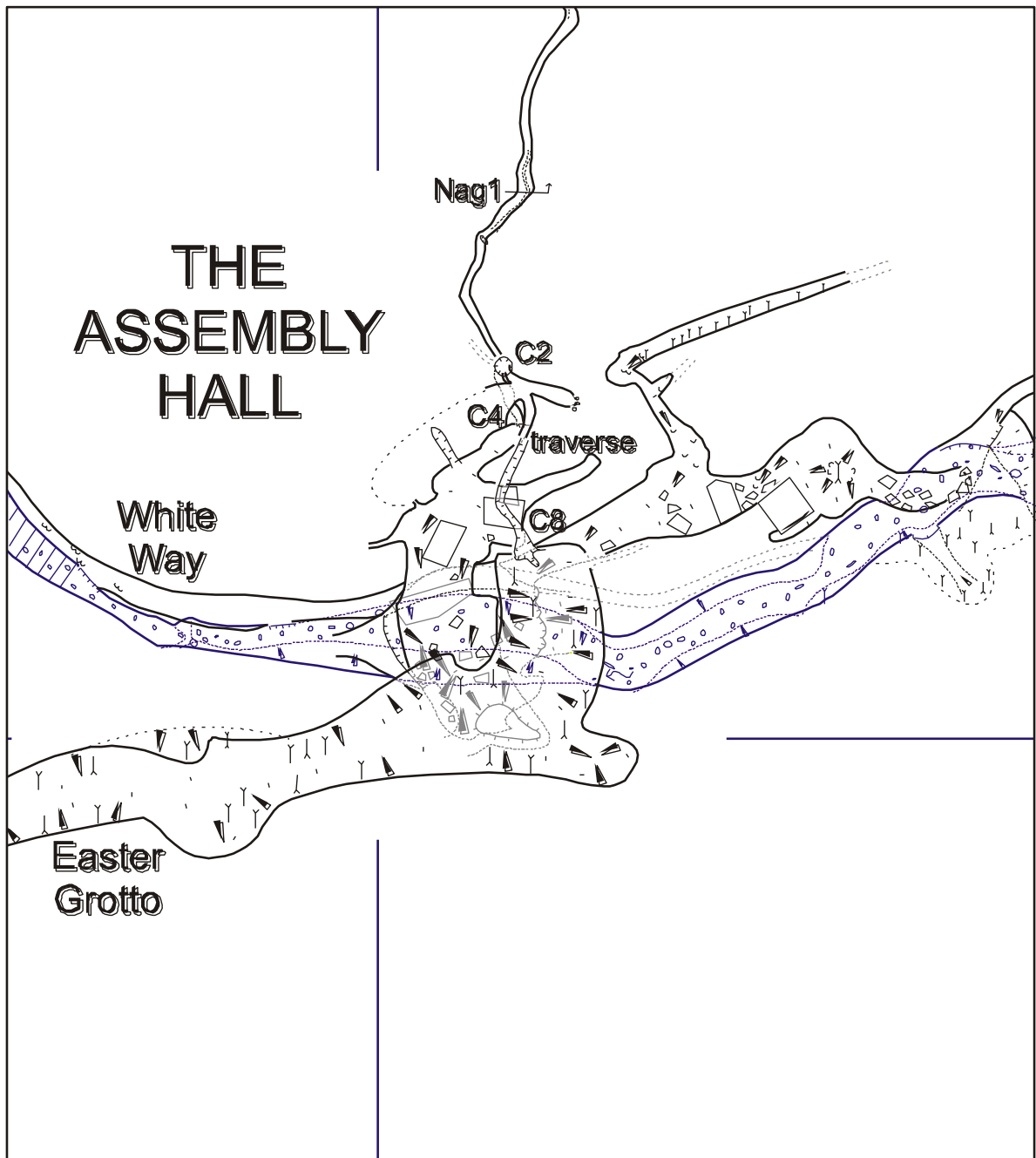


Part 4  
**TOP SINK to HOLBECK JUNCTION  
AREA**

A Companion Guide to accompany  
Sheet 4 of the RRCPC Grade 5b Survey

by: R.Duffy, S.Lieberman, P.Swire and others



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Bullpot Farm  
Casterton  
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**Author Note**

Although the companion booklets for the surveys describe the passages from the Lancaster Hole end of the system, it was felt that the majority of trips are likely to be undertaken from Top Sink toward Holbeck Junction area. To this end, the descriptions have been given in this direction for this sheet.

