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The American Spelean History Association is chartered as a non-profit corporation for the study, dissemination, and interpretation of spelean history and related purposes. All persons who are interested in those goals are cordially invited to become members. Annual membership is \$8. ASHA is the official history section of the National Speleological Society.

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FRONT COVER

A photograph of the Mammoth Cave Railroad Company locomotive, Hercules, in 1909.

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THE JOURNAL

The Association publishes the Journal of Spelean History on a quarterly basis. Pertinent articles or reprints are welcomed. Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced. Submissions of rough drafts for preliminary editing is encouraged. Illustrations require special handling and arrangements should be made with the editor in advance. Photos and illustrations will be returned upon request.

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BACK ISSUES

All copies of back issues of the Journal are presently available. Early issues are photocopied. Indexes are also available for volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. All issues of volumes 1-7:2 are available on microfiche from Kraus Reprint Company, Route 100, Millwood, New York, 10546.

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## WEYER'S CAVE DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Glenda H. Reid

Weyer's Cave, now known as Grand Caverns, is located in Grottoes, Virginia, in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley. As one walks through the cave today, one still succumbs to the power of its magical beauty and mystery, just as guests have described in journals and diaries since 1806. The cave walls contain the secrets of the past in the inscriptions of these early travelers.

Documentation of many of these signatures has resulted in the recovery of many lost chapters of the history of Grand Caverns. Each inscription represents a day in the past, a window through which one can see the lives and struggles of an earlier time. Some bring remembrances of that turbulent era that changed the course of American history-- the Civil War. The stories behind these names reveal the personalities of many who temporarily escaped the realities of the time by visiting Weyer's Cave.

After the battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic (June 8th and 9th, 1862), General Stonewall Jackson rested his army near the mouth of Weyer's Cave for five days, where he ordered a general clean-up. McHenry Howard, one of Jackson's staff officers, recounts that, "the men went to various homes to borrow candles so they could visit the cave where, they jokingly said, Jackson intended to take refuge if hard pressed."<sup>1</sup> The signatures of Eugene West of Ashby's Cavalry, Thomas H. Raines of the Virginia Volunteers, and C. B. Wise of the First Maryland Regiment, among numerous others, are reminders today of Jackson's visit at the end of his famous Valley Campaign.

About two years later, in May, 1864, Lieutenant William T. Boyd, Sergeant Roswell Byington, and Corporal Robert J. Mahar, members of the Fifth New York Cavalry, signed and dated the cavern wall. Elmer J. Barker, a member of their unit, recorded in his diary:

May 19th (1864) the regiment marched to Lexington and arrested Ex-governor Letcher and brought him to Staunton. Some of these duties were much harder to execute than fighting...

...General Duval invited several officers and men to visit Weyer's Cave with him. He took a band and wagon with rations both wet and dry. On reaching the cave, the old man who owned it demanded one dollar from each of us to guide us through the cave. General Duval told him the officers would give him what he asked, but the privates he thought did not have any money. The old man was very obstinate, so was the general. They were both Virginians. It finally ended in the General drawing his gun and pointing at the old man and ordering him to guide us through the cave, and telling him he would not get one cent for doing it either.

We had plenty of candles, and started, taking the band with us. It was most interesting. I had never seen anything like it. We came to one small place where we could not get the bass drum

through, so we had to leave it. One room they call the dancing hall. It was sixty feet long and forty feet wide, with a level floor, the roof being about 100 feet high. Beautiful stalactites were everywhere about us, in some cases reaching from top to bottom of the chamber, and others hanging part way down, or reaching from the bottom upward a ways. Our lights shining on the crystal surfaces made a very pretty effect. The band struck up and we all danced to the music. The men threw off their rubber coats and those who represented ladies retained theirs so we could distinguish the difference. After going through the cave, over one mile in length, we returned to daylight, hungry and tired.<sup>2</sup>

Later in the summer of 1864, Franklin Graham Gibson, a cadet at Virginia Military Institute, visited Weyer's Cave. Fighting as a cadet private in V.M.I. Company B, he was severely wounded at the battle of New Market (May 15, 1864). "One leg was shattered below the knee, another ball passed through his thigh, one through a hand, causing the loss of two fingers, another in the cheek."<sup>3</sup> While recuperating in Staunton, the twenty-year old cadet visited the cave, signed the wall, and added the notation: "V.M.I. - August 17, 1864." His wounds, seven in all, crippled him for life, but did not hinder very successful careers as a professor of French and mathematics and as a prominent lawyer.

An entry in the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies states: "September 27, 1864 - In battle at Weyer's Cave."<sup>4</sup> Henry Robinson Berkeley, a member of John B. Gordon's Artillery, wrote in his diary on the same day:

We encamped for the night on the west side of the (South) river very near Weyer's Cave, but had no lights to visit the cave. Captain Kirkpatrick and some four or five of our boys, having got hold of one little tallow candle, went a short distance into the cave, but the old guide refused to go very far.

Yesterday they say, our cavalry came near bagging a big lot of Yankee officers while they were in the cave.<sup>5</sup>

One of the "Yankee officers" referred to by Berkeley was Captain William W. Miles of the Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry. His bold inscription is one of the best preserved in the cavern. The Cavalry had moved to the area of the cave where, according to Samuel P. Bates in his book, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers 1861-1865*, "on the 27th, the enemy under Fitz Hugh Lee attacked, and a spirited engagement ensued, in which the Fourteenth, by its gallantry, won an order which directed 'Weyer's Cave' to be inscribed upon its flag." Less than three months later, while on a scouting expedition near Millwood, Virginia, Captain Miles was killed when his patrol was attacked by about 300 men, including two companies led by the well-known Colonel John S. Mosby (Mosby's Raiders).<sup>6</sup>

Samuel B. Heape, of the Second South Carolina Cavalry, was possibly the last Civil War soldier to visit Weyer's Cave. His signature is dated March 22, 1865. Private Heape was captured on July 17, 1863 and was sent to prison

at Point Lookout, Maryland. He remained captive until February, 1865, when he was transferred for parole, less than a month before his visit to the cave.<sup>7</sup>

