock about 10 feet in diameter and very much resembles an ordinary well. In late years a fence has been kept around the opening to prevent stock from tumbling into it. To enter the cave a ladder is used, by which a nearly perpendicular descent is made for a distance of about 30 feet. The diameter of the

shaft or opening increases as the descent is made. From the bottom of the shaft there is a passage or hallway running in a westerly direction. This passage is through solid rock, and is about 10 feet wide and 18 or 20 feet high. Passing along this rocky passage, which neither materially increases nor lessens in dimension for a distance of 200 yards, a large circular room or cavern is reached. This room is about 50 feet in diameter and about 40 feet high. From the lofty ceiling of this chamber descend hundreds of stalactites, which have the appearance of magnificent chandeliers. All around on the rocky walls are names, dates, initials and hieroglyphics, which have been cut in the solid rock, some of them more than a century ago. There is also a passageway leading away from this room which runs in a westerly direction. A short distance beyond the chamber there is a large deep pool of fresh water. Senator Browning states that he has explored the cave for a half mile beyond the chamber, and that he has no idea of its extent or dimensions beyond that point. Singular as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that very little is known of the cave among the people here except the older persons in the immediate neighborhood. In fact, it seems to have been better known a half century ago than it is now. It is located near the village of Sang Run, about sixteen miles from Oakland. As soon as weather and roads improve sufficiently for the purpose, an exploring party from Oakland will visit this interesting spot and inspect it throughout its length and breadth.

From the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, June 13, 1887, p. 2. Contributed by Joe Douglas.

REPRINTS

ACCOUNT OF THE LYNN PIRATES

And Thomas Veal, who was buried in his cave by the Great Earthquake.

In the year 1658 there was a great earthquake in New-England. Some time previous, on one pleasant evening, a little after sunset, a small vessel was seen to anchor near the mouth of Saugus river. A boat was presently lowered from her side, into which four men descended, and moved up the river a considerable distance, when they landed, and proceeded directly into the woods. They had been noticed by only a few individuals; but in those early times, when the people were surrounded by danger, and easily susceptible of alarm, such an incident was well calculated to awaken suspicion, and in the course of the evening the intelligence was conveyed to many houses. In the morning, the people naturally directed their eyes toward the shore, in search of the strange vessel—but she was gone, and no trace could be found either of her or her singular crew. It was afterwards ascertained that, on the morning one of the men at the Iron Works, on going into the foundry, discovered a paper, on which was written, that if a quantity of shackles, handcuffs, hatchets, and other articles of iron manufacture, were made and deposited, with secrecy, in a certain place in the woods, which was particularly designated, an amount of silver, to their full value, would be found in their place. The articles were made in a few days, and placed in conformity with the directions. On the next morning they were gone, and the money was found according to the promise; but though a watch had been kept, no vessel was seen. Some months afterwards, the four men returned, and selected one of the most secluded and romantic spots in the woods of Saugus, for their abode. The place of their retreat was a deep narrow valley, shut in on two sides by craggy, precipitous rocks, and shrouded on the others by thick pines, hemlocks and cedars, between which there was only one small spot, to which the rays of the sun at noon could penetrate. On climbing up the rude and almost perpendicular steps of the rock on either side, the eye could command a full view of the bay on the south, and a prospect of a considerable portion of the surrounding country. The place of their retreat has ever since been called the Pirates' Glen, and they could not have selected a spot on the coast for many miles, more favorable for the purposes both of concealment and observation. Even at this day, when the neighborhood has become thickly peopled, it is still a lonely and desolate place, and probably not one in a hundred of the inhabitants has ever descended into its silent and gloomy recess. There the pirates built a small hut, made a garden, and dug a well, the appearance of which is still visible. It has been supposed that they buried money; but though people have dug there, and in many other places, none has ever been found. After residing there some

time, their retreat became known, and one of the king's cruizers appeared on the coast. They were traced to their glen, and three of them were taken, and carried to England, where it is probable they were executed. The other, whose name was Thomas Veal, escaped to a rock in the woods, about two miles to the north, in which was a spacious cavern, where the pirates had previously deposited some of their plunder. There the fugitive fixed his residence, and practised the trade of a shoemaker, occasionally coming down to the village to obtain articles of sustenance. He continued his residence till the great earthquake in 1658, when the top of the rock was loosened, and crushed down into the mouth of the cavern, enclosing the unfortunate inmate in its unyielding prison. It has ever since been called the Pirate's Dungeon. A part of the cavern is still open, and is much visited by the curious.

