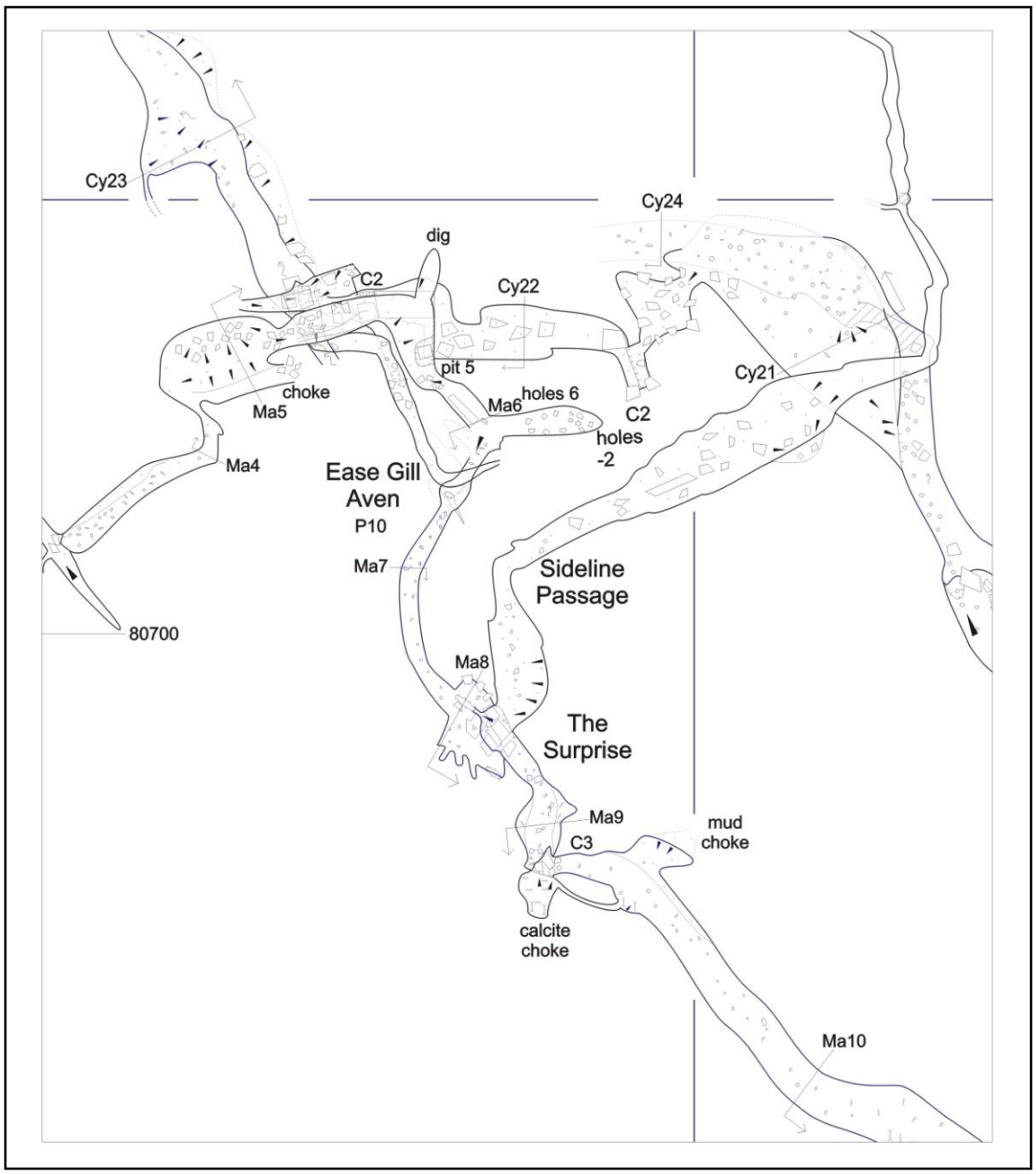
Part 3

COUNTY POT including Wretched Rabbit and Snail Cavern to Holbeck Junction

A Companion Guide to accompany
Sheet 3 of the RRCPC Grade 5b Survey

By: R.R.C.P.C and others



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Notes

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Bull Pot Farm
Casterton
Kirkby Lonsdale
Via Carnforth
LA6 2JP
UK

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Cover illustration:
Extract from accompanying Sheet 3 survey that is produced in 2 colours.

Sheet 3 survey: County Pot including Wretched Rabbit and Snail Cavern to Holbeck Junction
Drawn by Ray Duffy, winner of the Bryan Ellis Award – BCRA Hidden Earth 2001

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Notes

Addendum

Very early in the planning for this re-survey of the Ease Gill System we reallised the need to fix the major entrances in relation to each other. It was essential to be able to get the Lancaster Hole end of the system to join accurately with the Top Sink and Pippikin ends, a problem encountered by earlier surveyors.

To fix the locations of the entrances, two sets of laser equipment were borrowed and set up on Brownthwaite Fell (the Bull Pot Farm lane), and the car park on Leck Fell. To help reach the sites in the gill itself a party set off to establish a fixed station part way up Crag Hill overlooking the Top Sink end of the gill. With each party equipped with 'walkie-talkies' it seemed the mission would be successful, the weather, however, had other ideas. Not only did it start blowing so hard that the instruments wavered around uncontrollably but the mist and rain put the final nail in the experiments' coffin. We could not at the time use the easier, if less accurate method of GPS, as the Forces still had the final digit withheld for their own purposes in the Gulf War. We did have an earlier compass, clinometer and tape survey to the major entrances tying in the trig points at Brownthwaite Fell and Tow Scar. It was decided by those close to the project to proceed with the entrances as we had them as they worked very well in relation to each other and the drawing up of Sheet 1 was undertaken. Just before the production of this sheet we had the opportunity to try again to fix the locations of the entrances. Take two, arrived with an even worse day but with better equipment. This time we needed only one laser and sighting pole and the modest aim was to go from the trig point on Brownthwaite Fell to Lancaster Hole, into the gill to Link Pot and up to Pippikin. The remainder of the entrances would be surveyed to in the normal manner from fixed stations set up in between by the laser. It took part of the morning and most of the afternoon to go from the trig point to Lancaster Hole, less than 1kilometre. The rain was so hard at times it was impossible to see the 100 metre stations except during lulls. The team were frozen, as some of the rain was of the solid variety, wet, and extremely frustrated at having failed again. This time at least we did get some readings but they seemed at odds with the locations we were using, and, given the conditions under which they were obtained, it was decided to proceed with the original entrance to Lancaster Hole in compass, clino and tape position. Error!!!!!!!!!!!!

By early 2002 one of the team had turned his attention to finding GPS positions for the entrances and the features around the area. Surprisingly, he found a slightly different value for Lancaster Hole than the one we had used on Sheet 1. Looking carefully back over the data for the surface survey some original errors in positioning Bull Pot Farm, from which the other surveys radiated outward, were found. Oooops!!!!!!!! Although the error didn't affect the entrances and underground features in relation to each other they did alter everything relative to Grid. The original sheet from Lancaster Hole to Stake Pot had used blue grid lines at 100m intervals that were now incorrect as were the co-ordinates of the entrances. Rather than make Sheet 2 totally different in format we have decided to keep the blue grid but use it as a sizing grid and mark the real grid co-ordinates along the edge of the sheet so as to be less obtrusive. This has been rectified on the reprints of Sheets 1, 2 and 3.

Lancaster Hole	was 66385, 80680 now 66403, 80717
Cow Pot	was 66415, 80816 now 66432, 80853
Hellot Hole	was 66163, 80616 now 66179, 80650
Shorty Hole	was 66355, 80627 now 66373, 80663

What can I say folks but sorry!
Ray Duffy (Ease Gill Project Officer for the Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club)

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Notes

Introduction

Location

The caves under and around Ease Gill, which is on the Cumbria/Lancashire border of the United Kingdom, form the longest and most complex cave system in Britain. The system extends beneath Casterton and Leck Fells and around the western flanks of Gragareth hill. The caves are formed in the Carboniferous (Dinantian) Great Scar Limestone and contain a wide range of passage types, sediments and speleothems.

This publication is the second part of a series of surveys and companion guides to be published about the system. It is produced in a loose-leaf format so that as future discoveries are made it can be easily added to by inclusion of inserts. Updated pages will therefore have a footnote attached with the Version number and publication date. Besides being a guide and description of the cave passages, included with the Part 2 survey is some general material on Conservation, Access and History of Exploration to this part of the guide. This will be relevant to future sections of the guide as they are published.

The Survey

Background to Production

It has proved necessary to re-survey the system as more and more bits of the CRG published survey (1967) proved to be inaccurate and new discoveries in the system meant that this survey was added to without knowing where to start surveying from. The re-surveying of the whole system was started by Frank Addis and the North Manchester Caving Club in the early 1980's, and much work was done before Frank emigrated to Spain in 1990. His notes and drawings were left with the Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club who have continued the work. A Grade 5b survey is gradually being completed, and is to be published in a series of sheets at a scale of 1:750. It was fortunate that Frank had kept meticulous records and sketches, as we found great difficulty getting all the data to connect up. It was only after extensive new surface survey work was undertaken that we reallised that the available co-ordinates for the cave entrances were a little suspect to say the least.

In an attempt to correct these errors some highly accurate leveling work from the Ordnance Survey Triangulation Point on top of Barbon Low Fell across Casterton Fell via Lancaster Hole and on to Leck Fell was undertaken. This showed that major entrances were not located correctly on the large scale Ordnance Survey maps. All the cave entrances have now been accurately located and fixed survey stations established.
Molephone bases have also been established underground and on the fell. On re-fixing the cave entrances with the new data everything became a little clearer and work on the rest of the system could continue. All the cave entrance survey stations and many of Frank's underground survey stations have now been replaced with yellow tags to aid accuracy - please leave these in place. The survey data has been entered and plotted onto a computer using Survex software. This was then imported into CorelDraw for final drawing of the passage detail. At the same time a photographic record of the system is being compiled. Many of these photographs are now available on the "Ease Gill Guide" section of the RRCPC web site. Surveying work continues towards the publication of other sections of the system.

(RRCPC WEBSITE URL: http://www.rrcpc.org.uk/easegill)

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Conservation

Introduction

Ease Gill Caverns form part of the Leck Beck Head catchment Area S.S.S.I. administered by Natural England. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I.s) are notified by Natural England because of their plants, animals, geological or physiographical features. Most S.S.S.I.s are privately owned or managed. About 40% are owned or managed by public bodies such as the Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence and The Crown Estate, or by the voluntary conservation movement, and S.S.S.I.s cover approximately 7% of England's total area, Natural England liaise with about 23,000 owners and occupiers on these sites. The Whelprigg Estate and Kay - Shuttleworth Estate own the majority of Casterton Fell and the Leck Fell areas, respectively.

What are Sites of Special Scientific Interest? (S.S.S.I.s)

S.S.S.I.s are notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, in recognition of their special biological and/or geological interest, having been selected according to rigorous and published guidelines. Together they comprise a nationally important series of areas representing all that is best in England's natural heritage. They do not stand alone, they are part of the characteristic natural areas that are England's countryside and they depend on how this remaining countryside is cared for by our society.

Why is the Ease Gill Cavern System part of an S.S.S.I.?

The Leck Beck Head catchment S.S.S.I. comprises an area which is not only of outstanding geological importance but that also includes areas of major biological interest. More detail with regards to the geomorphology of the area is to be found in the Part 1 guide of this series.

Conservation work in Ease Gill Caverns

The RRCPC has been closely involved with the Ease Gill Caverns cave system since its discovery in 1946 and adopted it under the Descent "Adopt-a-Cave" scheme. No-one likes to go into a cave only to find dumped carbide, chocolate wrappers or anything else that shouldn't be there. In 1977, Descent magazine began a scheme to help acknowledge, promote and encourage the work done by individuals and clubs in looking after their favourite caves. The RRCPC therefore holds an annual clean up meet in the cave system and in recent years a great deal of rubbish has been removed, formations have been taped off to prevent damage from careless visitors and some formations have been cleaned. The use of carbide in the system is discouraged, hopefully to help reduce the dumping of spent carbide both inside and outside the cave. Bats have also been seen in the cave system and a number of entrances have been provided with stock-proof yet bat-friendly lids that allow bats to still use the caves.

Surface work

In recent years footpath erosion has become a major problem with the increase in visitors to the system. Again the RRCPC has taken steps to prevent or reduce the risks of footpath erosion by carrying out remedial work, re-routing paths and repairing boggy areas of the heather moor land, below which much of the cave is located. Fences and stiles have also been repaired. Access signs have been placed on the fells and these should be followed at all times. The RRCPC and its members on behalf of the Council of Northern Caving Clubs (CNCC) have carried out this work. As part of the club's conservation policy we have appointed a Conservation Officer, who can be contacted at Bull Pot Farm or by consulting the contacts page of the RRCPC web site.

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Access to the Cave System

The CNCC currently controls access to the caves of Leck & Casterton Fells. Initial contact with the Council can be made via:

The Honorary Secretary:
Les Sykes, 49 Manfield, Ashurst, Skelmersdale,
Lancs, WN8 6SY
Email: les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk

Most of the land on these fells belongs to the Whelprigg and Kay-Shuttleworth Estates and access is by permit only to member clubs of the Council. The area below Leck Fell House, on which Pippikin Pot is located, now belongs to the Middleton family and permission must be obtained from Leck Fell House to enter Pippikin, Nippikin or Bye George Potholes. The area has been designated as an S.S.S.I., primarily as a result of its cave systems and as such deserves respect from those who take advantage of the unique amenities the fell provides.

Casterton Fell:

The booking Secretary is:
Alan Speight, 8b Springfield, Bentham, Lancaster LA2 7BA
email: alanmavisspeight@btinternet.com

Permits are issued for a maximum of:
Five permits per day at weekends
Two permits per day on weekdays
Three permits per day on weekday Bank Holidays
The maximum number of cavers is limited to 8 per permit, with a maximum of two cars per permit.

Cars should be parked with consideration, always allowing access through Bull Pot Farm and to other roads and gates, as this area is still used by agricultural vehicles on a daily basis. Access to the caves is via the agreed routes as shown on the permit. Signs and paths are maintained by the CNCC along with the stiles at Cow Pot and Link Pot.