Private Heape, Captain Miles, Cadet Gibson, Lieutenant Boyd- soldiers from both the North and South- visitors at different times to Weyer's Cave. Although these men may never have met, they are united by the circumstances which took them away from their homes and families and thrust them into the bloody conflict of the Civil War. For a little while, the outside world could be forgotten as they walked through the magnificent chambers underground, their candles lighting the way into another time where, once again, their world became a place of beauty and serenity. George M. Neese, a Confederate gunner in Chew's Artillery, best described these feelings in his diary when he visited the cave on May 4, 1862:

Here nature was lavish in bestowing its wild charming beauties on the flower-bedecked wooded hillside, as well as its sparkling gems that glow and so profusely adorn the caverns inside, where the mystic goddess has been weaving her brightest jewels in silent gloom for thousands of years and is still at work putting delicate touches of lace-work as white as the virgin snow on every glowing ornament.<sup>8</sup>

A special feeling of pride and protectiveness is felt by all whose lives have been touched by Grand Caverns. May all who enter feel its magic, appreciate its beauty, protect its history, and respect the mystery it still holds within.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Howard McHenry, Recollections of a Maryland Confederate Staff Officer under Johnston, Jackson, and Lee, Williams and Wilkins Co., Baltimore, Maryland, pp. 129-130.

<sup>2</sup>Elmer J. Barker, Recollections, Letters of Elmer J. Barker, Essex County, New York, from the Clay Perry Collection, May 26, 1948.

<sup>3</sup>William Couper, The V.M.I. New Market Cadets, The Michie Co., Charlottesville, Virginia, 1933.

<sup>4</sup>The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, published under the direction of the Hon. Daniel S. Lamont, Secretary of War, by Major George B. Davis, Mr. Leslie J. Perry, and Mr. Joseph W. Kirkley, Series I, Vol. 43, Part I, Chapter LV, Reports, Correspondence, etc., Washington Government Printing Office, 1893, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup>William H. Runge, Four Years in the Confederate Artillery: The Diary of Henry Robinson Berkeley, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1961, p. 102.

<sup>6</sup>The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 43, Part II, p. 798.

<sup>7</sup>South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina, Compiled Service Records - Company Muster Rolls and Rolls of Prisoners of War.

<sup>8</sup>George M. Neese, Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery, The Neale Publishing Co., New York and Washington, 1911, pp. 52-53.

## ALONZO WILLIAM POND 1894-1986

Gary K.Soule

Alonzo William Pond died suddenly at his home in Minocqua, Wisconsin, on Christmas Day, 1986. Alonzo was a well-known anthropologist, and a veteran of many explorations of the world's caves and deserts. Born on June 18, 1894, in Janesville, Wisconsin, he graduated from nearby Beloit College in 1920. He led expeditions to Africa, in addition to France and Asia, and was a member of numerous organizations, including the Explorers Club of New York. To list all the accomplishments during the 92-year life of this interesting individual would take an enormous amount of space. For historians, I would suggest that they turn to page 2622 of Who's Who in America, 43rd Edition, 1984-85, Volume 2.

I would be remiss, if I didn't at least point out some of his more significant speleological accomplishments.

While the assistant curator at the Logan Museum at Beloit College, he directed an expedition to southern France. In the Dordogne regions, he explored and did excavations in caves for the remains of Stone Age man. Earning his M.A. degree from the University of Chicago two years later in 1928, he continued his world speleological pursuits.

His most famous mark in the spelean history books probably came in 1935. While working as an archaeologist for the National Park Service at Jamestown Island, Virginia, world famous "Lost John" was discovered at Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. He was called in and from June through September, 1935, he carefully arranged for and took charge of the retrieval of the desiccated body of this prehistoric miner. A framework was built in order to hoist the huge rock that had pinned the miner for so many years. This is the same mummy that, up to recently, was on public display in the historic section of Mammoth Cave.

From 1940 to 1945, he was the first manager of Cave of the Mounds, a show cave near Blue Mounds, Wisconsin. This beautiful, formation packed cave was discovered by a quarry blast on Friday, August 4, 1939. As manager of Cave of the Mounds, he soon proved himself as one of the foremost authorities on cave formation and public interpretation. He not only made a detailed motion picture on limestone caverns and how they are formed, but he wrote one of the most detailed and highly respected show cave guidebooklets ever made available for the public. Even today, the text of this booklet is

still considered highly accurate, and other show caves have since tried to imitate the general format and completeness of the text and illustrations. He has written numerous articles in various magazines, and authored Caverns of the World in 1969.

Surviving Alonzo are his wife, Dorothy (Long), whom he married on July 20, 1926; a son, Arthur of Park Falls, Wisconsin; a daughter, the Rev. Chomingwen Pond of Claremont, California; and two grandchildren.

Prayer services were held on Friday, January 2, 1987, at the Overton Funeral Home in Janesville, Wisconsin. Interment followed at the nearby Oak Hill Cemetery.

About a year before Alonzo passed away, I had the good fortune of visiting with Alonzo and his wife, Dorothy, at their home in Minocqua, Wisconsin. Alonzo was very sharp minded and alert right up to the very end. He shared with me a wealth of speleological knowledge and insight, for which I am ever grateful. His photographic documentation efforts, especially with the "Lost John" excavation, were remarkable, and many photos I had not seen previously came to light.

According to the wishes of Alonzo and his family, his speleological holdings were split between the Wisconsin State Historical Society for the Wisconsin materials, and the American Museum of Natural History for the European and United States archaeological photos and papers. Both public institutions have agreed to house these historic materials in perpetuity, with arrangements for qualified spelean researchers to examine the material.



Dorothy H. Pond, Gary K. Soule, and Alonzo W. Pond on October 8, 1985.