Cover illustration:

*Extract from accompanying Sheet 4 survey that is produced in 2 colours.*

Sheet 4 survey: Top Sink to Gypsum Cavern Area

*Drawn by Ray Duffy, winner of the Bryan Ellis Award – BCRA Hidden Earth 2001*

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
Index to Guide	4
Addendum	5
Introduction	
Location	6
The Survey	
Background to production	6
Conservation	
Introduction	7
What are Sites of Special Scientific Interest? (S.S.S.I.)	7
Why is the Ease Gill System a Site of Special Scientific Interest? (S.S.S.I.)	7
Conservation work in Ease Gill Caverns	7
Surface Work	7
Access to the Cave System	8
History of Exploration	9
Photograph 1	10
Top Sink to Holbeck Junction Area - Part 4	11 – 16
Other Ease Gill Caverns entrances within Sheet 4	17 – 21
Other Caves within Sheet 4	21 – 24
References	25
Photograph 2	26
Simplified Elevations of:	
Top Sink to Limerick Junction	27
Boundary Pot	27
Pool Sink to Holbeck Junction	28
The Borehole	28
Wretched Rabbit entrance	29
Magnified view of Wretched Rabbit entrance area	30

**Part 4: Top Sink to Holbeck Junction Area****Page****Top Sink entrance to Limerick Junction**

11

Wisdom Tooth Passage

11

Molar Passages

12

Danish Passage

12

Dire Straits

12

C.R.G.Extensions

12

Cobweb Chamber

12 – 13

Booth-Eyre Crawl

13

Limerick Passage

13 – 14

Grapes of Wrath

14

Old Limerick Passage

14

Saki Rift

14

**Limerick Junction to The Assembly Hall**

14 – 15

Far East Passage

15

Mayday Series

15

Fukuyama

15

Easter Grotto

16

Perfection Passage

16

**The Assembly Hall to Holbeck Junction**

16

Below The Assembly Hall

16

Upstream to Thackray's Passage Choke

16

**Other Ease Gill Caverns entrances within Sheet 4**

Pool Sink

17

Pool Sink to Holbeck Junction

17

Upstream of Anemolite Junction

18

Magpie Grotto

18

Baby Feeder Series

18

Asthmatic Duck Passage - (Craven Extension)

18

Fourth Pitch Bypass Series

18 – 19

The Borehole

19

The Borehole entrance to Mottershead's Chamber

19

Blissful Aven

19

Galaxy Passage

19

New Slit Sinks

20

Slit Sinks

20

Wretched Rabbit Entrance to Eureka Junction (*see also the Companion Guide to accompany Sheet 3*)

20

Upper Parallel Streamway

20 – 21

Entrance Series

21

**Other Caves within Sheet 4**

Boundary Pot

21 – 22

Savage's Bypass

22

Bank Holiday Hole

22

Best's Hole

22

Dragon Hole

22 – 23

Gintrap Hole

23

Fox's Lair

23

New Cave

23

Pickwick Pot

23

Rebar Pot

23

Rowan Tree Rift

24

Second Best Hole

24

Sheepfold Cave

24

St. George's Cave

24

## Addendum

## Notes

Very early in the planning for this re-survey of the Ease Gill System we realised 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 Bullpot 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 1km. The rain was so hard at times it was impossible to see the 100m 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 Bullpot 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.

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

What can I say folks but sorry!

Ray Duffy (President of the Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club)

## Introduction

## Notes

### 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 at the time of writing. The system extends beneath Casterton and Leck Fells and around the western flanks of Gragareth. 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 fourth part of a series of surveys and companion guides to be published about the system. Beside being a guide and description of the cave passages, included with the Part 4 survey is some general material on Conservation, Access and History of Exploration covered by this guide.

## 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 from where to start surveying. The re-surveying of the whole system was started by the North Manchester Caving Club in the early 1980's, and much work was done before 1990. The notes and drawings were left with The Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club (RRCPC) who have continued the work and in some cases repeated the surveys for accuracy. 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 only after extensive new surface survey work had been undertaken that we realised 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 levelling 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

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. Most of the cave entrance survey stations and many of the important underground survey stations have been marked with yellow lamb 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 a drawing package 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 (RRCPC URL: <http://www.rrpcp.org.uk/easegill>). Surveying work continues towards the publication of other sections of the system. (*See end of the guide for details*)

## Conservation

## Notes

### 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 Bullpot Farm or by consulting the contacts page of the RRCPC web site.