Leck Fell:

The booking Secretary is:
Jim Sloane, 60 Sharoe Green Lane, Fulwood,
Preston, PR2 8EE
Email: jsjimi@blueyonder.co.uk

Details of the access agreement are as follows:
Two permits per day and no caving during April, May and June.
No more than three cars are to be taken onto the fell per permit. Other cars may be left on the car park at Cowan Bridge (donations in the honesty box are welcome).
Cars taken on to the fell must only be parked on the Lost John's Cave car park, indicated on the map on the reverse of the permit form, not on the road verges elsewhere on the fell.
Cave entrances to be approached via the routes indicated on the permit map. The Country Code is to be obeyed at all times.

The landowner has indicated that in the event cavers transgress the access agreement, the fell will be closed for caving. The CNCC, on behalf of all cavers, wishes to maintain good relations with the landowner and therefore the co-operation of all concerned is sought to maintain caving access.

History of Exploration

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Much has already been written on the history of exploration of the cave system and reference should first be made to:
The Caverns of Upper Ease Gill - Northern Pennine Club (1952)
Lancaster Hole and the Ease Gill Caverns - CRG Transactions Vol.9 No.2 (1967)
The Ease Gill System - Jim Eyre (1989)
A brief summary of some historical events is given below.

Date	Event
1898/9	First recorded exploration of Bull Pot and Cow Pot, YRC
1909-1912	Bull Pot of the Witches - discovery of Burnett's Great Cavern etc. Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar School
1919	First survey of Bull Pot of the Witches, YRC
1926	Further exploration in Bull Pot of the Witches including discovery of Robert's Passage, YRC
1927	Exploration of Hidden Pot, YRC
1929	First exploration of Pippikin, Nippikin and Peterson Pots, Gritstone Club
1932	Surveying, photography and discoveries in Bull Pot of the Witches and Cow Pot, Eli Simpson & BSA
1933	Survey and exploration of Lower Ease Gill Cave, BSA
1935-1936	First recorded exploration in Upper Ease Gill, Boundary Pot etc. BSA
1946	Discovery of Lancaster Hole and Hellot Hole, BSA
1947	Discovery of Oxford Pot and Near Ease Gill Caverns, BSA
1948	Cow Pot connected to Lancaster Hole, BSA
1949	Lancaster Hole pushed as far as Ease Gill Far Series, BSA
1950	Connection of Oxford Pot to Lancaster Hole, RRCPC
1951	Exploration of Slit Sinks and Rosy Sink, RRCPC
1952	County Pot dug out after Rosy Sink Collapses, RRCPC/NPC
1952-1955	Exploration of Top Sink and Upper Ease Gill, NPC
1956	Exploration of Pool Sink to Ease Gill Caverns, PPSG
1957	Discovery and exploration of Pegleg Pot, NPC
1958	CRG Extension and other Far Ease Gill discoveries made, CRG
1963	Discovery of Borehole, NLSC
1965	Discovery of Aygill Caverns, NSG
1966	Bull Pot sump connected to Lancaster Hole, HWCPC
1967	First full survey and account of system published, CRG
1970	Major extensions to Pippikin Pot, HWCPC/ULSA
1971	Discovery of Stake Pot (Earby) Series, EPC
1972	Climbing into Magic Roundabout Series, Lancaster Hole, CPC
1972	Discovery of Mancunian Way and Manchester Bypass, MUSS
1973	Maracaibo discovered, RRCPC
1976	Gavel Pot -Lost John's sump Connected, CDG
1978	Discovery of Link Pot, NPC
1981	Exploration of Woodhouse Way, Lancaster Hole, RRCPC
1984	Wretched Rabbit Entrance opened up, RRCPC
1989	Pippikin Pot - Gavel Pot Sump Connected, CDG
1989-1999	Lancaster Hole downstream sump extended, CDG
1989	Discovery of Sylvester Pot, RRCPC
1994	Discovery of Bye George Pot, RRCPC/ULSA
1997	Connection of Cow Pot to Aardvark Country, NPC
1997	Connection of Pippikin Pot to Witches Cave, CDG
1997	Connection of Leck Beck Head to Witches Cave, CDG
1999	Discovery of Slug World, RRCPC
2002	Connection of Peterson Pot to Pippikin Pot via Svengland, RRCPC
2003	Connection of County Pot to Swindon Hole and Corner Sink, RRCPC
2005	Spiral Staircase Passage connection to Wretched Rabbit, RRCPC
2007	Galaxy and Slit Finger Passages in The Borehole RRCPC
2007	The Darkside, The Grind extensions, RRCPC
2007	The Fork Handles Series, RRCPC
2007	Blissful Aven, Borehole, RRCPC
2010	Shuttleworth Pot, Various Clubs
2012	The Sentinels, Slug World, RRCPC

The references to these explorations are listed at the end of this publication

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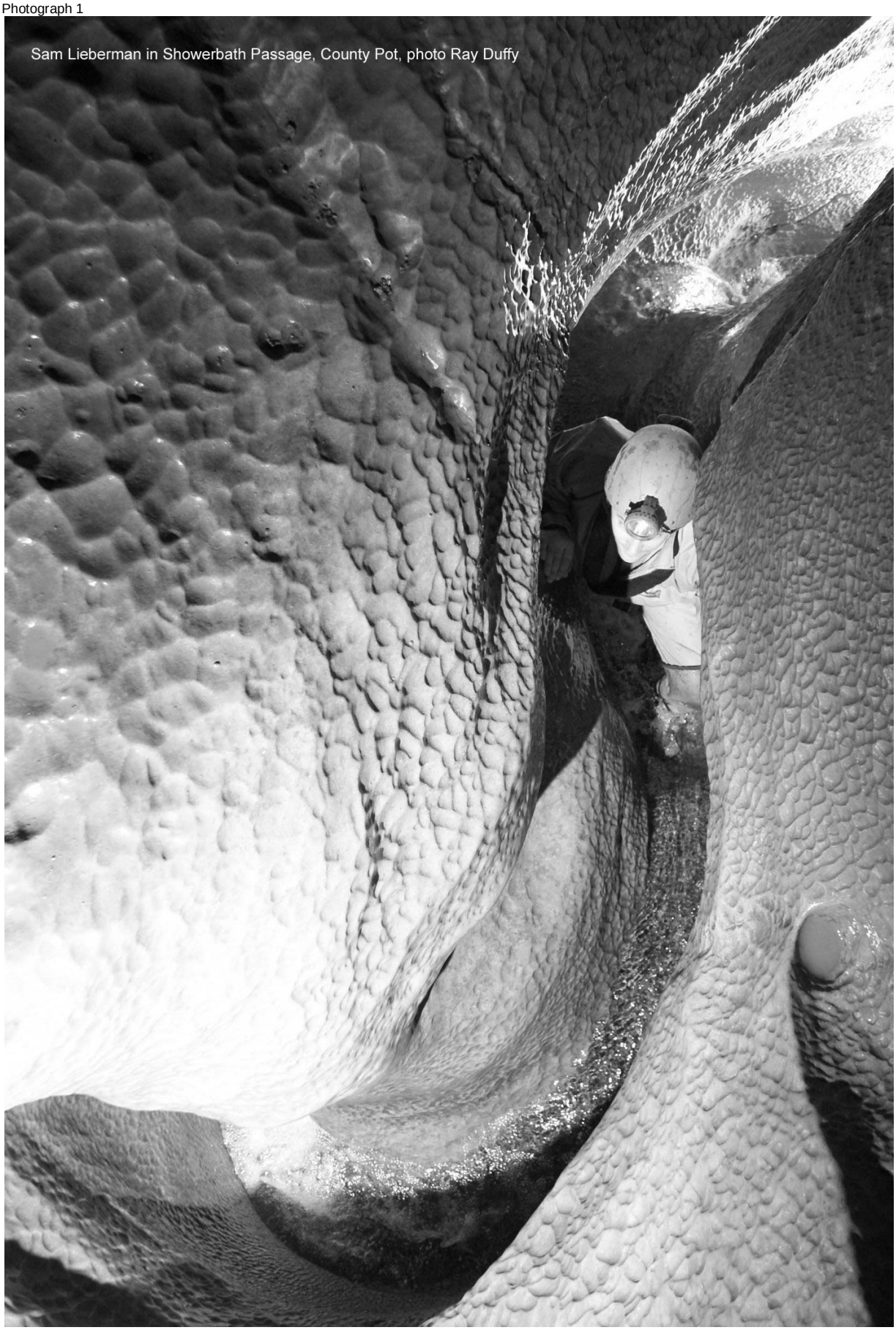
Photograph 1



Sam Lieberman in Showerbath Passage, County Pot, photo Ray Duffy

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Notes

Part 3:

County Pot

SD 67532 80577 Alt: 314 metres

This cave is the most popular entry point into the Ease Gill System. The route immediately below describes the most popular route through Ease Gill Caverns to the Main Drain at Eureka Junction. Other routes off are shown further on in the text.

Route to Eureka Junction

The start is an excavated entrance shaft with a steel lid, on right bank of Ease Gill, 73 metres up the valley from Cow Dubs. Under the lid is an easy climb down into a low passage.

A few metres down from the foot of the entrance climb a narrow passage to the left leads off into the entrance shaft of Oxford Pot, the surface entrance of which is blocked at present. Oxford Pot is a 20 metre pitch leading down to The Snake, a torturous passage leading to Confusion Corner.

The narrow entrance passage of County Pot quickly enlarges to become a winding canyon with several short climbs down to the head of the 7 metre first pitch.

An awkward climb above the head of the pitch in to some small passages leading back to the roof of the entrance passage and also the connection to Rosy Sink, surface entrance of which is blocked at present.

Below the first pitch is a chamber with an inlet entering on the right. This leads to a short low crawl through to The Snake passage, downstream of the Oxford Pot pitch.

Left from the chamber below the first pitch, a short passage leads to a 2.4 metre climb down into Broadway. The climb can be avoided via a higher level climb and traverse leading directly to Showerbath Passage near the waterfall.

Broadway is a fine wide passage that can be followed upstream as an easy walk to an aven, then beyond a crawl and short climb lead into an upper passage, here a climb up through loose boulders emerges in a large chamber with a waterfall inlet. The inlet has been dye tested to Innominate Sink.

Almost opposite the point of entry to Broadway is, Oxford Circus, and following the water downstream leads to Toadstool Junction.

However, the main way on at Oxford Circus is a passage which leads off right up and over a rock slope and down into Showerbath Passage. Easy walking in a narrow meandering streamway brings one to Confusion Corner and the junction with lower end of the Snake, the original route from Oxford Pot. Downstream of Confusion Corner on the right is a step up to an abandoned passage which enters The Upper Trident Series in Battle of Britain Chamber and also the start of the Manchester Bypass.

Carrying on down the main streamway leads quickly to a chute and 2 metre climb down into Spout Hall, this can be by-passed via an old route on a high shelf to the left near Confusion Corner.

Spout Hall slopes steeply down to two outlet passages, the obvious one being a crawl in a roomy tube containing the stream. After about 15 metres the roof suddenly rises and tucked under the right wall is the awkward chimney up to Poetic Justice.

At the chimney, the top of which is a short and well decorated bedding crawl, that drops 3 metres into a stream trench and then onto a 7 metre pitch down into Pierce's Passage.

Upstream from the 7 metre pitch-head, a tight stream trench leads back toward Spout Hall.

Passing beyond the Poetic Justice chimney the passage continues as a fine meandering streamway to Platypus Junction, passing two high level connections to Ignorance is Bliss on the way.

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At the foot of the Poetic Justice pitch, Pierce's Passage leads as an easy meandering walk to a large junction where Trident Passage enters on the right. Downstream a climb over a muddy boulder slope up to the right or alternatively a route following the stream leads to a twisting canyon passage, descending several short cascades, this is Lower Pierce's Passage. Just as the rock floor gives way to cobbles a climb in the roof leads up into Cotton Chamber in Ignorance is Bliss.

The main stream gradient now eases and a drop in the roof is followed by a climb up into a mud floored section. A junction is soon reached and the passage to the right leads to Wretched Rabbit. Further down the crawl a shallow slope leads into the spacious Main Drain at Eureka Junction.

Downstream from Eureka Junction can be followed for over 100 metres of gradually lowering, increasingly wet and boulder filled passage to a route up, via a squeeze through boulders, into Lower Snail Cavern. A route has also been forced as far as Oxbow Corner via a very wet passage at stream level, not recommended, and only possibly attempted in drought. Upstream of Eureka Junction is the main way on.

Downstream from Oxford Circus

Downstream of Oxford Circus the passage continues as a twisting streamway to a high level junction, with Green Passage on the left, a long, low and muddy crawl ending in a choke beneath Cow Dub.

Downstream the tight meandering passage arrives at Toadstool Junction where Butterfield's Passage enters on the left as a large inlet. This can be followed up a 4.5 metre waterfall climb into a rift passage to a junction. To the left is a short section of rift ending at a 4 metre aven but the passage continues until too tight. Back at the junction, Butterfield's Passage continues low and then up a 2 metre climb to a crawl, a canal and then a tight and wet exit at Cow Dubs II.

The main way on from Toadstool Junction continues with several cascades to Razor Passage, where some small climbs down, over and through breakdown, lead to Platypus Junction.

About 30 metres before reaching Platypus Junction, a low and wide bedding on a shelf to the left, leads to a hole up and a junction.

Facing the back toward the bedding, a slope up to the right over the boulders enters a large passage heading upstream above Razor Passage, this is Upper Razor Passage, leading back towards Broadway but finally ends in a choke.

Back at the bedding junction, right leads to an awkward crawl for 40 metres with several squeezes. At a slight enlargement in the bedding, a hole through boulders to the right followed by a climb up an unstable boulder choke breaks out into a crawl through to The Gallery above North West Passage, downstream of Poetic Justice.

Dismal Bypass

Beyond the connection to the Gallery the bedding plane crawl continues through a pool to an enlargement in a boulder chamber. Ahead the crawl continues, but a climb up a large slab on the right leads into the Gallery Extension, a short section of large well decorated but mud floored passage, heading back toward but not through to The Gallery.

To the left at the top of the slab leads to Dismal Bypass. This continues as crawling through boulders to Funnel Chamber with a hole in the floor into a wide and low bedding plane. This can be followed though to two separate passages uniting near the roof of Upper Molluscan Hall.

An awkward climb down through boulders at the far lower end of the chamber lead to the lower chamber and hence offers a bypass from the flood prone Dismal Junction.