## 1989 SPELEAN HISTORY SESSION

The 1989 Spelean History Session was held on the campus of the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee, during the morning of August the first. Attendance was up over preceeding years, with at least sixty or seventy people present at one time or another. The following presentations were made, in the order listed:

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Gary A. O'Dell        | "Cave Spring Farm: A Kentucky Pioneer Settlement"  |
| John H. Ganter        | "Cave Maps as a Spatial History of the NSS"  |
| Fred V. Grady         | "Saltpeter Artifacts from the Caves at Trout Rock, West Virginia"  |
| Russ Gurnee           | "Jose Storek, Pioneer Speleologist in Guatemala, Central America"  |
| Nancy Holler          | "Little-known Tourist Caves of North Carolina"   |
| Charles A. Lundquist  | "Cave History in Newsome Sinks"  |
| Larry E. Matthews     | "An Introduction to the History of Cave Exploration in Tennessee"  |
| Phillip P. Reeder     | "The Mining of Lead from Caves in Southwestern Wisconsin: A Historical and Geological Perspective"   |
| William Varnedoe, Jr. | "A History of Recorded Alabama Caves"  |
| Gary A. O'Dell        | "The Phelps Cave of Lexington, Kentucky"   |
| Ernst Kastning        | "Joint Caves, Dent Pits, Cup Holes and Rill Channels: Speleological Studies of George Henry Hudson at Valcour Island and Lake Champlain, New York" |
| William R. Halliday   | "The Naming of the Town of Cave Creek, Arizona"  |
| Marion O. Smith       | "Early Photographs of the 'TAG' Caving Region"   |

## A HISTORY OF RECORDED ALABAMA CAVES

W. W. Varnedoe, Jr.

Alabama's earliest cavers were Indians. We know that they entered some of Alabama's caves because we have found their burials, but they left no records with one possible exception. They were illiterate and their records must, of necessity, have been oral. There is an Indian legend that when the god Manitou committed a sin and was thrown out of heaven, he landed at Ittachooma Cave (modern Talucah Cave, AL 47). As a result, this cave was cursed and the water hereafter flowed into rather than out of the cave. This is a cave description of a sort, for a stream does indeed flow into Talucah Cave.

The first written record of a cave in Alabama is in a report to the US Government filed by Col. Benjamin Hawkins, an Indian agent. In this 1796 report, he mentions Kymulga Cave (modern DeSoto Caverns, AL 22) as a gathering place for the Creek Indians. There is no description or evidence that he entered or even saw the cave. Inside DeSoto Caverns the name of I. M. Wright and the date 1723 is scratched on the wall. Mr. Wright, an Indian trader from Charleston, South Carolina, has the distinction of being the first person, known by name, to enter an Alabama cave. He left no description or record of any kind, however.

Big Spring Cave (AL 57) was mentioned when John Hunt built his cabin there in 1805, founding Huntsville. Neither he nor anyone else described the cave. All early references to the spring as quoted in A Dream Come True by James Record or Historical Huntsville, A City of New Beginnings by E. H. Stephens, refer only to the spring and the water it supplied.

The modern Alabama Cave Survey (ACS) has in its files a map entitled "Aboriginal Map of Tennessee" which covers a portion of north Alabama. At the approximate location of Russell Cave (AL 169) a cave called Tecallasee Cave is shown. While the resolution is crude, the location shown is on the wrong side of the river to be Nickajack Cave; and also Russell Cave has a large, easily seen entrance. This map is undated, but one political division shown on it is called, "1806 Congressional Reservation," making the map later than 1806. Alabama is not shown as a state, making the map earlier than 1819. Incidentally, the Tennessee River is called the Kallamuchee River on this map. While this is documentation of an Alabama cave, at least its location, no description is given.

Madison County was created as a county in the Mississippi Territory before Alabama became a state. In the minutes of the Inferior Court of Adison County in 1812, a lawsuit erupted over some alleged stolen saltpeter mined from Sauta Cave (AL 50). Depositions taken from witnesses give some production figures and processes, but no real cave descriptions. This old minute book has now disappeared, but Pat Jones saw it and wrote a full page story in the September 1, 1935, Huntsville Times, which gives most of the details.

In the Nashville Daily Times of October 22, 1863, there is a story of a company of Union soldiers at Cave Springs, Alabama, exploring a saltpeter

cave. It is a sensational type of story and lacks the detail to specifically identify the cave. However, we know that General Rosecrans and a small group of Union soldiers did explore Long Island Cave (AL 1300), for the General's signature and date of August 5, 1863, are still in the cave. A photo is in the October, 1973, NSS News. The unpublished diary of one of the soldiers describing this trip survives, but again, there was no formal documentation.

It is probable that the Confederate government must have had something akin to a cave survey, at least of saltpeter caves. But no such composite list describing or locating the caves has survived the Civil War, although bits and pieces of scattered information such as crew movements have been found. Many Alabama caves have been identified with these scraps of information.

The American Chemist of March, 1874, relates that bat guano from Mastodon Cave in Lauderdale County was being tested. Subsequent newspaper ads reveal that the cave was mined and the guano sold, but the cave was so ill described that it cannot be identified today.

The Huntsville Independent states in its April 22, 1876, issue that many tourists visited Ittachooma Cave (Talucah Cave, AL 27), but once more there is no description.

In the May 23, 1888 issue of The Weekly Mercury there is an account that Mr. Lippencott and Mr. Hicks explored Bird's Spring Cave (Bird Cave, AL 936) and found some archaeological remains. No description of this rather small, unimpressive cave is given in this account.

A great deal of newspaper publicity surrounded the commercial tourist and dance hall opening of Shelta Cave (AL 4) in 1888. But all of the descriptions are so exaggerated that if the identification of the cave were not known, no one would recognize it from these descriptions.

The newspapers in 1889 also reported about a Major Schrimshaw's "expedition" and descent of Natural Well (AL 5). But since he only descended and went up without penetrating the cave at the bottom, his description, while accurate, is very abbreviated.

In 1891, Bulletin No. 12 of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Crump Cave (AL 68) and Hampton Cave (AL 34) are described by Cyrus Thomas.

A much more accurate and formal report on caves was published by Henry McCalley in parts I and II of The Valley Regions of Alabama, Special Reports 8 and 9 of the Alabama Geological Survey (AGS) in 1896. In these general geological reports McCalley describes and locates 26 caves, but he provides us with no maps. Unfortunately, his coordinates were often of crude resolution and the landmarks he cites have now largely vanished. Today four of these caves cannot be identified. Twenty two, however, have been correlated with the modern ACS. While quite abbreviated, these reports qualify as Alabama's first cave survey.

In 1936, the Tennessee Valley Authority made an extensive exploration and detailed map of Honeycomb Cave (AL 36) as part of a survey for Guntersville Dam. The report, map, and photos made inside the cave survive.