This rock is situated on a lofty range of thickly wooded hills, and commands an extensive view of the ocean, for fifty miles both north and south. A view from the top of it, at once convinces the beholder that it would be impossible to select a place more convenient for the haunt of a gang of pirates; as all vessels bound in and out of the harbors of Boston, Salem, and the adjacent ports, can be distinctly seen from its summit. Saugus river meanders among the hills a short distance to the south, and its numerous creeks which extend among thick bushes, would afford good places to secrete boats, until such time as the pirates descried a sail, when they could instantly row down the river, attack and plunder them, and with their booty return to the cavern. This was evidently their mode of procedure. On an open space in front of the rock are still to be seen distinct traces of a small garden spot, and in the corner is a small well, full of stones and rubbish; the foundation of the wall round the garden remains, and shows that the spot was of a triangular shape, and was well selected for the cultivation of potatoes and common vegetables. The aperture in the rock is only about five feet in height, and extends only fifteen feet into the rock. The needle is strongly attracted around this, either by the presence of magnetic iron ore or some metallic substance buried in the interior.

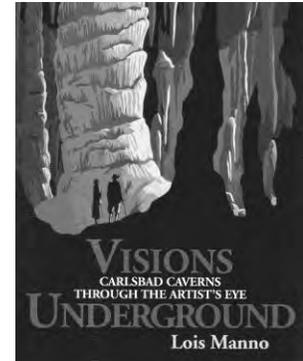
The Pirates' Glen, which is some distance from this, is one of Nature's wildest and most picturesque spots, and the cellar of the pirate's hut remains to the present time, as does a clear space, which was evidently cultivated at some remote period.

From *The Pirates Own Book*, by Charles Ellms, 1837. (See cover of this issue.)

BOOK REVIEWS

***VISIONS UNDERGROUND: Carlsbad Caverns through the Artist's Eye* (2009) by Lois Manno. Rio Grande Books. Los Ranchos, NM (in collaboration with the National Speleological Society). Paperback, 177 pages, 8" x 10" format, ISBN 978-1-890689-95-7. Available for \$19.99. Reviewed by Danny A. Brass.**

Drawing on her experience as a caver, an artist, a past director of the National Speleological Society's Fine Arts Salon, and director of the Carlsbad Caverns Art Exhibit/Cavern Arts Project, Lois Manno provides an interesting and informative historical overview of art and photography at Carlsbad Caverns. The breathtaking underground chambers of Carlsbad Caverns have long been an inspiration to artists and photographers; and artistic endeavors—from the first tentative stirrings of underground photography to more recent National Park Service Artist-In-Residence programs—are an integral part of the cave's colorful history. In drawing public attention to the grandeur of Carlsbad's vast underground labyrinth, the efforts of early artists helped to usher in a period of national awareness of subterranean worlds. Ultimately, this proved to be instrumental in helping to establish the cave and surrounding land as a National Monument in 1923 and a National Park in 1930. The park was declared a World Heritage Site in 1995.



Manno has compiled over 140 contemporary and historical images of Carlsbad Caverns and associated caves (e.g., Lechuguilla) for this beautifully illustrated book. In addition to a host of photographs taken deep within the cave, a rich array of spectacular illustrations—ranging in style from photo-realistic representations to abstract designs—captures the ethereal beauty of underground Carlsbad. Many of the early artists discussed in the book were hardly known outside of a select community. And yet, working in relative obscurity, they created some of the most endearing artistic masterpieces of Carlsbad Caverns that have ever been produced. Others, such as renowned photographer Ansel Adams, enjoyed international acclaim. However, all of them struggled to maintain their creative vision when faced with the foreboding and pervasive darkness of the cave. Portrayed in a variety of media, images of Carlsbad have steadily evolved over the past 100 years, shaped not only by advances in available technology but also as an adjustment to how these images were actually utilized. As Manno so clearly describes, however, what has remained largely unchanged over the intervening years is the creative inspiration that the cave continues to evoke in the eyes of artists and photographers.

In this singularly interesting account of speleohistory, Manno does an excellent job capturing the ever-changing flavor of underground art, particularly as it unfolded at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. In placing modern-day cave art into an historical context, she provides an interesting perspective on both caves and the creative spark that resides within the artist's mind.

In the book's final chapters, the work of more contemporary cave photographers and speleoartists is showcased. These featured artists are all well known within the caving community for their unparalleled skill and expertise in capturing the otherworldly magnificence not only of Carlsbad Caverns National Park, but of underground passages in cave systems worldwide. Many of these prominent artists and photographers have written books themselves, detailing aspects of their own particular creative genius.

While artists and photographers alike may find many wonderful ideas buried among these pages, it should be noted that this book is not an instructional guide to either cave photography or the creation of speleoart. Cave photographers will not find recommendations for underground lighting and exposure techniques. On the other hand, general-interest readers will not be bogged down by complicated discussions of F-stops, guide numbers, and megapixels. Furthermore, the book is not meant to be a comprehensive pictorial anthology of Carlsbad Caverns. Rather, it offers only an infinitesimal sample of the captivating world of cave art, past and present. Readers interested in instructional material on underground photography and speleoart or in the collected works of select artists are encouraged to consult some of the many references provided.