Further along the crawl beyond the climb to Gallery Extension more flat out going leads to a complex junction. Up to the left a small chamber, Hall Hall is entered. This hall is the start of Luff's Passage which continues as a high

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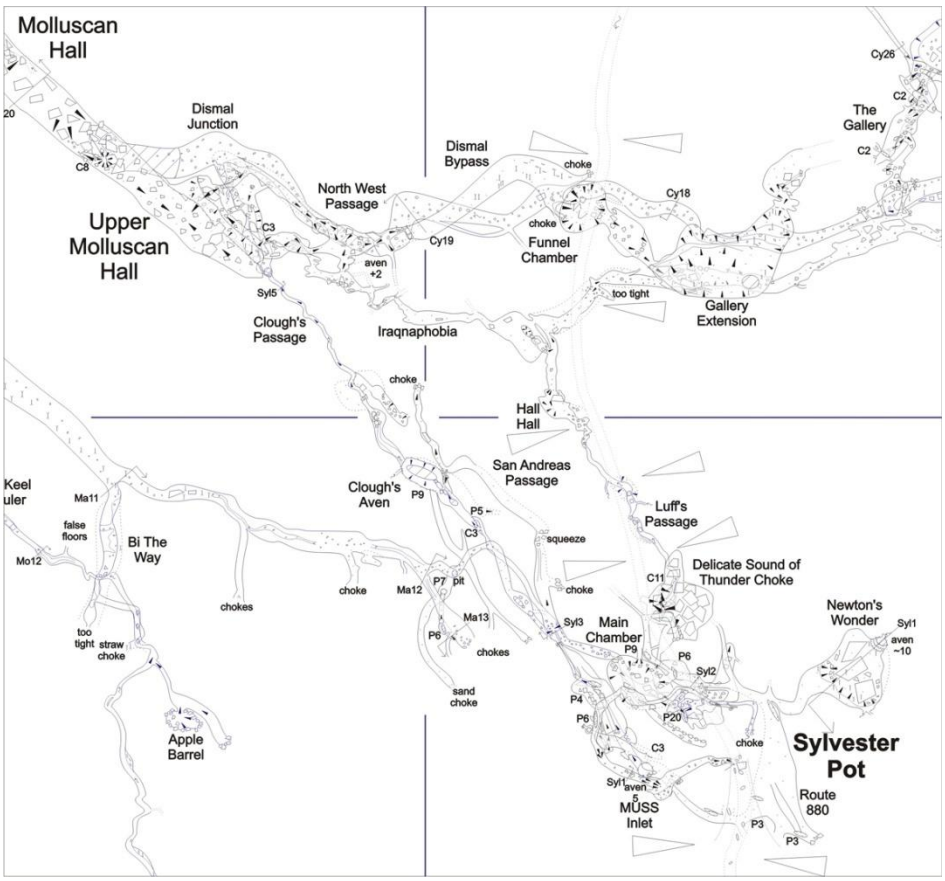
Notes

meandering streamway to the Delicate Sound of Thunder boulder choke, a very unstable route up the right hand side of which has been forced through to Sylvester Pot.
Continuing below Hall Hall is a crawl, Iraq-Naphobia, a sandy grovel for over 50 metres until it breaks out into the roof of Clough's Passage close to the point where it become low and joins Dismal Junction.

Main route to Dismal Junction and Molluscan Hall

Continuing downstream from Platypus Junction the well decorated North West Passage soon degenerates to a wet cobble crawl, passing Dismal Junction, where Clough's Passage leads off to the left for 100 metres to a 9 metre aven. From the top of the aven the Mancunian Way Extension leads off high above. Upstream beyond the aven Upper Clough's Passage continues up an awkward inlet rift and leads into the lower reaches of Sylvester Pot.
Downstream from Dismal Junction a wet crawl ends at a squeeze through some blocks, where the stream backs up in flood, into Molluscan Hall.



Ignorance Is Bliss

Including Cotton Chamber and Upper Pierce's Passage

The original climb into Ignorance is Bliss is an awkward climb up the left hand rift, close to and just a few metres downstream of, the bottom of the Poetic Justice chimney. About 40 metres further downstream on the left is an easier ascent. An alcove on a ledge above the stream, leads to a muddy chamber from which an easy climb-up of 3 metres reaches the abandoned, dry, high-level passages of Ignorance Is Bliss.
Upstream, a well-travelled mud-floored passage goes back left for 30 metres to the original climb-up near Poetic Justice. In the other direction a crawl leads to a boulder-strewn rift passage, which after about 20 metres is joined by a large passage on the left, The Gallery.

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The left passage leads to a well-decorated chamber with two holes in its floor. Passing over the holes the passage degenerates into beddings and fallen blocks, from here a visual connection down an impassably, tight bedding can be seen to part of the Gallery Extension. Dropping down the holes in The Gallery a crawl leads back to the main stream, halfway between the entrance to Ignorance is Bliss and Platypus Junction, thus forming a short 'round trip'.
Off to the right of the crawl an unstable area leads through a boulder fall to another crawl and eventually after more crawling to the passage leading to the Gallery Extension.
Continuing straight past the junction towards The Gallery, the main passage in Ignorance is Bliss continues as an easy crawl to an awkward boulder squeeze, followed by a few metres of narrow and winding passage to a mud choke.
Just back from the choke a 3 metre climb up on the left reveals an unexpected ‘flat-out’ calcite crawl, which after 25 metres reaches a T-junction with Upper Pierce's Passage. Upper Pierce’s Passage runs about 20 metres above Lower Pierce's Passage and is a dry, abandoned passage, with large boulders along the floor. The 'main' way is left, North and West, from the T-junction, passing an hourglass shaped passage doubling back on the right, the passage then slopes downwards into Cotton Chamber after about 20 metres.
The hourglass passage is conjectured to be the downstream continuation of Lower Trident Roof passage. On entering the passage, several pits in the floor may be laddered, 7 metres, to join a boulder-floored intermediate level of Pierce's Passage. Downstream from here soon joins the route out of Cotton Chamber whereas upstream leads via a climb to a high boulder platform overlooking Trident Corner.
On entering Cotton Chamber a window overlooks a second chamber, which is reached via a mud tube on the left. From this lower chamber a second 3 metre mud tube lands on a slippery slope, followed by an easy climb down ledges into the stream of Lower Pierce's Passage, about 80 metres from Eureka Junction.
From the lower muddy tube, instead of dropping down to Lower Pierce's it is possible to continue over a short slippery traverse gaining a larger passage and a complex series of multi level rifts, Wotacunt Passage. The upper levels end in chokes whilst the lower rifts lead to mud-floored crawls ending above Lower Pierce's Passage as it heads towards the junction with Wretched Rabbit Passage.
Back at the T-junction below the bedding in Upper Pierce's, turning right leads to 50 metres of mud-floored rift to a Y junction.
The left fork is partly blocked by a large boulder and an 8 metre ladder pitch drops to a sloping ledge where water can be heard. A further climb down leads to a rift and lands in Lower Pierce's Passage, near to the junction at Trident Corner.
Traversing over the boulder along Upper Pierce's Passage the rift narrows to the very tight, Fatarse Squeeze, beyond which is a climb up into Brown and Smelly Chamber in the Manchester Bypass. The right fork from the Y junction leads to a little-travelled winding crawl, which ends in a chamber with a pit in the floor and some nice stalagmites.

Trident Series

The passages in the Trident Series almost defy description but recent survey work has gone some way towards rectifying this situation.

WARNING

In wet weather the streams in this area become 'sporting'. However, if the surface gill starts to run then the area can suffer unpredictable Flood Pulses.

Poetic Justice and Poetic Justice pitch bypass route

The entrance to the Trident Series and the Manchester Bypass is via a shelf on

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the right-hand side of the streamway and about 5 metres upstream from the top of the spout entering Spout Hall. Continuing over fallen rocks in a stooping passage and passing a short, flat out crawl at floor level on the left dropping back into Spout Hall, reaches a junction after about 10 metres.
Straight on here leads to routes connecting to the Poetic Justice pitch and to an alternative, and perhaps safer, way into the Manchester Bypass [1].
By turning right at the junction, a crawl upward for a few metres emerges in the surprisingly small and boulder strewn, Battle of Britain Chamber. Opposite, in the floor, is the start of the Manchester Bypass [2].
The way on into Trident is up to the right and through a short crawl to a small cross passage, whilst a drop down a rift before the crawl joins the alternative entry to Manchester Bypass [1].
The left branch of the cross passage soon chokes, but continuing up slope to the right over a jumble of loose boulders soon emerges in a small chamber. In the roof above the small chamber a climb up leads to a short bedding inlet that becomes too tight.
However, a step up to the left opens out in a rift passage and the Trident Series proper.
Right, leads immediately to a complex of inlets and beddings, including the alternative way into Splash Chamber and from which the connection to Corner Sink and Swindon Hole can be made. This complex area also has a connection to the Paper Floor area of Upper Trident [5c].
After stepping up and continuing ahead through a narrow rift a complex double chamber is entered, Splash Chamber.
At floor level, immediately to the left as the chamber is entered, is the start of the Broken Ladder Series, leading to Lower Trident Roof Passage [4] and to Crystal Floor Passage [4a].
On the right is an oxbow, starting from near the previous chamber, drops into the chamber down a slope to the right [3].
Entering the second part of Splash Chamber, the obvious way on is low to the left, following the stream, soon reaching the pitch down into Whiteline Chamber.
By continuing through the waterfall in Splash Chamber, a cobble slope on the right leads up to some obscure choked bedding planes. Straight ahead, however, a wriggle over boulders at floor level ends in a 2 metres drop onto a scaffold bar in Whiteline Passage and connections with the rest of Upper Trident [5].
In wet conditions Splash Chamber hosts a cobble-laden deluge hammering down from the roof 10 metres above [3]. The main way on, as previously mentioned is over large cobbles beneath the waterfall under the left wall. This way on may become impassable in very wet conditions but can be bypassed through another crawl on the left a couple of metres back from the waterfall, below a rift. **Note!** Even this becomes impassable in extreme conditions.
Following the water down a short stretch of clean washed passage reaches an open area at the top of the drop to Whiteline Chamber.
A rope on the right, leads around the Chocolate Traverse, connecting back to the Whiteline Passage streamway below the scaffold bar and the complicated area of Upper Trident [5a].
In front of the roped traverse, is a wet, 10 metre drop into Whiteline Chamber [7], here a traverse round the left side of the pitch head passes a climb up loose boulders on the left leading to a blind chamber, but by continuing straight on a small hole in the wall right wall is reached. The hole leads to a crawl and eventually a drop of 10 metres back into the Lower Trident streamway below Whiteline Chamber [7].
The usual way on, however, is at floor level to the left of the head of the pitch where a short crawl over boulders leads to a drop that requires either a ladder or rope. Part way down the drop it is possible to land on a ledge and skirting around the drop on the left leads to a bedding that heads back toward Splash Chamber but rapidly becomes too tight. It is possible to free climb down a chute

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further around the ledge or if the ladder or rope is long enough then floor level can be reached direct.
Heading away from the drop, two passages both lead to the Lower Trident streamway [7].
The normal, albeit slightly longer, route involves a short traverse and step over leftwards into a crawl followed by a stooping rift passage and a couple of small climbs leading to a balcony overlooking an awkward climb down to the Lower Trident streamway.
Warning! The streamway can become impassable in extremely wet conditions.
The other way on heads straight for the streamway where a crawl over a boulder leads to a 'back and foot' climb down into the streamway.
Once in the streamway, downstream passes two passages on the right, both comprising the lower end of Whiteway [6]. Carrying further on down the fine vadose canyon leads to a major junction with Pierce's Passage at Trident Corner about 50 metres downstream of the Poetic Justice pitch.
On the right just before Trident Corner is reached, here the loose and awkward 3 Fag Climb rises up to a roof level connection with the Lower Trident Roof Passage and Broken Ladder Series [4].

1) Manchester Bypass alternative entry route

Continuing beyond the right turn to the Battle of Britain Chamber, a slide over a large slab and then down to the left arrives almost immediately at a crawl in the floor.
Heading off to the left under a boulder is a tight route back to the top of the Poetic Justice pitch [1a].
By continuing beyond this route and bearing right in a low bedding chamber leads up a cobble slope, sometimes wet, to join the other Manchester Bypass route, on the other side of the poised blocks leading out of the Battle of Britain Chamber [2].

1a) Poetic Justice pitch avoiding Poetic Justice chimney

The crawl in the floor soon opens out into a low boulder filled chamber, but the way on is down a 3 metre pit in the floor. A flat out bedding from here goes through a squeeze then opens out to meet a complex group of clean-washed streamways. Continuing downstream the well decorated passage rapidly enlarges as the Poetic Justice pitch is approached. The bedding to the Poetic Justice chimney is above on the left just before the pitch-head is reached.

2) Battle of Britain Chamber to Manchester Bypass

Battle of Britain Chamber is an important place as it is the start of the Manchester Bypass route. This is the dry escape route which links County Pot to the main Ease Gill High Level route, if Eureka Junction is flooded. Entering from above Spout Hall, the start of Manchester Bypass is over the large boulder in the centre of the chamber and down the loose hole to the right. A careful squeeze between poised blocks meets the alternative route [1] at floor level and thence into the rest of Manchester Bypass.

3) Passages above Splash Chamber and the Swindon Hole connection

Following the normal route out of Battle of Britain Chamber toward Splash Chamber, via the crawl then the rising and stooping boulder floored passage to the short climb into a chamber. From here, bearing right, away from Splash Chamber leads immediately to a junction, where left goes back to Splash Chamber. Right at the junction reaches a three way junction, the two right hand passages soon end but the left hand one has an easy 6 metre roped, climb at the top of which the low streamway, Splash Inlet is met. This is the Corner Sink and Swindon Hole water that subsequently crashes down into Splash Chamber.
Upstream in the crawl, leads to a low, wide bedding of cobbles with evidence of drastic flooding, that may re-arrange the following route. Turning left and then right in the cobbled and wet bedding leads to the base of a tall, narrow rift. By

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following the rift up over boulders the base of a small tight chimney is gained. An awkward, tight and slippery 'back-and-foot' climb of 4 metres to the top, then short crawl, emerges in the bottom end of Swindon Hole.
Downstream in Splash Inlet reaches a junction after a few metres. Continuing straight on, a tight and contorting passage soon leads to a 10 metre climb down sharp flakes into Splash Chamber, but only when very dry. Doubling back to the right at the junction, a tight passage pops out into the cobble floored Gritstone Chamber, also called Far Chamber in some old descriptions, whose roof is comprised entirely of jammed blocks.
To the right the chamber ascends over and beneath increasingly perilous boulders, whilst opposite, a hands and knees crawl either side of a pillar drops into a small rift.
To the right, the rift rises to meet a flat out 10 metre crawl that emerges with a view down into Bedstead Chamber on the left [5c]. A short continuation of the crawl quickly chokes.
Heading left along the rift soon reaches a rope climb down a small aven, and a hands and knees crawl ahead drops down a 2 metre climb to the Paper Floor Passage area of Upper Trident [5c].
Back at the base of the rope climb, a flat out bedding crosses over a tight slot in the floor to reach a couple of avens with vocal connections to the rift at the top of the rope climb. The tight slot in the floor continues as a desperate 'zigzag' rift before becoming too tight, with a vocal connection to Key Passage [5b], 10 metres downstream of the Paper Floor feature itself.