In 1930, the Alabama Geological Survey issued Special Report 16, Ground Waters of North Alabama by W. D. Johnston. In it, Dr. Walter B. Jones wrote a chapter on caves in which he describes, locates, and gives maps of 22 caves. Beginning with this data, Dr. Jones began the formal, deliberate Alabama Cave Survey. He established the numbering system with these first 22 caves that is in use today. This cave survey was different from anything that had been done before. It was not part of some other project or one with a finite time goal, but a project in its own right with an on-going goal of cataloging all the known caves in Alabama, and including in that catalog not only a description but also a map of the cave, and including all sorts of other data, such as its fauna and geology.

When Dr. Jones became State Geologist, he continued his interest in caves and continued to add to the survey. When the NSS was organized, he became life member number 108. By 1946, he had listed 127 caves. This had grown to 170 by 1955 when the Huntsville Grotto was chartered. Up to this time, Dr. Jones, as his duties permitted, was practically singlehandedly running the survey. He would often cave with his wife, Hazel. In the early days he used wet plate photography and developed the plates right in the caves with her help.

In 1955, the author first met Dr. Jones deep inside Sauta Cave and we became good friends with our common interest in caves and caving.

The Huntsville Grotto was rapidly finding and mapping caves, so Dr. Jones assigned Bo Daniels and E. L. Hasting of the AGS to coordinate with the grotto so that data could be added to the survey.

Soon there were four grottos in Alabama. To make more efficient use of them, the ACS assigned blocks of numbers to each grotto and allowed each grotto to add the data themselves. The additions and number assignments were usually handled by the grotto's secretary.

When Dr. Jones retired as State Geologist, Bo Daniels received other assignments and could no longer devote the time to the ACS as when his boss was a caver! Huntsville was the most active grotto at the time and gradually activity shifted from the AGS in Tuscaloosa to Huntsville. Bo eventually gave complete control of the survey to the Huntsville Grotto, although nominally it remained an AGS project. Since I (Bill Varnedoe NSS 3160) was grotto secretary at the time, I took over the ACS. Subsequent secretaries were not interested and I retained it.

I recalled the blocks of numbers and instituted tighter controls and standards, such as requiring locations within  $1/4 \ 1/4 \ 1/4 \ 1/4 \ 1/4 \ 1/4$  or  $\pm 40$  feet. Earlier, most locations were only given to a resolution of  $1/4$  or  $1/4$  section ( $\pm 1345$  feet). Gradually the gaps in the numbers created by the block system were filled in and caves ever since have been assigned numbers sequentially as they are reported.

The AGS exercised less and less interest, until, by degrees, the ACS evolved into my personal project under my sole control. This covered the period from the early 1960s until 1973.

The data were kept on forms that Dr. Jones had printed for the purpose. Richard Anderson, who at that time chaired the NSS Cave Files Committee, had

invented a code to record cave data for the NSS files so that he could get all of it on an IBM punched card with 80 letter entries. The ACS first used and then modified this format. This gave the ACS great flexibility since machines could alphabetize, sort, compile statistics, and otherwise manipulate the data. The old forms were abandoned and, except for the maps, all data were on cards until technology caught up and it moved to disks or tapes. Still further modifications have resulted in the system in use today. One artifact of these modifications is that length data on the earlier (lower numbered) caves were given by a letter code in logarithmic blocks. Later, lengths were given exactly. But translating the earlier letter codes to feet resulted in a seemingly odd coincidence of many caves having the exact same length. These caves were those encoded by the same letter because their lengths lay in the same block of lengths. This letter code was later replaced by a number length average to the block.

One thing I resolved to do was to publish, because there was nothing printed since the 1930 list in Special Report 16. The first book, Alabama Caves, listed 617 caves in 1965. Only 250 copies were printed, including ones in the NSS Library and the Library of Congress.

It was also Dr. Jones intention to publish the entire state in county by county books. Although he had retired, he still was influential in the AGS, and, jointly with the author, submitted the text of a cave survey book for Madison County, Alabama. This book was published in 1968 as Circular 52, and listed 140 caves. Unfortunately, the AGS publication cycle did not permit a review of the final text, and it contains several errors. Morgan County was next, but Dr. Jones died before publication in 1980. Again, there are some errors as the AGS publication routine is so long that much of the information was out of date by the time it was printed as Bulletin 112. No more county books have been published or contemplated.

Parallel to this activity, I published another book for the entire state in 1973 that listed 1421 caves. As my final accomplishment before I retired as Director of the ACS, a book listing 2020 caves was published in 1980 by the ACS.

The ACS was formally reorganized in 1980 along democratic lines with elected officers. The constitution of the ACS states that a new full data publication will be issued with each additional 500 caves added to the survey. One such book with 2707 entries appeared in 1987. In addition, there are annual updates with added or modified data. Today, the list stands just short of 3000 caves and a new book will, no doubt, soon appear.

I would like to draw some conclusions from this history. The attitude towards caves as revealed by their references in print seems to have passed through three distinct phases which I will call utilitarian, curiosity, and recreational.

All of the early reference up to about 1880 seem preoccupied with the use of caves for something, such as burial, saltpeter, or guano. When exploration or curiosity is mentioned at all in these references, it is in passing. Clearly they were not the motive for entering the cave. Most of these accounts were in newspapers, diaries, or correspondence.

From about 1880 until 1930 reports began to appear of scientific discoveries, including the fields of biology and archaeology. These reports were published in journals rather than newspapers. However, in nearly all cases the trips were one-shot affairs, with caves visited only once, or of some project incidentally involving a cave.

From the 1930s on things change. People began to dedicate projects to the caves themselves, and trips returned repeatedly to many caves, unlike the "Sunday School picnic" once-or-twice-in-a-lifetime trip. Formal caving begins. A new concept, recreational caving (that is, caving as a sport) is born, but by no means replaces curiosity and scientific endeavor. In fact, science has now spawned branches specializing in caves.

These phases do overlap in time somewhat and there were transitional type cave trips. But, by-and-large, they are distinct enough to be easily recognized when we study the history of caving in Alabama and, I suspect, in America.

All former motives for entering caves still exist to some extent. Will a new reason emerge to be added to this list in the future?