Visions Underground is a well-written and easily read book that will appeal to a wide audience. General readers as well as artists, photographers, and cave historians will all find something of interest here. In fleshing out this historical portrait of a century of creative expression at Carlsbad Caverns, Manno offers readers a rarely glimpsed vision of subterranean art and culture. In 2009, this text was awarded two prizes at the New Mexico Book Awards: Best Art Book and Best Book for 2009.

GRAND, GLOOMY & PECULIAR: Stephen Bishop at Mammoth Cave (2009) by Roger W. Brucker. Cave Books. Dayton, OH. Paperback/hardcover, 277 pages, 5½" x 8½" format, ISBN 978-0-939748-71-6/978-0-939748-72-3. Available for \$15.95/21.95. Reviewed by Danny A. Brass.



Roger Brucker is a well-known figure within the caving community. He has been an avid underground explorer, especially of the Mammoth Cave region, and is the co-author of several celebrated caving texts: *The Longest Cave*, *Trapped!*, *The Caves Beyond*, and *Beyond Mammoth Cave*. His latest book is a voyage into the world of historical biography. *Grand, Gloomy & Peculiar* is a biographical novel about the life and times of renowned caver Stephen Bishop, the young slave who rose above a life of servitude to become the most famous of the early underground tour guides and a legendary explorer of Mammoth Cave.

The tenure of Stephen Bishop was a colorful time in the history of Mammoth Cave, eclipsed only by the infamous Kentucky cave wars of the early 1900s, the spellbinding sixteen-day saga of Floyd Collins (1925) that transfixed the nation and altered the course of caving history, and the massive exploration efforts more than a century after Bishop's death that unequivocally established Mammoth Cave as the longest cave in the world. Prior to its designation as a national park in 1941,

ownership of the cave and the land surrounding it had changed hands from time to time, as did the priorities and vision of its caretakers. As his story of Stephen Bishop unfolds, Brucker examines the complex relationship between people and the cave—from exploration and tourism to potential health benefits for tubercular patients—which has continued to grow and evolve with the passage of time.

In this interesting and well-written account, readers will learn about Bishop through the eyes of his wife, Charlotte, who narrates the story. Brucker explores aspects of Bishop's life both above and belowground, mixing elements of everyday life as a slave in mid-nineteenth-century Kentucky with sojourns into the depths of Mammoth Cave. Being an invaluable asset to the successful operation of Mammoth Cave as a commercial enterprise, Bishop certainly enjoyed privileges as a slave not generally available to others, including the “freedom” to indulge his one true passion: exploring the vast subterranean wilderness of the Mammoth Cave system. Nevertheless, as Brucker points out, his life and daily activities remained largely under the control of taskmasters.

In breathing life into the characters of Stephen and Charlotte Bishop, Brucker succeeds in putting a human face on individuals barely known outside of the caving community—drawing them out from behind a veil of mystery and placing them in specific relief. As such, this book bridges a longstanding gap in the caving literature, providing a valuable link to what little is known about the man who was arguably the greatest caver of his time.

Weaving his tale around available accounts of Bishop's life, Brucker expresses himself in a clear and easily read style. He writes with authority on a well-researched subject and a cave system that he is intimately familiar with. His protagonists are described in the context of their hopes and dreams, triumphs and tragedies. Of necessity, of course, historical fact is mixed with credible fiction in order to flesh out the story. *Grand, Gloomy & Peculiar*—a phrase that Bishop himself used to describe various aspects of the cave—is a suitable selection for a wide range of individuals, from young readers to adults. This fact-based biographical saga is sure to stimulate an interest in Mammoth Cave and in Bishop's steadfast efforts to plumb its depths. It nicely complements Brucker's earlier texts, which offer detailed accounts of more recent exploration in this extraordinary cave system. This work will appeal to anyone with an interest in Mammoth Cave, including cavers and tourists alike, placing a century and a half of ongoing exploration in the world's longest cave system into historical perspective.

As Bruce Sloane wrote in his introduction to Harold Meloy's detailed account, *Stephen Bishop: The Man and the Legend* (see *Cavers Caves & Caving*, 1977, by Bruce Sloane, ed. Rutgers University Press), *The early guides to Mammoth Cave were slaves, and Stephen Bishop was one of them. His unusual talents made him so widely known that for a while he was almost as famous as the cave itself. The stories about him and his feats survive. With their telling and retelling, the legend of Stephen Bishop was born—and still survives to this day.* With the publication of *Grand, Gloomy & Peculiar*, Brucker extends the legend of Stephen Bishop into the new millennium.



“Industrious pirate! See him sweep.” Robert Louis Stevenson, 1881