4) Broken Ladder Series

This series is on the left and just at the start of Splash Chamber, the entry passage goes gently downhill with walking and crawling around boulder obstacles to end at an 8 metre drop, with a spit on right wall, down a smooth rift. Here a 'broken ladder' used to hang down but did not reach the floor below.
A climb up and continuation crawl has a fixed rope at its end dropping to safer landing in the same area as the original broken ladder pitch. **Note!** A ladder is still advisable. The pitches both lands on a boulder bridge.
On the opposite wall, a traverse to the right, best roped, skirts round a large hole down to the Lower Trident streamway [7], this was the original route in to Upper Trident. A small alcove to the left of the traverse chokes, whilst on the far side, about 15 metres of uninspiring passage chokes close to the blind chamber at the top of Whiteline Chamber.
A little further to the left, looking out from the base of the rope, a hole in the floor provides a more comfortable climb down to the Lower Trident streamway [7] appearing on a ledge in the same area as the end of the alternative route down from near the top of Whiteline Chamber.
Heading left and passing over the climb down to Lower Trident Streamway continues into a rock floored walking passage and down an easy 3 metre climb into more walking passage arriving shortly at a junction.
Right at the junction leads to the Crystal Floor Passage series [4a] and obscure connections to Whiteway [6].
To the left, continues on as clambering over boulders. An aven on the left has been climbed 5 metres to a short calcite choked passage. Opposite this aven on the right of the passage a climb enters another small roof passage again choked with calcite.
Continuing past these features over the boulders reaches a fine hour glass shaped rift, Lower Trident Roof Passage, which ends as an exposed loose traverse and unstable climb down, 3 Fags Climb, to the Lower Trident streamway just before its junction with Lower Pierce's Passage. The conjectured continuation of this roof passage can be seen in the Ignorance is Bliss series of County Pot.

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4a) Crystal Floor Passage

By turning right at the junction, then via a squeeze up past a fallen slab, leads to a finely decorated grotto. Immediately on the left there is a 2 metre climb up into a well decorated bedding plane that soon chokes. To the right a crawl over or under large slabs leads to a short section of passage ending with a cobble run-in to the left and impassable bedding slot through which the Lower Trident streamway can be heard [7].

A squeeze up into the grotto then over to the far left corner, leads to a climb up and short crawl into another small chamber with a 7 metre pitch down to Crystal Floor Passage. The pitch can be climbed with care but is probably best laddered from a spit above the drop. The initial part of the climb lands in a boulder floored chamber with access to the upstream continuation of the passage. This can be followed via some convolutions to two obscure exits into the roof level of Whiteway [6].

Continuing to the bottom of the pitch lands near the upstream choke of a fine canyon with crystal floors in places, care needed, and adorned with helictites. A further 20 metres along the passage a climb up the left wall reaches a short mud choked roof passage. The continuation beyond this point turns right and climbs up and down on the right around a large fallen slab to reach the terminal chamber. A climb up a huge fallen block to the left chokes immediately, whilst a pit in the floor to the right enters a fine crystal floored bedding, beyond which is a choke of calcited boulders. Since this choke is known to be very close to an inlet rift in Wretched Rabbit please avoid crawling through, and thus damaging, the formations in the bedding.

5) Upper Trident

Since the normal route into Upper Trident is via Splash Chamber, the descriptions are written assuming exploration from this perspective.

> **Note on Trident Passage names**
>
> These descriptions assume Key Passage to be the streamway connection to the Right Hand Series starting from the junction in Whiteline Passage just above Whiteline Chamber to the place where the passage containing the Paper Floor enters. However, old descriptions of Trident exploration suggest Key Passage to comprise what is now called Paper Floor Passage in its entirety from the pitch near Boulder Chamber [5d] past Bedstead Chamber and on up to Final Chamber [5b, 5c].
>
> Bedstead Chamber was not originally so named and has acquired this name from the ladders constructed from old bed frames that were used in the original exploration and bits of which can still be found in this area. The name is used in these descriptions as a convenience. Also, confusingly, what is now known as Puzzle Chamber [5a] at the upstream end of Whiteline Passage has also been termed as Boulder Chamber in the past. The Left Hand and Right Hand Series are so named from their relative positions with respect to true left and right in the hydrological sense i.e. looking downstream.

5a) Left Hand Series

From Splash Chamber a feet-first drop through a floor level hole over a large cobble lands on a scaffold bar just above a walking size streamway, this is Whiteline Passage. On the left of the slide down, tight bedding rejoins the route linking Splash Chamber with the top of Whiteline Chamber.

In Whiteline Passage, the downstream heads back towards Whiteline Chamber. After 15 metres there is an oxbow in the roof on the left from where it is possible to join one end of the Chocolate, also known as Cadbury, Traverse, that goes back to the top of Whiteline Chamber. **Warning!** The existing rope is of dubious vintage and trusted at your own risk. On the right, opposite this oxbow, an easily

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missed streamway enters from behind a flake. This is the start of Key Passage and the Right Hand Series [5b]. Continuing to follow the water, the drop into Whiteline Chamber is reached after only a few metres, with the calcite vein lending the chamber its name clearly visible in the wall.

Upstream from the scaffold bar leads to a maze of passages emanating from Puzzle Junction. A narrow inlet to the left chokes in cobbles after 10 metres. Straight ahead passing either side of a pillar goes to a tight rift with water falling out of the roof, this turns right to rejoin the passage down a 2 metre climb between Puzzle Junction and Puzzle Chamber.

Right from Puzzle Junction opens out after a few meters at another junction. To the left leads to a climb up a wet aven and to a number of small passages. The obvious one in front, splits after 10 metres with both branches choking in cobbles, this is sometimes known as Cowy'ed or the Horses Head as it describes the sculpted limestone 'head' separating the two branches.

Facing out over the climb, a tight bedding plane to the right chokes. By traversing out over the passage below, a tight and tortuous bedding plane is reached, on the left becomes too tight after a few bends. Completing the traverse gains a low shelf. To the right the low bedding joins a tight rift accessible from below, opposite the wet aven. To the left an extremely tight dug out squeeze enters a tight bedding plane, eventually too tight, heading back towards Splash Chamber.

Returning to the bottom of the wet aven, just beyond this on the left the loop passage from Puzzle Junction, drops in and on the right is a tight, drippy rift that has a vocal connection to the bedding accessible from the traverse above. Continuing forwards, the passage passes a couple of low inlets choking in cobbles and enters the cobble filled Puzzle Chamber ascending to the left. The roof, particularly towards the end, is mainly comprised of large, gravity resistant, rounded cobbles, hence the puzzle, how does it stay up? A couple of tight tubes, up climbs on a limestone bench ahead and to the left, may be explored by the very determined, or suicidal.

5b) Right Hand Series

This is normally accessed by heading downstream from the scaffold bar in Whiteline Passage on the way from Splash Chamber [5a]. Five metres before the pitch down to Whiteline Chamber, an unobvious inlet behind a flake to the right is the entrance to Key Passage. Passing a couple of tight bends, a tight rift enters at roof level on the right with vocal connection to a tight passage below the rope climb down from Gritstone Chamber [3]. Continuing ahead the streamway reaches a junction.

To the right a tall rift is initially too tight at floor level, but by climbing up, a traverse around a tight bend soon regains the floor. After a couple of metres a bedding at roof level connects to the floor of the upstream continuation of Paper Floor Passage as it heads up towards Bedstead Chamber [5c], a few metres further on is a tight, wet, cobble floored slope rising to Bedstead Chamber itself. Further on the passage branches, left connects to the base of the aven just before Final Chamber [5c], whilst right passage chokes in a number of cobble-infested rifts.

Straight on, past this first junction in Key Passage, a scoop in the right wall above a pool is the start of a 3 metre climb up to the Paper Floor, the same place can be accessed by continuing upstream in tight rift and then climbing onto a shelf on the right up into Paper Floor Passage [5c].

Ignoring the higher routes and continuing upstream leads to a junction. A tortuous stream rift enters from the left this eventually becomes too tight beyond a cobble choke and ends close to Final Chamber.

Soon after climbing up a low step in the main streamway, after a few metres another junction is met. To the left, a shelf and rift slot, ascend to join the upstream continuation of Paper Floor Passage between Bedstead and Final Chambers [5c].

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Straight on up the streamway a crawl over cobbles pops out in the base of a tall aven. To the left, up a climb, is a tight connection to the upper end of Paper Floor Passage upstream continuation [5c]. Behind and above, several metres up, a bedding leads to the base of Guillotine Aven. Ahead and to the right in the floor is the small connection to the first stream passage accessible on the right on the way up Key Passage.

Continuing on through a narrowing in the passage gains entry to Final Chamber. To the left is a 1.5 metre climb into the top end of the higher level passage running back down to the Paper Floor [5c]. Ahead and on the left, up a 7 metre climb, is an ascending passage to a choke. Below this, ahead and to the right, several inlets cut through a wide bedding plane level as they ascend over cobbles, all choke fairly rapidly.

5c) Paper Floor Passage and the Higher Passages in Upper Trident

Whilst technically part of the Right Hand Series it is easier to describe this passage and associated areas separately.

The first describes the upstream direction toward the Paper Floor continuation toward Bedstead and Final Chambers.

A climb out of the Key Passage streamway [5b] lands in a comfortable walking sized rift. A couple of metres in the upstream direction a climb up the right wall leads to the rope climb up to Gritstone Chamber and a connection back to Splash Chamber. [3]

Passing this climb the passage swings left, in the floor is a bedding connection to the first stream passage accessible on the right at the first junction up Key Passage [5b]. Continuing further, the passage opens out ahead into Bedstead Chamber.

The main way on is found by doubling back, away from the chamber. Facing the climb up the chamber, a tight wet slot in the floor connects back to the previously mentioned stream passage accessible from the junction in Key Passage [5b]. About 10 metres above the wet slot is the bedding crawl from above the rope climb on the route to Gritstone Chamber [3]. Above this, the search for higher inlets has proved inconclusive.

Ahead, at the base of the aven a climb up fluted limestone gains a ledge from where a 9 metre climb up enters a narrow rift passage. After 5 metres is a junction, ahead the rift continues over and through calcited blocks eventually choking in boulders, a parallel rift to the right loops back to the junction, joining via a window in the wall.

To the left at the junction a climb over a waist high wall of rock drops into Guillotine Aven, a rope or ladder is required for descent. At the base of the aven, a short bedding crawl leads to a drop of several metres into the aven just before Final Chamber.

Instead of descending the aven, it is possible to climb to the top of Guillotine Aven gaining a rift passage full of increasingly dangerous loose rocks, and alarming views down, as it crosses over Final Chamber.

Exiting Bedstead Chamber, the Paper Floor continuation passage swings right, where a climb up to a bedding plane on the right, enters a small blind aven with audible link to the base of Guillotine Aven.

Continuing past this, the passage crosses over a rift slot. Dropping down the slot enters the upstream continuation of Key Passage [5b], a couple of metres after this a small passage enters from a roof bedding plane on the left. By climbing up and following a short crawl in the bedding plane reaches the base of a blind, 12 metre aven. By continuing further up the main passage a tight slot on the right drops back into the aven just before Final Chamber. Opposite, on a bedding shelf over toward the left, is a small 5 metre blind aven. The passage ends as it drops down a small climb into Final Chamber itself. To the left at this point yet another, tight, and very sharp blind aven is accessible via a bedding plane.

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The next description is in the downstream direction to Boulder Chamber and Lower Trident.

Having climbed out of the Key Passage streamway [5b] into the comfortable walking sized rift, downstream, the wafer thin limestone bridge, the Paper Floor, that gives this passage its name is immediately apparent. Stepping very carefully over this feature, or crawling underneath it, the passage heads down a comfortable walking sized rift with small pools. About 10 metres downstream from the Paper Floor an oxbow passage appears in the roof. A little further on the passage opens out at a junction.

To the left a 3 metre climb joins the other end of the oxbow just mentioned.

To the right, a careful climb up perched boulders enters a wide boulder floored passage. A small passage to the left loops round a large block. Continuing down a slope past a fine stalagmite formation meets a tight slot in the floor. This connects to passages leading to, and underneath, Boulder Chamber [5d]. Passing over the hole in the floor, the wide passage soon disappoints, closing down in a choked rift. To the right, however, a tight squeeze under the wall enters a small awkward passage ascending to a bedding plane. The bedding meets an impassably low, cobble floored, streamway heading towards the Corner Sink and Swindon Hole area.

Straight ahead at the junction, Paper Floor Passage leads down to a 6 metre pitch. Traversing over the pitch head to the left gains a short tight passage opening out 10 metres or more above the Lower Trident streamway, several metres down from Whiteline Chamber [7]. Climbing up just before the pitch-head, onto a shelf on the right, accesses the Boulder Chamber area [5d].

Descending the 6 metre pitch into the easy walking passage soon turns to crawling and then drops into a cross passage. Opposite a continuation rift closes down, and to the right a few metres of passage meets a climb with squeeze above, this is the downstream end of the tight streamway running under Boulder Chamber [5d].

Turning left at the junction and following the passage down a short climb emerges on a balcony overlooking the Lower Trident streamway, 25 metres down from Whiteline Chamber [7]. Also on the balcony is a climb back into the continuation of the stream passage just followed, this is the upper end of Whiteway [6].

5d) Boulder Chamber Area

Climbing up onto a shelf to the right just before the 6 metre pitch, there are two Bedding plane crawls, both of which drop into a low chamber a few metres on, but the further one provides the easier route. Once in the low chamber, a slope up to the right ends with tight tubes in the roof and the more awkward bedding dropping in on the right and continuing opposite to be seen later in Boulder Chamber proper.