Editor's Comment: While researching his book on Cumberland Caverns, Tennessee, Larry E. Matthews investigated a note on a small piece of sheet metal by the Monument Pillar. It indicated that the Monument Pillar was first discovered by Edward McCrady, chancellor of the University of the South at Sewanee. His caving companions were Dr. Henry T. Kirby-Smith, a physician, and Harvey M. Templeton, a businessman. Both McCrady and Kirby-Smith kept journals of their caving trips, and in some cases they represent the first written accounts of these Tennessee caves. Kirby-Smith's "first" and "second" books of caves have been printed in this Journal (Volume 19, Number 2, pages 28-53, and Volume 18, Number 1, pages 3-10, respectively). The following journal by Dr. McCrady was hand written and was intended for his own personal use; thus there might be errors in transcription. Also reproduced herein are three photos found in his Journal, and two maps by McCrady that Dave Parr has re-drawn for sake of clarity.

Edward McCrady was born in Canton, Mississippi, on September 19, 1906. He earned his A.B. at the College of Charleston in 1927, an M.S. at the University of Pittsburgh in 1930, and a Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania in 1933. After being a researcher in biology, he became a professor of biology at the University of the South in 1937. In 1948, he became senior biologist in the Division of Biology and Medicine of the Atomic Energy Commission. He returned to the University of the South as vice-chancellor in 1951, and was elected president and vice-chancellor a year later. Dr. McCrady is credited with the discovery of two new species of cave life, a blind cave beetle (Pseudanophthalmum macradei) and a cave salamander (Gyrinophilus palleucus). Retiring from the University of the South in 1971, Edward McCrady died on July 27, 1981.

## CAVE TRIPS FROM EDWARD McCRADY'S JOURNAL

Larry E. Matthews

1944 May 23 - Trip with Pope + HSH to Sink. Cove Cave

Sept. 24, 1944 Henry Kirby-Smith, Harvey Templeton, Allen Tae, and myself. Salt River Cave, Turcica Vaginalis, Multilevel.



In Salt River Cave we captured one large specimen of Speleomolge Gyrinophilus pellucida, and saw, but failed to capture, two smaller specimens of the same. Also captured one large specimen of Eurycea lucifuga, about 1/4 mile from entrance. Captured two blind fish (Typhlichthys) one apparently gravid. The two fish and Speleomolge were put into same bottle whereupon the salamander soon killed the fish but did not eat them. The Speleomolge was placed in an aquarium when we reached home. Collected a few more pieces of my tiger skeleton on this same occasion.


In Turcica Vaginalis we saw most amazing array of flint balls in all stages of exposure sticking out of the limestone walls- worth photographing. Also found curious "bivalve" shelf-like formations. They occurred on the walls of the cave on the surface of the flint nodules, and on the surface of stalactites. Always, however they were formed of flowstone, and were results of cracking of thin sheet of flowstone (like glaze on chinaware) with subsequent growth of lips of crack due to capillarity and supersaturation of the water. Never seen or heard of elsewhere as far as we know.

Multilevel is largest of the three caves and extremely labyrinthine. At one place we found the largest cauliflower-like growths we had ever seen, and we photographed these.

In Turcica Vaginalis, I caught one specimen of what was probably Aneides aeneus. He later escaped from my bottle so I had no opportunity to check his identification accurately. I do not remember seeing the bright orange patch at the base of the legs and the tail seemed a little short to me. (I forgot to mention that we saw an almost complete bat skeleton in the stalactite room and left it there. It was to my left as I sat to be photographed against the large stalagmite pile.) This note added much later (Nov. 25, 1945) is probably wrong. I was probably thinking of the bat skeleton mentioned on page 10. It was in a similar upper passage in Sinking Cove Cave.

October 1, 1944 - Wonder Cave

Henry K. Smith, Harvey Templeton, myself. Got permission to explore the noncommercialized portion of the cave. Had to wade in water about 3 feet deep at worst. Came to immense collapsed dome- perhaps biggest I've seen. The broken limestone had gypsum in it and on it making sparkling effects. There were many geode-like cavities in the solid limestone lined with crystalline material. Fossils unusually abundant- brachiopods   sideview (possibly Osthis resupinate- see Nicholson Ancient Life History

page 185), (also a larger one- possibly Spirifera), corals of two sorts resembling Zaphrentis  and Cyathophyllum the latter being branched. Also I found one large flattish, black fossil about 11 centimeters long, by 3 to 3 1/2 cm. wide which was apparently a calamite. I could not remove it from the rock so it is still there in a rock on the right bank of the stream about 2 feet above the water level in the portion of the cave beyond the big dome.

I brought home one cave millipede from here. There were several specimens of Typhlichthys, numerous large crayfish and innumerable Cottus bairdi.

October 8, 1944 - Indian Cave

This is near highway at foot of mountain between Monteagle + Wonder Cave. Henry and John found numerous young blind fish, apparently just born. This throws some light on breeding season for this species, and accords with my capture of apparently pregnant female on Sept. 24.

Oct 22, 1944 - Higgenbotham Cave

Between McMinnville and Beersheba on the north side of Blue Spring Cave at the foot of Cardwell's Knob. This is the biggest cave I have ever been in. It has been explored frequently during something like a century past and vandalized as far as practicable, also used as sources of saltpeter. Entrance through small aperture into highly ornamental room with small skylight. Looks like good animal trap but no bones were found. Not far from entrance stalactitic columns almost close passage. Near this point we found dry basin full of calcareous flakes which had formed on surface of original water. Some of these had remarkable blisters on them such as we had never seen before- petrified bubbles, as far as we could make out. Whether the bubbles were erect or inverted with respect to the original floating flakes was not clear. Some were found attached to under side of flat rocks in the basin. Captured a white insect (very small) and saw several white spiders at this point. Also took a cave millipede near here.

At several places we saw references on the wall to "Big Room". After following passages so long, tortuous, and small that we suspected several times that we were being made the victims of a stupendous hoax we finally entered the biggest room I have ever been in. I stepped off 550 yards (about 1/3 mile) along one area of the room which was about 100 feet wide and some 15 feet high. Other parts were more than 60 feet high. Two passages leading from it we did not have time to explore. Harvey and I climbed up a rock fall near the end of the long room and got into an upper chamber whose ceiling had collapsed for the most part in one big piece which had broken up as it hit, but lay with the gigantic pieces still showing how they originally fitted together. This passage was closed on all sides but one where it looked down into a deep, narrow, twisting passage which had not previously been explored by anyone. We found a way to climb down into it and went for at least 1/3 mile more before we decided to return. We found water dripping through the ceiling of a very high room and refilled our water jar. Near this point there was an enormous chimney and pit. Beautiful crystal clear stalactites and a few helictites were found in a high flowstone passage

beyond this point. Also coon tracks and a remarkable new kind of formation where rock sheets being deposited on clay had buckled up and rolled into tubes, some v-shaped, a few branched, and some not quite complete. The attached map is not accurate in details of curves, but is as good as my memory permits. The scale of width here is much greater (i.e., exaggerated) than the scale of length.

Nov. 12, 1944 - Xanadu

This is the same cave which John Kirby-Smith, Dr. Petry and I explored in 1942. It had previously been explored as far as we know by only two people who were from Tracy City (Homer Kimz). It is in Grizzard Cove and seems to be the outlet for the water from Foster's Falls.

Henry, Harvey, and I took a boat on top of Henry's car and were able to drive all the way to the cave entrance which we had not done before. We paddled in only a short distance before we had to get out and carry the boat some 75 yards. We had never had to do this in previous trips. Near the point where a chimney on the west side communicates with the main cave, the water



Dr. McCrady excavating a jaguar in Salt River Cave. C.E. Mohr photo.

went off into a sink in the floor instead of flowing out the mouth. The water at the mouth was stagnant, though deep and full of fish- tremendous numbers of Cottus bairdi (Mollygods) and steelbacks (Hybopsis spectrunculus) or Hyborkyncus nobatus (I must check species). There were also both kinds of crawfish in fair numbers. In the dry part of the cave we found one of the minnows trapped in a small pool some 4 inches deep and about 18 x 10 inches in a depression on the surface of the solid limestone some 3 feet above the level of the water. He had obviously been there ever since the water had dropped below that level. There was no visible food, animal or vegetable, in the pool, the sides of which were smooth solid limestone; and yet he seemed in good shape. He had probably been there something like six months, as there had been something of a drought in this area since last May, and it is unlikely that the water had been at that level since then. At the place where the water disappeared into the floor it was 8 or 10 feet lower than its level when I first saw it. I have never known a cave stream to vary that much.

Throughout most of the cave we paddled in deep water which at times was fully 24 feet deep. With a light operated by a storage battery which we carried in the boat we could see clearly all the way to the bottom and found the same species of fish and crawfish all the way back except that the ordinary crawfish got fewer and fewer and in the last half of the cave disappeared, whereas the white ones became more and more abundant. Visibility was so perfect that I am convinced there are no blind salamanders in this stream. We could not have failed to discover them if there were.

Fossil sea anemones are abundant in this cave.

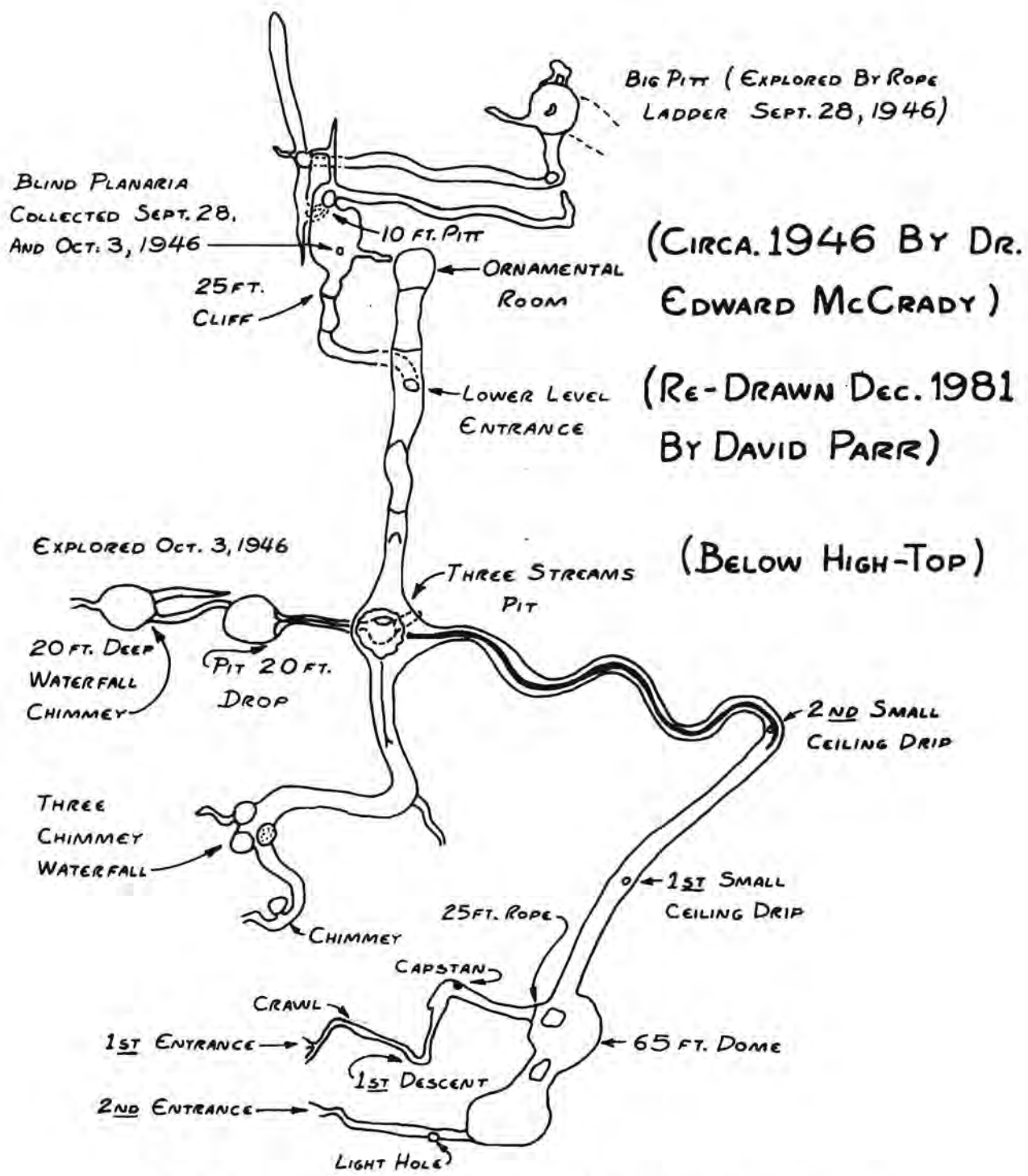
January 14, 1945. Sinking Cove Cave.