Following the obvious way on over boulders enters a large chamber area and a junction. On the right, a passage lowers to a hands and knees crawl and passes over a tight rift in the floor taking a stream. Crawling onward, the source of this stream enters from an impenetrable rift to the left, ahead a tight squeeze exits into a pit in the floor of the wide passage above the climb up perched boulders from Paper Floor Passage. Following the stream down the tight rift is a tortuous passage, passing through a small chamber on a cross rift directly below Boulder Chamber, and finally dropping through a squeeze and 4 metre climb to meet the passage found below the 6 metre pitch at the lower end of Paper Floor Passage [5c]. Advancing a few metres from the junction in Boulder Chamber is another side passage. Situated in the left wall, the crawl passes a 2 metre drop on the right and tiny inlet on the left to open out 10 metres or more above the Lower Trident streamway, 10 metres down from Whiteline Chamber, one of three similar passages meeting in this area [7]. Beyond the bedding, the roof opens out above a wide boulder floored area and the fine lens shaped aven that has been climbed for 20 metres with no easy way out at the top.

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6) Whiteway

Whiteway is most easily found from the downstream end. Take the first passage on the left when heading upstream in Lower Trident streamway away from Trident Corner [7]. A few metres after climbing out of the stream another passage linking back to the streamway enters on the right. A step up leads into the tall well decorated rift of Whiteway, please exercise care when passing around the fine formations.

Climbing up to the right of a long pool allows access to a higher level traverse above a large block wedged in the main passage below. The traverse then opens out on the left to a bedding plane that rises up a calcite slope to join the boulder floored passage accessed halfway down the pitch that lands in Crystal Floor Passage [4a].

Stepping over a large fallen block, the passage continues well decorated in beddings above and to both sides. Approximately 15 metres past the block a 3 metre climb up the rift gains a flat out bedding to the left, again joining the far end of the boulder floored passage accessed from the pitch into Crystal Floor Passage [4a].

Continuing further on up Whiteway, the tall rift passage narrows and then emerges onto a balcony 2 metres above the Lower Trident streamway [7].

7) Lower Trident Streamway to Whiteline Chamber

Warning! The streamway can become impassable in extremely wet conditions.

To tie things together, here follows a description of the Lower Trident streamway from its junction with Lower Pierce's Passage at Trident Corner up to Whiteline Chamber.

Fifty metres down from the Poetic Justice pitch, the Lower Trident stream washes out from an obvious large canyon to the right at Trident Corner. A couple of metres up and on the left of the streamway, 3 Fag Climb, starts with a climb up the wall and then a loose and steep boulder slope up to a roof level connection to the Lower Trident Roof Passage and Broken Ladder series [4]. Further upstream the fine vadose canyon passes two passages on a shelf to the left that quickly join at the lower end of Whiteway [6].

Continuing about 30 metres upstream, up small cascades reaches a climb up on the right to the standard route to Upper Trident via to the top of Whiteline Chamber.

A further 10 metres on, past a number of bends and over cobbles in the floor a less obvious climb on a left hand bend gains a shelf to the right. Straight ahead, the passage lowers through a crawl emerging in the vadose trench, traversed over on the 'standard' route from the top of Whiteline Chamber. Alternatively, heading right along the ledge enters a rift where the roof opens out, this was the original entry route into Upper Trident and requires scaling techniques, from below, to appear in the chamber at the base of the first pitch, without the rope, encountered in the Broken Ladder Series. Continuing on, an easier climb at the end of the rift pops out below the second pitch, with the rope, in the Broken Ladder Series [4].

Immediately beyond this climb, as the passage swings right again, a wide balcony opens out to the left 2 metres up. Two main passages enter here, to the left when climbing onto the balcony is the top end of Whiteway [6] and to the right is the inlet leading, via a short crawl to the right, on to the 6 metre pitch going up to the lower end of Paper Floor Passage near to Boulder Chamber in Upper Trident [5c].

Up in the roof, above the upper end of Whiteway is an impassable bedding connection with a side passage in the Broken Ladder series, passed on the way towards Crystal Floor Passage [4a].

On the opposite side of the streamway a climb of 6 or 7 metres enters a small bedding passage that parallels the main stream to appear several metres up the wall in Whiteline Chamber. Further upstream still beyond balcony to Whiteway a step up in the stream over large cobbles enters the tall canyon approaching Whiteline Chamber. About 10 metres along, the roof widens out and three small

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beddings enter, two from the Boulder Chamber area on the left side [5c,5d] and one from above Whiteline Chamber on the right. Walking the last few metres, the canyon opens out into the spray lashed Whiteline Chamber, so named because of the obvious calcite vein running right up the back wall of the shaft. Above and behind on the right on entry to the chamber is the upstream end of the small parallel bedding. The water drops down two waterfalls separated by a rib of rock above. The left and lower fall drops from Whiteline Passage [5a], the right and higher fall is the water from Splash Chamber.

Eureka Junction to Stop Pot

Upstream from Eureka Junction the large passage passes an inlet on the right that leads back to the step up at the end of Lower Pierce's Passage near the Wretched Rabbit junction. Further upstream the passage continues over fallen roof slabs and boulders to reach a wide chamber, from here there are four ways on, two are straightforward and two obscure.

To the left the stream can be followed through a sometimes very wet boulder section, The Sluice, the final water chute of which may become completely impassable in wet weather. The chute can be bypassed by climbing up just before it onto a bedding plane shelf that rejoins the stream beyond the chute.

The second way on is up the slope to the right that leads to a low wide bedding plane crawl eventually emerging through the boulder choke in Stop Pot.

The access to the third route is up the slope, as previously mentioned, but before entering the bedding plane, turn left and traverse back across to the left wall of the chamber. Here there is an equivalent bedding plane to the previous route that bypasses that side of the choke to emerge 2 metres up the wall just upstream of The Sluice.

The final route is a tight way through unstable blocks starting above and to the left of the entrance to the right hand bedding. This ends in a tight cobble floored 'dug out' rift in the wall of the crawl heading away from Stop Pot towards Four Ways Chamber. There are several routes leading out of the massive Stop Pot. A climb up the huge boulder slope above leads to a 10 metre fixed iron ladder up into the High Level route through to Lancaster Hole.

A few metres up the slope towards the ladder and on the left there is ledge leading through a bedding plane connection through boulders to Four Ways Chamber and a route through to Wretched Rabbit Passage.

Looking back out over the boulder slope from the foot of the ladder a passage can be seen high up in the ceiling, this the downstream end of Double Decker Passage from Straw Chamber.

From the foot of the Stop Pot boulder slope two passages can be entered from a rock shelf on the right when facing upstream. The first one is Depot Passage 2 whilst the more obvious wide bedding is the complex Depot Passage 1.

On the opposite side of Stop Pot from the Depot Passages an involved route on ledges over and through huge fallen blocks above the streamway leads upstream to Holbeck Junction.

Stop Pot to Holbeck Junction

Heading upstream, away from Stop Pot, clambers over and through huge boulders just above stream level eventually emerges in a widening at stream level. Part way along this it is possible to climb up a very loose boulder slope to Straw Chamber, however, this is better reached by ascending the boulder slope from the widening.

Entering Straw Chamber at its base, the start of double Decker Passage can be seen at roof level high on the right wall. At the far end of Straw Chamber a steep slope of boulders leads to the well decorated Dry Dock Passage, this is a walking sized passage that terminates in an extensive choke.

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To the left of the entrance to Dry Dock and lower down is an awkward climb up the left wall entering a linking crawl to a tight connection down to Green and Smelly Passage.
Under the left wall of Straw Chamber a 'hair-raising' descent down loose boulders regains the main streamway just upstream of Stop Pot as previously mentioned.
From the widening back at stream level route over huge fallen blocks leads to a narrow section, and a climb down to the stream at Holbeck Junction. On arriving at Holbeck Junction from Stop Pot, three major routes present themselves. Just before dropping down to stream level a climb up mud covered boulders straight ahead is the start of Gypsum Caverns, a series of sandy chambers with gypsum crystals on the walls.
In the streamway at Holbeck Junction, upstream leads to Thackray's Passage and the connection with the Far Series of Ease Gill Caverns and finally to Top Sink, covered in Sheet 4.
Straight ahead, when the streamway is entered, is a dry oxbow, the standard entry point from the lower reaches of Pool Sink and Borehole. The huge sentry boulder in the streamway is now teetering so climb the slope beside it with care.
A short distance downstream on the left from Holbeck Junction the downstream end of Green and Smelly Passage is met even further downstream the main stream continues until it gets too low in boulders.

Gypsum Caverns

Heading up the slope from Holbeck Junction, a route to the right under massive boulders drops back to the streamway, but heading on over boulder obstacles soon reaches a junction. To the right, is one end of a large oxbow rejoining Gypsum Caverns further along the main route. The oxbow contains a perilous traverse over a pit at the bottom of which is an audible connection to Thackray's Passage.
Heading left at the junction leads to a 3 metre roped climb down. The slope down to the left at the foot of the climb leads to flat out bedding crawls that soon choke. Up the slope to the right leads to Gypsum Caverns proper. Some 60 metres of stooping and walking follows and the other end of the oxbow from the junction appears on the right. Continuing straight on, the wide passage finally appears to end, here a small passage enters on the right from 2 metres up the wall, Perfection Passage. This low, tight and calcite floored bedding crawl leads to Easter Grotto. On the left wall opposite Perfection Passage, is another tight passage that soon closes down, its end is somewhere below Easter Grotto, see Sheet 4.

Thackray's Passage

Heading upstream from Holbeck Junction, Thackray's Passage begins as an easy walking streamway. Fairly soon a point is reached where the water emerges from a very low wet bedding plane. Just before this bedding two very small passages are passed on a ledge on the left, the upstream and longer one ends in a low and muddy bedding.
Where the stream emerges from the bedding is a step up to the right entering a stooping oxbow with a connection climb up to the Gypsum Caverns oxbow. Often the stooping stream bypass oxbow contains a pool and beyond is a stal grille, a slide through which drops back to the main stream upstream of the low wet bedding. From here the upstream passage continues as a low stooping and wide streamway, gradually increasing in height, as it heads towards Assembly Hall on the route to Top Sink, described in the Sheet 4 booklet.

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Notes

The route in from Pool Sink

Lower 'T' Piece Passage to Green and Smelly Passage

Below the final pitch of Pool Sink, Lower 'T' Piece Passage is mainly easy walking, with occasional scrambling over boulders. Two route lead to junctions with the large Green and Smelly Passage, the upper dry oxbows route connecting some 15 metres downstream of the wet route. About 20 metres downstream from the junction the two routes diverge near large jammed boulders. A very tight connecting bedding plane in the left wall ledge of the stream passage joins up with the bedding complex on the route from the Borehole. It is this bedding that is bypassed through the more commodious Eccles Bypass.

Downstream from the boulders the passage narrows and after a short wade a cross passage is reached. Ahead the stream enters into a low bedding plane, best avoided by going right, then by crawling and stooping to emerge in the dry oxbows of Green and Smelly Passage.

To the left at the cross junction leads to the lower end of Borehole and also Spiral Staircase Passage.

Green and Smelly Passage to Holbeck Junction

Green and Smelly Passage is the tall canyon entered from the oxbows on the right of the jammed boulders mentioned above. The passage is mainly walking with the occasional boulder obstacle to a pool where a quick left and the right turn emerge in a large cobble strewn chamber containing a huge slipped block. A climb up onto this block leads to a traverse above the previously mentioned passage as Upper Green and Smelly Passage. This can be accessed in its upper reaches by traversing from the foot of Spiral Staircase Passage or by climbing up at various points in Green and Smelly Passage.

Crossing the chamber with the huge block regains the streamway. At this point two ways on can be followed, the streamway or an oxbow on the right.

The streamway can be followed by hands and knees crawling until the main streamway is met, going upstream in stooping passage soon arrives at Holbeck Junction a slight widening in the passage with a boulder slope up to the left.

The oxbow is the easier route, passing a roof connection to Straw Chamber, a small blind passage on the right, finally emerging at the large unstable boulder in the main streamway marking Holbeck Junction.

Connections to Wretched Rabbit via Spiral Staircase, also to The Borehole via Eccles Bypass

From the cross junction at the end of Lower 'T' Piece Passage, turning left into a narrow passage leads, after a few bends, to a small and apparently blind chamber. However, low down on the right wall is a small hole into an adjacent chamber that allows a fairly easy ascent to the top of the separating wall. From here a slither and careful step over gains a boulder floored passage. Four separate routes unite at this point.

Back out over the first chamber entered is a crawl along a loose ledge leading to Upper Green and Smelly Passage, basically a high level traverse over boulders with some wide bridging, eventually descending into the chamber containing the huge fallen block just prior to Holbeck Junction.

From the chamber climbing down the boulder strewn rift reveals a hole through into Eccles Bypass and the link to The Borehole. The passage continuing over the rift fizzles out in boulders near 4-Ways Junction.

Ahead in the chamber the high aven has a hanging passage on the left with a large cairn at its base, built to allow easy access to Spiral Staircase Passage. Beyond this passage the aven, sometimes roped, also gives access to Spiral Staircase Passage, both ways lead to the Big Rift in Wretched Rabbit.

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The route in via Spiral Staircase Passage

At the lower end of the Big Rift in Wretched Rabbit entrance series, a climb down the solid walls, not the dry stone walling, of the excavated shaft leads to a crawling and then walking streamway, Spiral Staircase Passage. After passing, with care, some fine straw formations a junction is reached.

To the left a short stooping passage leads to the top of an aven, sometimes roped, allowing a descent down a chimney to a ledge and then drop to reach the chamber below.

To the right at the junction a tortuous crawling passage continues around sharp bends to emerge at the previous aven but from a point about 3 metres off the floor, hence the need for the very large cairn below.

The route in from The Borehole

Passages on Sheet 3 lead from below the Borehole pitch to connections with passages in Pool Sink.

Downstream from the Borehole Pitch, see Sheet 4, is a narrow snaking passage which eventually emerges in a larger passage. A hole through boulders up to right gives access to a spacious chamber dominated by giant looming blocks. To the right, behind a large block, a wide passage leads to a spacious bedding plane that chokes after 40 metres.

Continuing further on downstream the walking sized passage leads to the large, and flat roofed, Mottershead's Chamber. To the left the chamber can be followed past an aven to a 'dug out' crawl into a series of loose chambers heading towards Dry Dock Passage.