This was my 3rd trip to this cave. Henry, Harvey and I went in Harvey's station wagon. We had to leave it nearly half a mile from the mouth of the cave and walk the rest of the distance. Even at this distance we could hear the water rushing out of the cave. We photographed the entrance with its waterfall at its best.

Henry found the water in the 3rd entrance so deep that we despaired of being able to get through a low-roofed portion which we remembered, and decided we'd have to walk over the ridge into Wolf Cove and enter the cave from that end. We did this and captured a blind salamander of the new species almost as soon as we got in.

We set up our camera and flashlight equipment and made a photograph of the spot with Henry standing in the water. We captured a second specimen just before reaching the spot where you climb up to the upper passage with the helictites and cave pearls in it.

In the upper passage we found the bone fragments which Henry remembered having seen on our trip last May 23, but which I had forgotten. It is a portion of a long bone some 2 inches in diameter, and I have not yet identified it (this turned out to be a giant sloth). I also found an almost complete bat skeleton but had no vial or box of convenient size to carry so delicate a thing in, so left it there.



**SKETCH OF FORT-PEEBLES CAVE**  
 DISCOVERED BY JOHN FORT & EDWARD PEEBLES  
 FEB. 1943

We spent a long time photographing helictites and then returned to the main cave. On the way out we saw but failed to capture another salamander. We took several crawfishes, but found no blind ones. Henry calls these "semi-pellucidus" because they are pale gray, but not white, and not eyeless. Whether they are really a new form we do not yet know. I collected two millipedes, a sow-bug or so and a small white, long antennae, jumping insect which I have not yet studied.

We managed to come out the front entrance in spite of the deep water. When we got back to the car we built a fire, changed to dry clothes, and ate our lunch (5:00 to 5:30 P.M.). Got home about 7:30. The cave exploration + photographing had consumed about 6 hrs. (10:30 to 4:30). Driving took 2 hrs each way.

Note: On Jan. 25 one of these large salamanders apparently ate the small one which had been in captivity since the preceding August - some 5 months. It had not changed color or had its eyes enlarge, or show any signs of metamorphosis. It had apparently not eaten before Jan. 21 when I got it to take some meat. On Feb. 2, 1945 I found the largest specimen lying on top of another adult. I could not make out whether it was amplexus or not.

February 18, 1945 Higgenbotham Cave - Second Trip.

Harvey, Henry, and I. Discussions about falling bodies in vacuums and max. speed of 186,000 miles per second on way to cave, about rocket action in vacuum on way home. Decision that rocket action is equally effective in vacuum as surrounding medium merely equalizes pressures on all sides and does not enter equation.

There had been much rain. Streams were greatly swollen and ponds in every hollow. Could not get car further than quarter of mile beyond church on account of stream crossing the road. We went into field on right to find place to cross stream. Harvey climbed a willow tree and managed to bend it enough to transfer to sapling on other side. Henry and I crossed by log and brush pile. All crossed this way coming back.

At cave I explored partly a second cave near entrance of first, but did not have time to finish it. In second room of main cave we collected millipedes and saw but failed to capture a beetle (probably Anophthalmus). We watched the millipedes dip their heads deep into one little hole after another in the soft dirt of the floor as if searching for some sort of food. I took a sample of the earth to see if I could find anything in it.

In this same room we saw a cave rat (Neotoma pennsylvanica) and her nest in a hole in the side of the wall some 8 feet up. She was able to scamper along the wall by catching her claws into irregularities of the surface. Was not very much alarmed by our presence. I was able to stroke her back with a stick. She had more hair on her tail than ordinary gray rats. Her nest proper was of straw neatly made in spherical shape with round entrance; but she had dragged quantities of cedar twigs in, which were still fresh and fragrant and there were two ribs about 5 inches long which I have not yet studied, also dragged into her nest and somewhat gnawed.

This time after passing the first ladder we explored the side passage

from the room with the first sign about the BIG ROOM. Collected beetles (3 I believe) and some small white insects with long antennae, and one very small long, slender arthropod not yet identified. This side passage which we had not explored in the previous trip was several hundred yards long and led to water. The first water was only a slight drip by a slippery ledge. Here we found more ribs partly sealed in rock on left. I did not try to remove them. Further on we found a high chimney and deep pit with water running rapidly over flowstone drapes in the chimney. We climbed partway up but had to give up.

Returning to main passage we went to second ladder. I ascended first and took rope with me which I then lowered to Henry. This was where Henry had remained behind on first trip. Nothing eventful between there + big room, though I found more of the flint which had turned to clay.

From BIG ROOM Harvey and I explored several long passages which I have added to map. We got into virgin cave in one passage and there we found what seem to be wild cat bones embedded in the limestone in a ledge some 30 inches above earthen floor of cave. I recovered the humerus and one canine tooth in nearly perfect condition. The atlas vertebra was so deeply embedded that I realized it would be destroyed if I persisted in trying to remove it, so I left it. It looked about like




above sketch. Also got parts of tibia, and many small fragments from earth below the rocky ledge.

When we returned to Henry he had been waiting for two hours and was cold and disgusted. He warmed up quickly however in the arduous crawls on the way out.

We measured the cave with spools of thread (large 700 yds each, and small 100 yds). It turned out to be only 1350 yds back to the Big Room which was 535 yds long. The side passages we did not measure, but some must have been as long as main passage.

We got out about 6:30 having taken about 1 1/2 hours or somewhat less on way out. We needed 2 hours to get in to Big Room. Spent about 7 hours in cave all told. It was still daylight and we were hungry and particularly thirsty. We ate in the car. Found coffee in thermos still hot. Had some wonderful salt smoked salmon which Harvey brought and some gin to warm us up.