The main way on from Mottershead's Chamber is to the right over shattered blocks and into a crawl emerging down a climb into, 4-Ways Junction. Continuing forwards up and out of the far end of 4-Ways Junction chamber is a short section of muddy rift. After exiting the rift through boulders, right leads back to 4-Ways Junction, whilst to the left is a wide passage at the foot of an awkward 2 metre climb down.

Right from the base of the climb is a larger passage with a roof oxbow and several avens leading to a large choke filled with black boulders. Near the start of this passage a climb down through loose and delicately poised boulders in the floor reaches a crawl to connect with the climb up out of the Eccles Bypass bedding.

To the left of the 2 metre climb, the passage continues over more blocks until it meets a clean washed chamber. Ahead, past some fine formations, is Stal Passage which is choked by a block fall. Before Stal Passage is reached, however, a hole in the boulder floor leads down through precariously poised boulders to two superimposed bedding planes.

Back underneath the boulders has been followed back towards the 2 metre climb as previously mentioned.

Climbing further down the boulder choke reaches the streamway where progress is made in the lower bedding plane downstream over clean washed rock. After 10 metres the passage shelves away to the right to the very tight squeeze leading directly into Lower 'T' Piece Passage a little way upstream from its junction with Green & Smelly Passage.

Avoiding the bedding passage and continuing along the abandoned low bedding plane on the left is Eccles Bypass. Two stream inlets are passed on the left coming from beneath Mottershead's Chamber and a slope upward arrives in a rift at right-angles. Climbing up the rift rightward leads directly to the floor of the low wide chamber below Spiral Staircase Passage. All of Eccles Bypass passage is low and flood prone as water backs up from the main streamway well beyond this point.

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Notes

Molluscan Hall to Mancunian Way

Downstream of Dismal Junction the wet crawl ends with the squeeze up through boulders to enter a large boulder floored passage. From this point it is possible to climb up through the boulder choke at the left wall to gain Upper Molluscan Hall and the Dismal Bypass route.

Ahead the large passage enters a jumble of boulders and starting on the right with a series of climbs up and down over block falls and then veering over to the left wall to a drop that regains the stream. Just a few metres downstream a bedding plane enters up on the left wall, this is the main way on. The large passage continues downstream for some distance becoming increasingly low.

Climbing up into the wide bedding and crawling flat out for some distance until small boulder chambers lead to an awkward muddy climb up to enter a wide, low, muddy and boulder floored passage. At the far end of this passage the water from Molluscan Hall can be heard running below and this is reached by a squirm down a chimney on the right. The streamway starts low but then the passage rises to an impressive height and scrambling over and under boulder obstacles eventually arrives at the main Ease Gill water at Surprise Junction. Here all ways on quickly end in hazardous crawls beneath masses of loose collapsed blocks though a way through from Eureka Junction to Oxbow Corner has apparently be made.

Back at the squirm down into the streamway, a passage leads away and a climb up into a parallel passage gains the base of the 11 metre high Ease Gill Aven, scaling this leads to a series of passages.

To the left at the top of the aven is a crawl that enters The Surprise, a large chamber with the Mancunian Way extension leading off beyond. To one side of the chamber is a 3 metre climb up a gravel and mud wall into Sideline Passage, a low crawl, with a tight passage to the right that chokes, that emerges 6 metres up the wall of Snail Cavern in the High Level Route of Lancaster Hole.

The other route from the top of Ease Gill Aven, The Mancunian Way, leads via a series of low chambers and crawls to a larger passage entering Cornes Cavern from behind a tremendous dropped block.

Beyond The Surprise the well decorated passage of Nice Way splits after about 100 metres at Bi the Way. To the right after about 15 metres of crawling under a false floor reaches a flowstone blockage. To the left a bedding plane can be forced until it becomes too tight.

To the left at Bi the Way continues as a crouching walk followed by a hands and knees crawl to another fork. To the right is low and blocked by boulders. Near the end of the left hand branch, after Bi the Way, a hole on a shelf in the right hand wall leads down a 5 metre pitch to a dug-out and blasted section. After a short flat out crawl a 7 metre pitch is reached. This pitch has a scaffold bar in place and is in a very tight and awkward rift. At the bottom of the pitch is a larger passage, up dip, that quickly chokes close to passages in Sylvester Pot. Downstream through a shattered chamber leads to a stream passage that can be followed down to a 9 metre pitch into Clough's Aven In Clough's Passage.

This route provides yet another round trip in the Ease Gill System and is a quick route out of the far reaches of The Mancunian Way by using a 20 metre rope to abseil the three pitches described above. This should only be attempted in dry conditions to avoid being cut off by flooding at Dismal Junction.

Maracaibo

The far reaches of this series of passages does encroach onto Sheet 3 but is already fully described on page 13 of the Sheet 2 reprint booklet. It is worth mentioning at this point that the section around the Apple Barrel in Maracaibo is probably associated with the passages at the end of Bi the Way in Mancunian Way.

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Depot Passages

From Stop Pot the passage commences as a 6 metre wide bedding plane on a shelf above a climb up blocks on the true left bank. The floor contains a number of slots down to a tortuous set of wet beddings. The main passage gradually lowers and narrows to a sharp right turn and the passage changes to a phreatic tube. On the left hand side through this section are several routes into an unstable area beneath Double Decker Passage. After 30 metres there is another sharp right hand turn. Turning right here is the main way on. Over to the left, however, is a wriggle up through boulders into Depot 0.5.

Depot 0.5

This starts as a T shaped passage with a mud and boulder choke to the left, but to the right a T junction is reached after only a few metres. To the left is a low sandy passage which has been dug and gives a vocal connection to Green and Smelly Passage. To the right the way on at roof level appears to choke but a low section in the floor leads via an awkward corner to a loose rift up through boulders to a bedding chamber, there are several ways on here.

Straight on across the chamber is a low bedding that continues for some distance. The passage behind the way up into the chamber ends in a choke. On the right of the chamber is the top of a rift. An awkward traverse along this followed by a 4 metre climb down to the floor of the passage reaches a sharp left hand corner over-looking the roof of the main rift in Depot 1 and an easy 5 metre climb down leads to the floor of this passage or it can be traversed at roof level.

Depot 1

The main way on in Depot 1 leads off from the second sharp right hand bend. The crawl gradually increases in height and it is necessary to crawl under or over several fallen blocks until quite suddenly the passage develops into a high rift passage, this is straight and some 6 metres high. There are several fallen blocks that have to be climbed over. When reaching the first of these it is possible to climb into the roof of the passage and traverse its length in either direction. Traversing back leads to the connection to Depot 0.5 described earlier. At the end of the main rift the passage splits into two. Up to the left over a sandy slope is a short section of passage to a circular chamber and a 15 metre high aven.

To the right and down at the sandy slope leads around some low corners to an enlargement and an awkward 3.7 metre climb, tapes helpful, to an upper level. Above the climb the passage again splits. Straight on past a small stal column the roof lowers to a flat out crawl, which emerges at a 5 metre climb up in a 10 metre high rift, the route at floor level to the right becomes low over cobbles. To the left just before the rift is reached a short crawl leads to an upward squeeze providing an alternative route to Trapdoor Chamber.

At the top of the 5 metre climb, two ways present themselves. A short slope leads to a larger sandy passage and an awkward climb down, joining with the route mentioned above, and short passage to Trapdoor Chamber.

In the chamber a sandy low tunnel on the left leads to a boulder choked pit with a vocal connection to the 15 metre aven back in the main Depot 1 passage. Up to the right in the chamber a narrow decorated rift becomes progressively tighter, passing a rocky squeeze followed by more narrow rift passage to a wider section with 3 metre climb into small passage which gets too tight after 10 metres.

The other way from the top of the 5 metre rift climb leads to a flat roofed sandy chamber with a steep sand slope leading to a passage in the roof. This is a low crawl which enlarges and then descends via a slide to the top of the 15 metre aven off Depot 1 main passage. Beyond the sand slope a crawl at floor level under cemented blocks pops out in a well decorated but small stream passage. The lower section of the stream passage becomes impassable and progress is made at a higher level. A fine group of helictites decorates one wall and just

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beyond the passage widens out and eventually bifurcates and closes down. The draught being followed comes from an excavated crawl on the left that leads to a choked passage containing lace-calcite formations and a calcite floor. The passage passes a choked inlet on the right and ends in mud and boulders with possible continuations through a too-tight hole to the right and in the floor where a boulder blocks access to a lower passage.

Depot 1.5

To the right at the junction above the 3.7 metre climb is Depot 1.5, starting with the flat out, Flashbang Crawl. This passage continues for 46 metres, mostly over smooth calcite to a blasted squeeze, then a narrow rift to a sudden climb up into Ahaa Chamber.

The first exit on right is a low triangular crawl for 30 metres to a choke. This is close to the end of Depot 2 Passage. The second exit is small passage through a grotto to a squeeze and calcite choke. Straight ahead from Ahaa Chamber is a step into a walking size passage with a shattered rift chamber on the right. A 5 metre climb at the far, eastern, end of this chamber leads to a narrow inclined rift tube, Onion Passage that emerges into Lofty Chamber. This is section of old dry passage blocked at both ends by sand and boulder fill. A 3 metre climb into an old stream trench on left leads to Pretty Passage. At the first right hand bend of Pretty Passage a tight crawl on the right leads back to Lofty Chamber near its eastern end. Pretty Passage eventually splits and chokes but just before the split, a drafting tube on the left has been known to bring in flood water, most likely from Spiral Staircase Passage, but is too small to follow.

Below the shattered rift chamber a short crawl and 3 metre chimney up on the right leads via a squeeze onto a loose boulder slope down into the left hand branch of Wretched Rabbit Passage above the waterfalls. The top of this chimney can also be reached via a flat out crawl at the top of the 5 metre climb into Onion Passage.

Depot 2 Passage

From the rock shelf where Depot Passage starts a crawl over a mud bank in the right side of the passage leads into a minaret-shaped passage. This can be followed by mainly crawling for 70 metres to a choke, close to passages in Depot 1.

Snail Cavern and Monster Cavern

The high level route from Stake Pot, shown on Sheet 2, continues beyond Cornes Cavern which narrows at its far end and then enlarges again when Snail Cavern is entered. At the top of a mud slope is the way down to Lower Snail Cavern and a way though at stream level via a very wet route to Eureka Junction, only to be attempted in very dry conditions.

Back in Upper Snail Cavern on the right wall 8 metre is the end of Sideline Passage arriving from The Surprise, sometimes a dubious rope is in place. This provides a link with Mancunian Way. A few metres further on up another 8 metre climb on the right wall is the entry to Main Line Passage which links to Main Line Terminus normally reached by following the large open passage to where it splits into four separate passages.

Continuing on beyond Snail Cavern the largest of the high level caverns is reached, Monster Cavern. This is some 100 metres long and over 20 metres wide at its widest point. At the end of this a slope leads up broad mud ledges to emerge at Main Line Terminus, a low and wide crossroads.

The first passage on the right is the other end of Mainline Passage. Next to this, also on the right, is the start of Manchester Bypass, the flood escape route out of Ease Gill via County Pot, whilst straight ahead leads through a crawl to enlarge again and end in Carrot Chamber. A passage in the right wall just before the end of Carrot Chamber is a very tight crawl, Crystal Passage,

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through to Old English Chamber and another connection to the Manchester Bypass.
Left at Main Line Terminus is a traverse round a choked pit into a sandy passage and crawl to a dig. Though not the most obvious outlet, the way on to Stop Pot is a short wide crawl to a climb downs and mixed going in smaller passage for a short distance before arrival at the top of Stop Pot. Here a fixed iron ladder drops to a steep boulder slope down to the Main Drain and the rest of the Ease Gill Caverns.
Warning! This slope has many scar marks from recent rock falls, descend with care. The whole of the High Level Route should be treated with respect due to the confusing route finding and slippery mud slopes over dangerous deep holes in the floor down to the Master Cave.

Manchester Bypass

**** Important - Flood Escape Route ****

This route provides the least complicated means of escaping from the Main Drain via County Pot under flood conditions.
The route starts from Main Line Terminus in the High Level Route as if heading toward Stop Pot. In Main Line Terminus head rightwards down the slope crossing a small rift to the muddy ledges leading up and slide over a small ridge, to arrive at the start of Main Line Passage. Beyond this point walking and scrambling leads to where the floor rises suddenly, with the way on being a very low shattered bedding plane crawl. By keeping to the right hand side of the bedding and after only 8 metres, a slide awkwardly up through a slot emerges into Old English Chamber, to the left in the bedding is Crystal Passage leading off to Carrot Chamber.
A small muddy hole to the left of the point of entry into Old English Chamber is the low and narrow Spangle Passage. Various obstacles and short traverses at roof level lead on finally to a narrow descending rift. Care is required here as the rift ends 3.7 metres above the boulder strewn floor of Brown and Smelly Chamber. The climb down is quite awkward due to the greasy nature of the walls and a short line or a couple of slings can be of great help. A route in the floor of the chamber leads to Fatarse Squeeze and the connections through to Upper and Lower Pierce's Passages.
The correct way on, however, is a crawl out of the chamber over boulders to the left at the bottom of the climb, followed quickly by a drop into a small and shattered passage. This soon rises over muddy boulders and to the right here is the top of a 6 metre pitch with a fixed ladder in place.
For those who are very slim it is possible to by-pass this pitch by continuing forward into Coño Crawl, a very narrow rift and corkscrew descent that emerges over the top of two large unstable boulders at the end of the chamber encountered near the bottom of the fixed ladder.
From the foot of the ladder a scramble up boulders to a short crawl that gives on to a short descent into a muddy fissure and a way on into a low cobbled crawl via a gap between two loose boulders. Ahead, leads into a low bedding chamber with the route on being up and over some large fallen blocks on the left. A short scramble and a few metres of walking sized passage emerges in the active streamway just upstream of the spout in Spout Hall.
Upstream from near Spout Hall via Showerbath Passage enters Oxford Circus and the climb on the left in Broadway leads to the base of first pitch in County Pot and out to the surface.

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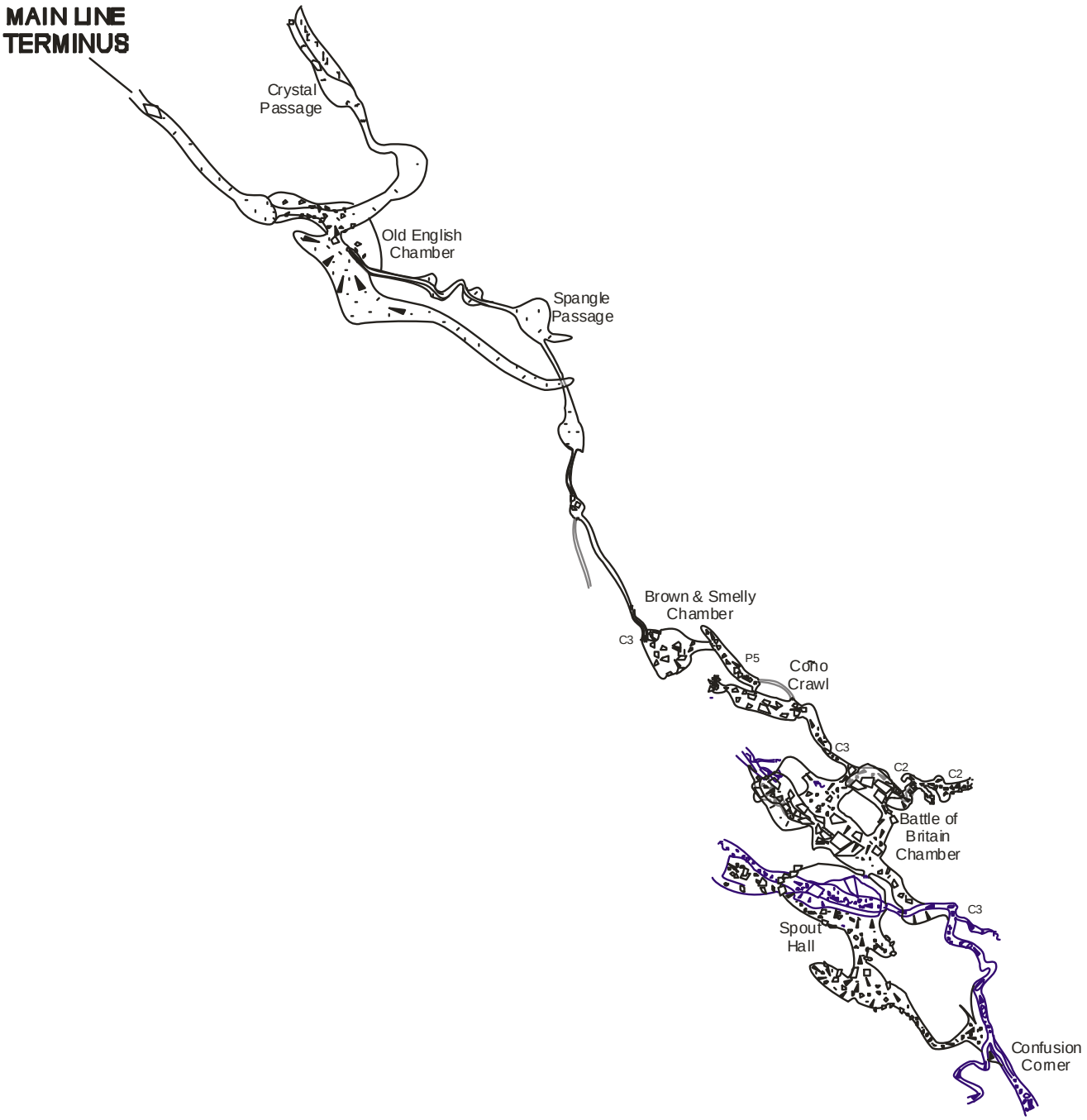
Manchester Bypass Survey



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Notes

Other Entrances to Ease Gill Caverns on Sheet 3

Corner Sink

SD 67587 80650 Alt: 317 metres

Warning! Liable to rapid flooding if the gill starts to flow.

The entrance is in the true right bank of the gill at a sharp corner just upstream of County Pot. There are two passages at the start of the cave, a higher abandoned dry crawl and a rift entrance below, the upper entrance joining the rift route just before a climb down to a pool. The rift entrance is a squeeze down over large boulders into a rift passage which quickly becomes a crawl. Beyond a small oxbow on the right the floor starts cutting down and walking is possible to a climb down to a pool. On the far side of this a narrow fissure can be climbed into, thus avoiding the choked wet bedding below. After a few metres the fissure descends into a small chamber from which a very low and wet bedding plane crawl connects through to Swindon Hole. Just beyond this junction a low bedding inlet enters from the right, this becomes too low after 20 metres. Further along the main passage a small low chamber is entered that leads to the Red Chimney connection to Trident.

Sylvester Pot

SD 67366 80585 Alt: 316 metres

Entrance is flood prone and loose boulders are a hazard in several parts of the cave. The entrance is located in the bed of Howe Gill about 100 metres above its confluence with Ease Gill and on the true right bank just below a waterfall. An obvious dam has been built around the entrance and should be checked before entering. The entrance crawl soon becomes low at a squeeze which can become blocked by shingle. Beyond the squeeze the passage opens out into a small chamber. To the right here leads back toward the entrance, but straight on through boulders leads to a crawl and a vocal connection via a 7m blind pot to the first pitch. To the right above the blind pot is a sandy tunnel which breaks out over the top of the 20 metre first pitch. The streamway above the first pitch can be followed upstream for a few metres until it chokes close to the entrance. Downstream two short cascades are descended to the head of the pitch, bolts are in place and the shaft is broken 15 metres down by a large ledge.
At the bottom of the pitch is a boulder strewn chamber with several ways on. Scrambling over the boulders leads to a loose breakdown chamber, while climbing down through the boulders leads to a 3 metre climb and another very unstable breakdown chamber.
The main way on is along a crawl immediately at the base of the first pitch and a junction is soon reached. To the left is the 7 metre second pitch which can be descended via two alternative holes into the Main Chamber.
Back at the junction the right hand crawl leads to a wide and complex bedding plane, Route 880.

Main Chamber

In the main chamber there are three ways on. Descending the boulders in the floor of the chamber leads to the ‘free climbable’ 4 metre third pitch and then down through boulders to a small streamway, Upper Clough’s Passage in County Pot. The water can be followed upstream for 40 metres to avens below the Main Chamber and downstream to two climbs down into Clough’s Passage and the way on to Dismal Junction. Above Upper Clough’s Passage and before the two climbs down is a low crawl leading to a series of rifts and sandy tunnels where the stream below can be heard, this is The San Andreas Fault Passage. Back in the Main Chamber the other two ways on are down the obvious rift at the other end of the chamber. This leads below the breakdown chambers at the

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base of the first pitch and is liberally endowed with loose boulders. Just after entering the rift a loose climb up on the left leads through to the connection to The Delicate Sound of Thunder and Luff's Passage in County Pot.

Route 880

Route 880 is a wide and low bedding plane with several holes in the floor. It is easy to become disorientated and end up going round in circles. After about 10 metres a junction is reached, to the left is an obscure low crawl over a 4 metres deep rift, with a chamber below, through to a large sand filled chamber, Newton's Wonder, with a fine set of gour pools and associated stalactites. The avens leading out of Newton's Wonder close down so please do not climb the formations! A stream enters from the roof and is lost in the boulders which form the floor. It is assumed to be the stream in Luff's Passage.
Back in Route 880 the main way on leads past three holes in the floor all of which have been descended to loose boulder chambers. The main bedding narrows and becomes a flat out crawl to a narrow pitch head. Just before this a climb down the last hole breaks out into a large chamber with a rock bridge, Hanging Death Hall. At the far end of this are several sand choked crawls which are very close to Mancunian Way in County Pot, and an aven dropping down from the narrow pitch head mentioned above. In the floor of this chamber the stream in Upper Clough's Passage can be heard.

Swindon Hole

SD 67570 80604 Alt: 314 metres

Situated approximately midway between Corner Sink and County Pot this is the fissure entrance in the true right bank. A few metres of passage lead to a step down into a bedding plane passage, and a crawl through a pool. At the far end of this a far larger passage is entered with a short inlet running off to the right. On downstream the way on gradually enlarges, with six offshoots on the right. The first two connect to form a complex area with beddings and chokes, the second passage leading to a climb up to near the surface at the bend near Corner Sink. Further downstream from these passages a low area is met, which probably sumps in wet weather, and just beyond this point an inlet on the right soon chokes somewhere below the gill. After a longer stretch of crawling, another inlet on the right leads through a low wet bedding crawl to join Corner Sink. Further downstream another inlet on the right degenerates to flat out crawling in water before becoming too tight. On downstream again the passage roof rises up and a climb up, into a bedding plane, reveals the 4 metre Red Chimney down to a narrow rift. Descending further down the rift leads to a small chamber from which a flat out crawl leads to the connections with Splash Chamber in the Upper Trident Series of County Pot.

Wretched Rabbit Entrance

SD 67633 80677 Alt: 319 metres

Warning! The low passage at the end of the Big Rift and the cascades beyond may become impassable in high flood.
The entrance is located on the true right bank of Ease Gill near a large pool and 30 metre downstream from Slit Sinks. The main passage provides a fairly easy way into the Ease Gill system without the use of tackle but the climbs up the Big Rift are strenuous on the return. The whole Wretched Rabbit Series is far more complex than would first appear from just a casual visit. Only the main way through the Upper Series is described here as most of this will be dealt with on Sheet 4.
Once inside the entrance a short crawl leads to the first of a series of short but awkward drops into the Big Rift, a 15 metre hand line is useful. This first drop is presently rigged with a scaffold bar and fixed hand line. At the bottom of this

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first climb are three ways on. There are two passages on the right, one an inlet rising over large cobbles to a choke and the other a tight bedding plane crawl dropping into a passage, leading to the Upper Entrance Series and the connection with New Cave.

Upper Wretched Rabbit

Three more drops land in the Big Rift which is easily traversed to a chamber. In an alcove to the right is a 4 metre climb into the Upper Entrance Series. An obvious excavated pit in the floor leads down a slot and into the top end of Spiral Staircase Passage, providing a short route to Holbeck Junction. However, the main way on is straight across the pit to a hands and knees crawl that quickly enlarges to sideways walking in a meandering canyon passage. After several short climbs down, holes in the floor or alternative oxbows lead down two waterfalls.

By traversing over the holes to the right an inlet streamway is met, and a just a few metres upstream this passage turns sharp right. Above and ahead is a 2 metre climb up to a traverse and awkward crawl to a small decorated chamber which is choked with fill at both ends. A narrow 5 metre deep slot in the floor connects with Marble Chamber.

A few metres further upstream the passage rises up over boulders and the stream is lost in the floor. On the right is a 2 metre step up followed by a step over holes in the floor to Ulrika Junction, where a complex of passages continues above and parallel to the main Wretched Rabbit Streamway.

Straight on goes to a well decorated chamber with a voice connection in the roof to the upper level. A little further is a junction. Straight on again leads out over a traverse to an 8 metre pitch down into Marble Chamber. To the left via a squeeze goes to a small well decorated chamber with all ways on choked.

Two alternative 3 metre climbs in the roof at Ulrika Junction lead to an upper passage. One direction leads via a crawl and a chamber with unstable boulders to Mystery and Imagination Passage. This involves a tight squeeze and crawling to a connection with Dreamweaver, though not physically connected due to a large unstable boulder barring the way. The other is an awkward traverse to a choked crawl and a 6 metre slot back down to the lower passage. Back at the inlet, the passage rises up to the base of a boulder slope, up which leads to the squeeze and chimney down into Depot 1.5.

At the base of the boulder slope is a slot above or crawl at floor level through to the continuation of the Middle Parallel Streamway. A short distance along here is a rift passage on the right leads back to the main Wretched Rabbit streamway a short distance above the waterfalls. The Middle Parallel Streamway can be followed upstream for a considerable distance as a narrow winding streamway until it becomes too low and is blocked by boulders. The end is close to the floor in the bottom end of the Big Rift.

Lower Wretched Rabbit

Below the waterfalls the passage continues past a fine long stalactite. Above the stal is a 5 metre climb, best avoided as it would cause damage to the formations, into a narrow passage leading to the small elliptical Marble Chamber. To the left at entry the chamber descends over calcite to become too low, while above is a climb up a 4 metre aven to a tight rift. On the right is a 5 metre climb up to another narrow passage followed by another decorated chamber choked at both ends.

Back in the main streamway after about 30 metres of twisting and turning passage with some narrow sections at thigh level the stream passes under some boulders.

A climb up to the roof here leads to a bedding plane and another hading climb up to a boulder choke. Up and straight on through the boulders leads to a larger chamber and two ways on. To the right through a boulder squeeze is a 10 metre high aven with a dubious fixed rope in place. To the left is a sandy dig up an awkward chute to another choked aven, work continues in this area.

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Dreamweaver

The streamway continues for a short distance and then sinks away to the left through black boulders, with a dry passage to the right. About 5 metres back upstream of this junction is a 2 metre climb up to a sandy wriggle into a chamber with a false floor in the roof. Another 3 metre climb past the false floor leads to a fixed rope up a 4 metre aven. This is followed by a squeeze into a small chamber with a blind pit in the floor. An awkward 5 metre climb up the chamber wall leads into a tortuous well decorated crawl, Dreamweaver, where precision body positioning is required to avoid damage to formations. After 30 metres this breaks out at a short climb up into a larger passage which rapidly chokes to the right just past a large stalagmite and lowers to a sandy crawl to the left. Straight on is a squeeze under a suspended boulder and connects to Mystery and Imagination Passage and the complex of passages already described above the two waterfalls.

Back at the junction in Wretched Rabbit Passage, the right hand passage is a dry high level oxbow and traverse to a boulder strewn section where the stream is rejoined. Several cross rifts are evident here and one of these on the left leads to a low crawl that turns 90º to the right into a larger passage. This chokes with calcite very close to the downstream end of Crystal Floor Passage in the Trident Series.

In the main streamway crawling soon becomes necessary and after 20 metres a shuffle past a boulder marks one of several short climbs in the roof which lead to Four Ways Chamber and a connection to Stop Pot, see below. Downstream is another 100 metres of mixed going including a traverse and a crawl to the junction with Lower Pierce's Passage in County Pot. Turning right here leads in about 10 metres to Eureka Junction.