P.S. I nearly omitted one of most important points. In second room of main cave we found the rock blister pool full of water and the blisters in process of forming so that we could confirm every detail of our theory. The water was excessively mineralized and had floating sheets of calcium carbonate on almost all of its surface. Beneath this, bubbles of various sizes would come up from below and rest against the under side of the floating flakes. Then rock would be precipitated on their surface making rock bubbles or blisters on the under side of the floating flakes. Occasionally bubbles came up in clear water and petrification began before top of bubble burst so that cavity of sphere communicated with air above

surface.  Bubbles varied in size from about 0 to about 0. Some formed whole spheres. Such rock bubbles should be called pompholictites.

This pool was dry when observed Oct. 22, so all the floating and forming bubbles had been made since then. Apparently the principal prerequisite is extreme concentration of calcium bicarbonate in water and a source of bubbles.

We also took temperature readings of water and air at several places. Found variations from 56° to 59° Fahrenheit. Outside temperature was somewhere in thirties and there was a bitter wind.

March 5, 1945 - The smaller of the cave beetles (2 specimens 6-7 mm long) turned out to be Pseudanopthalmus sp. The largest beetle (12 mm long, 1 specimen) I have not yet been able to identify. It is very like Anopthalmus, but has eyes. The millipede is Lepropetalum lactarum. For both of these classifications see A. S. Packard's Cave Fauna of North America, Nat. Acad. of Sciences, Vol. IV, 1st Memoir.

April 15, 1945 Big Mouth Cave, near Pelham

Obtained 7 specimens of a new species of Speleomolge. This one has irregular brown dorsal spots in the deeper layer of the skin. They show plainly, in life. In pickled specimens the opacity of the outer skin obscures them but when this is rubbed off they show strongly again. Two specimens were placed alive in Henry K-S's aquarium. The others were preserved.

Thomas Barbour (Atlantic Monthly, Oct. 1945, page 77) says "The Kentucky fish, Amblyopsis, is evidently derived from a normally found stream inhabitant called Chologaster which is found in the Southeastern part of the United States." He does not mention Typhlichthys subteaneus. He also says "In the Old World, in the caves of Carmola and Carinthia in the Alps of Austria, two forms of blind amphibia are found. They are long slender, pallid, newt-like creatures which have been known to science for many years." I know of only one, the olen, Proteus. I must write him about this. He speaks of the temperature in the cave being much higher than the already quite hot outside. This is extraordinary and unexplained.

June 15, 1945 Lost Cove Cave

3 Speleomolges taken - all small. All preserved in Bouin's Fluid. These are the first to be found in this cave. This is the fourth or fifth cave so far discovered to contain this new genus. It is perhaps a separate species. The four caves are Sinking Cove (Cave Cove Cave is in a sense part of this), Salt River Cave, Big Mouth Cave, Lost Cove Cave.

Nov. 25, 1945 Saltpeter Cave, White County. A Civil War Powder Factory 100 ft. below ground.

24 specimens of a Vespertilionid bat were found, of a species which is

# SKETCH MAP OF WET CAVE

FRANKLIN COUNTY,  
TENNESSEE



UNDATED MAP  
LOOSE COPY FOUND  
IN THE JOURNAL OF  
DR. EDWARD McCRADY

RE-DRAWN DECEMBER 1981 BY DAVID PARR

apparently Corynorbirius macrotis. 3 of these were captured alive and brought home. They have the longest ears I have ever seen on a bat, being about 5 times the length of the snout.

(I have skipped a good many cave trips in this record)

August 12, 1946 Trip to Lost Cove Cave with Dr. Henri Henrot of Paris, France.

Obtained numerous small Silphid beetles which were feeding upon bat dung; numerous small white insects which he called Collembola, but they appeared to me to be winged; one larvae of some Gyrinid beetle found in a small isolated saturated pool; a few amphipods; and many isopods; and one Speleomolge about 80 mm. long. Like the first three that I obtained from this same cave. This specimen is slender and small and comes from the same spot- the tributary stream on the balcony by the second entrance. The beetles came from the small dry solution channel connected with this same balcony. It is possible that the Speleomolges from Lost Cove Cave are a separate species or sub-species which is small and slender. I also brought home one Cottus baird; and one chub-like Cyprinid Fish resembling Hyborhyneus notatus though.

August 14, 1946 - third trip to Higgenbotham's Cave. This time with Dr. Henri Henrot, Dr. J. Manson Valentine, and Harvey.

Captured about two dozen Pseudanophthalmus and a similar number of Rhadines. Did not explore beyond 2nd ladder.

September 10, 1946- Crystal Caverns (Clay, Alabama, 18 miles northeast of Birmingham) formerly called Alabama Caverns and McClunney's Cave.

The poorest commercialized cave I have ever seen. I went in to look for a "white salamander" Dr. Jones (State Geologist) had seen in the deep spring, but found nothing. The water was not a foot deep, was crystal clear, had no life in it. There were cracks however which might connect with anything, and if one waited long enough one might see a salamander emerge from them.

September 28, 1946. Fort-Peebles Cave with Edward Peebles and Battle.

Took rope ladder and 3 lengths of rope. In addition to previously explored parts we were able to descend the big pit at the end, but it plugged up fairly quickly. Below the second rope descent we found numerous snow-white, eyeless planarians, presumably of the species Fonticola percaeca, though Packard's original description is extremely scanty, including no internal anatomy.

October 5, 1946. Returned to Fort-Peebles Cave with John Mahan, McGoldrich, Peebles and Battle.

Captured about 8 of the Fonticola, innumerable isopods, one larval Gyrinophilus, and several white crawfish. Also descended 3 streams pit to 1st, 2nd, + 3rd levels by means of rope. This seems to complete exploration of this cave.

(Omitted a good many cave trips in interval 1946 to 1953, including trips to Higginbotham, Hubbard's, Grassy Cove Cave, Atomic Caverns, Cudjo's Cave, Clinch River Cave at Oak Ridge, Still Cave and Wet Cave (with Warnig, John, and their friends)

Dec. 6, 1953, Sinking Cove Cave. Went back with John Kirby-Smith, James Dent, Fritz Whitesell, Atwood, Doug Vaughan.

We had to park car at Creek and walk to cave. Decided it was best to cross ridge and enter through Wolf Cove. Found tremendous amount of water after rains last night. The water was too much, and too swift to permit us to see any salamanders.



Helictites in Lower Salt River Cave (Tiger Cave), Franklin County, Tennessee.