Four Ways Chamber to Stop Pot

By climbing up the boulders out of Wretched Rabbit Passage, with care, and squeezing through a constriction, leads eventually to Four Ways Chamber. There are several ways on from here but the main route goes rightwards over a slab and drops back into an alcove where a low scalloped trench enters. This is a hands and knees and flat out crawl for 30 metres emerging onto a broad platform at the side of the Stop Pot boulder slope. Up the slope leads to the fixed iron ladder and the high level route to Lancaster Hole. Down the slope the main drain is quickly reached. The Four Ways Chamber route forms a useful escape in flood conditions when Eureka Junction and the bottom of Wretched Rabbit passage may be sumped.

Other Caves within Sheet 3

OS Grid References are included to 10 figures where known.

Bat Cave

NGR SD 67577 80586 Alt 318 metres Length 107 metres

This is a high entrance in the obvious rift opposite Swindon Hole and above Gelder Hole, where a stream emerges. A twisting canyon passage leads to a junction. Right soon splits into two impassable branches whilst left continues some distance to small chambers and tight inlets. Water as been dye tested to come from Oxford Cave 3 via Bramble Hole.

Blythe Hole

NGR SD 6760 8052 Alt 327 metres

This is a surface collapse into rift passage with the way on at present blocked by surface debris.

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Bramble Hole

NGR SD 675 806 Alt 335 metres Length 40 metres

This is a stream sink in Oxford Cave Beck. A 4 metre climb down leads to a stream passage, downstream is a wet crawl to a large white formation. Under this is a low bedding plane continues for about another 20 metres to a tight rift. The water has been traced to Bat Cave. Upstream beyond a squeeze is a wide bedding plane, pushed for 10 metres, heading towards Oxford Cave 3.

Cliff Cave

NGR SD 67375 80486 Alt 303 metres Length 15 metres

The entrance is situated on a ledge in the cliff face on the true left bank of Ease Gill opposite the tributary of Howe Gill. A low crawl, recently dug, passes a small inlet on right, too tight, and the way on continues as a flat out bedding to the head of a 5 metre pitch. A clean washed chamber at the base closes down to small holes. The bedding continues above the pitch but is choked solid.

County Caves

1. NGR SD 67544 80534 Alt 316 metres
2. NGR SD 67555 80545 Alt 319 metres
3. NGR SD 67556 80547 Alt 319 metres

1. This is an obvious bedding plane entrance across the gill from County Pot. The way on quickly lowers to a crawl and choked passages. Two other caves to the left and right of No.1 are short and choked with boulders. Length 8 metres
2. The entrance is upstream of No.1 and higher in the scar. Stooping passage to a sudden entry into a fine chamber.
   A climb down overhanging blocks leads to the floor with several blind holes and a short passage. One of the holes has been descended to a pitch with a very tight take off and no natural belay, down this leads to a rift which heads back under the gill, both directions are blocked by cobbles and boulders but a draft could be detected.
   Back at the chamber there is a climb up onto a shelf which has two inlets. One is a narrow fissure, the other an easy going passage to a small aven. Length 33 metres
3. Immediately left of No.2 is a sideways slide into a high canyon and an easy traverse past a short side passage on the right to a boulder choke. Length 21 metres

Cow Dubs I

NGR SD 6749 8055 Alt 301 metres

This is a short low bedding plane cave in the true right wall at the base of waterfall at Cow Dub, only accessible in extreme drought.

Cow Dubs II

NGR SD 67470 80535 Alt 301 metres

Entrance in rock walled hole just downstream and on the left of Cow Dubs waterfall itself. The hole leads to a flat out wet crawl to the head of a 3 metre drop. Below the drop a body sized tube, which can be extremely wet, is followed by more crawling to where the way enlarges to walking sized passage to a 5 metre pitch into the top of Butterfield's Passage in County Pot.

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Finger Pot

NGR SD 67456 80515 Alt 310 metres Length 10 metres

Entrance is covered by boulders in a thick patch of bracken about 20 metre down the valley from where the wall joins the beck at Cow Dubs, well up on the left bank near to a pointed boulder. A straight descent of 8 metres down the rift lands on a sloping floor which funnels down to a rift passage. The rift quickly chokes in either direction.

Gelder Hole

NGR SD 6756 8059 Alt 314 metres Length 10 metres

Situated directly below Bat Cave where the water falls down 2 metres and into a wet bedding plane, which has been pushed under the beck to a low sump. In flood the water from here was seen to enter County Pot from the roof above Confusion Corner.

Howgill Sink

SD 6722 8041 Depth 12 metres Alt 292 metres

Warning! The entrance is often under water when Ease Gill is flowing.
The entrance is beneath a cover in the true left bank of Ease Gill, about 270m downstream of Cow Dubs waterfall. A short and tight climb down lands in a widening where a rift on the left chokes and bedding plane in the foot of the climb is choked at present.

Innominate Sink

NGR SD 6753 8050 Alt 323 metres Length 3 metres

This is situated up the side valley above Cow Dubs below a small rock wall, where water obviously has sunk in wet weather. The entrance is completely blocked at present.

Old Holborn Cave

NGR SD 6757 8059 Alt 314 metres Length 10 metres

The entrance is located just upstream and on the opposite bank to Swindon Hole. A slope down into a short section of tight rift leads to a choke, here an awkward drop through a hole in the floor lands in low and wet bedding plane. The bedding heads towards and away from the gill and becomes too tight.

Oxford Pot

NGR SD 675 805
Entrance now blocked.
This was situated only a few metres downstream of County Pot beneath a large boulder. A short drop leads directly onto the 14 metre Oxford Pot pitch, below which a low wet crawl leads into a large passage. On the left is a crawl through bedding plane that connects to the foot of the 1st Pitch in County Pot. The passage descends small cascades to a climbable 3 metre pitch at the foot of which is a junction, here a small inlet joins. The continuation, the Snake, is a twisting and tortuous passage to an enlargement. From here a scramble down a bouldery rift leads to where a larger passage enters from the left, Showerbath Passage in County Pot.

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Oxford Caves

A series of caves associated with the tributary gill opposite County Pot.

1. Cave 1 NGR SD 67559 80581 Alt 317 metres
2. Cave 2 NGR SD 67565 80561 Alt 321 metres
3. Cave 3 NGR SD 67625 80523 Alt 333 metres

Cave 1.
The entrance is situated 15 metres downstream from Gelder Hole. At beck level water can be heard through the lower entrance, a bedding slot under the cliff on the left bank. The easier entrance is an easily missed rift on a grassy ledge, 10 metres above. Downstream, currently choked, soon leads back to the rising below. Upstream, a tight squeeze in a narrow canyon that gains height on a tight bend, into a small bedding plane. Then awkward going over pools and cobble obstacles as the passage narrows, leads after 22 metres to a choke. About 6 metres back from the choke a strong draught enters from the left, looking downstream, through rocks choking a tiny inlet. This is likely to be the entrance below a crumbly scar in a small pit just below Oxford Cave II. Length 24 metres

Cave 2
This is situated below the prominent scar in bedded limestone. Starting as a wriggle through onto wider passage where a stream sinks in the floor. Upstream is a pleasant crawl to a series of impassable choked inlets below the surface stream bed. Length 46 metres

Cave 3 (Just off this Sheet)
The entrance is up the small gill on the right beneath a covered manhole. A climb down to a 'T' shaped passage leads to a chamber and a further twisting passage which develops into a tortuous traverse. The stream can be heard at end. Length 21 metres

Rosy Sink, Also known as Slaughterhouse Drain

SD6752 8056 Alt: 312 metres

The entrance is via a short drop down through boulders at the foot of the scar, in the true right bank of the gill, a few metres downstream from County Pot. Below the entrance boulders a low crawl gradually enlarges where a trench cuts down in the floor where the way on is now blocked by collapse. The passage beyond used to connect at the roof passage above the 1st Pitch in County Pot.

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References:

This is by no means a definitive list but contains the main references referred to in the text, earlier guides to the system and publications since Appendix 3 of The Ease Gill System - J.Eyre (1989) which contains a detailed reference list.

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P.Monk - Editor (2011)
Shuttleworth Pot into Witches Cave II

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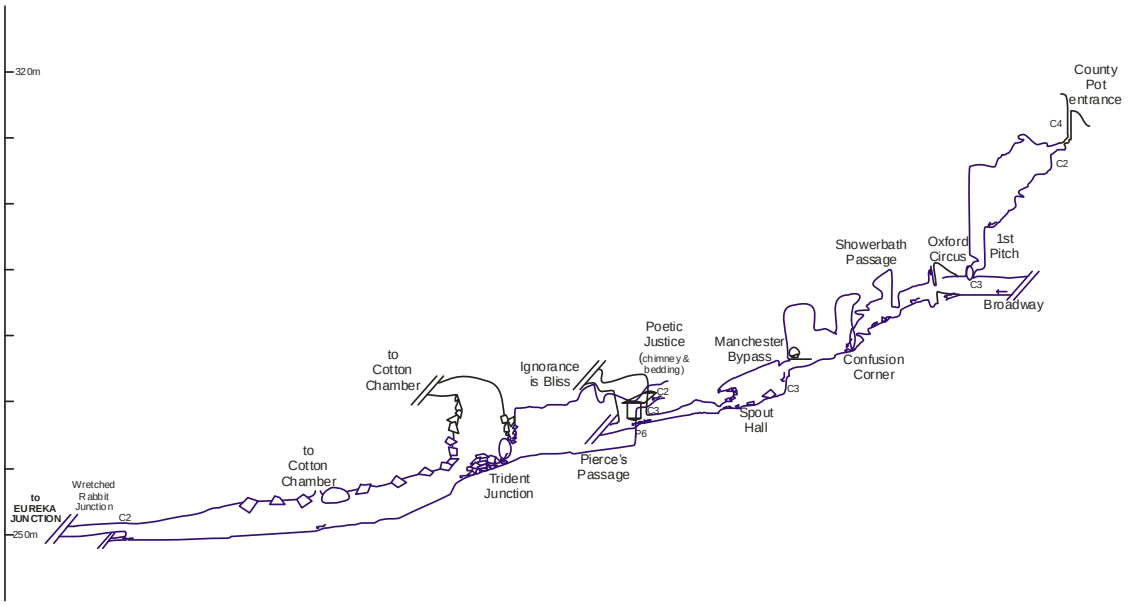
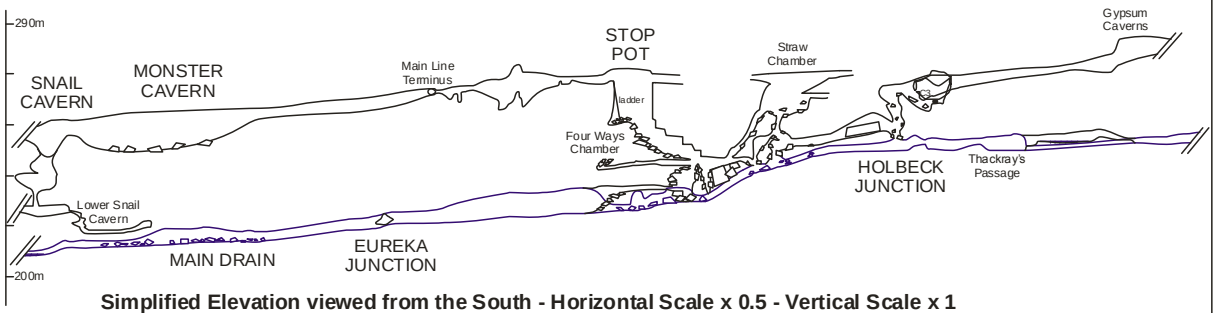
Simplified Elevations

Sheet 3 - County Pot to Eureka Junction



Simplified Elevation viewed from the South West - Horizontal Scale x 0.5 - Vertical Scale x 1

Sheet 3 - Snail Cavern to Holbeck Junction



Simplified Elevation viewed from the South - Horizontal Scale x 0.5 - Vertical Scale x 1

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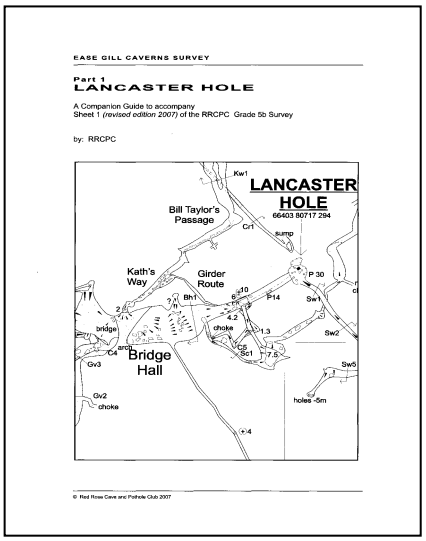

Sheet 1 – Lancaster Hole Area (2nd Edition 2007)
with accompanying guide, covers the Lancaster Hole area and eastwards to Stake Pot.

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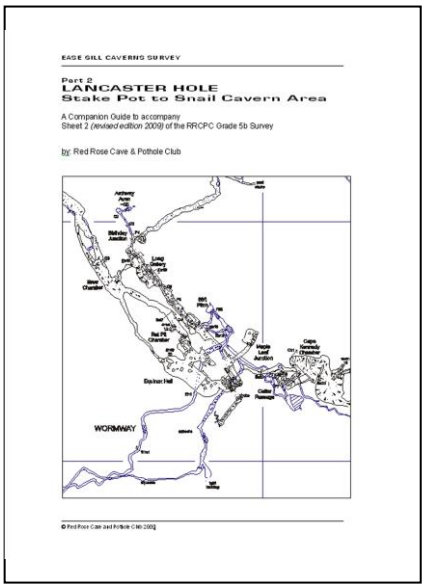

Sheet 2 – Stake Pot to Oxbow Corner (2nd Edition 2012)
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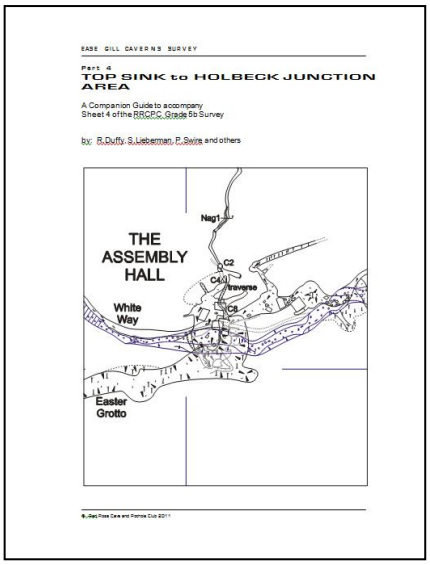

Sheet 4 – Top Sink to Holbeck Junction Area
With an accompanying guide

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