## Access to the Cave System

Notes

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 Bullpot 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

## Notes

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)

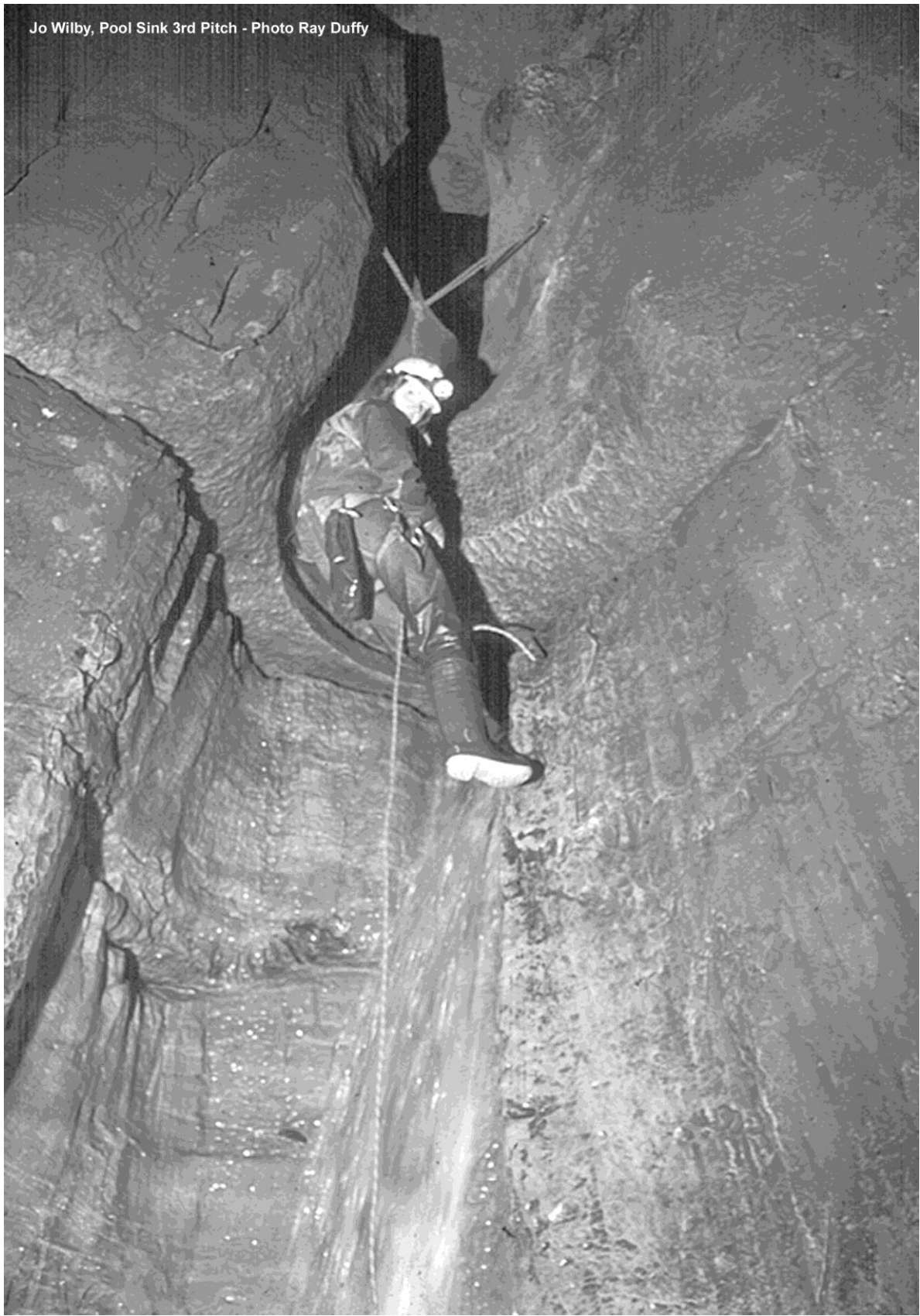
The Ease Gill System - Jim Eyre (1989)

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

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

Photograph 1



Part 4:

Notes

**TOP SINK**

SD 68037 81111 Alt: 343m

***WARNING! In wet conditions, Walrus Pot is a very intimidating pitch and the lower passages may become impassable.***

This entrance is the highest entry point into the Ease Gill System from the Ease Gill streambed. The route immediately below describes the route through to Limerick Junction.

**Top Sink entrance to Limerick Junction**

The excavated entrance shaft with steel lid, leads to a small streamway with stooping and crawling to a walking passage with choked inlet on the right. Downstream gives easy walking to a junction, to the left continues as an awkward passage to a bedding extension that eventually becomes too small. The main way on at the stream junction is to the right and a tortuous, twisting passage ensues until a small drop heralds the head of the 20 metre Walrus Pot. A traverse into a sentry box gives way to a spray lashed descent to the stooping sized  $\pi^2$  Passage. This pitch can become very unpleasant in wet conditions.

From the foot of the pitch,  $\pi^2$  Passage continues as mainly sideways walking to a series of small cascades to the head of the 7 metre Penknife Pitch. At the foot of the pitch there are three ways on. The obvious downstream streamway of Bradshaw's Passage is the main way on but a climb above the stream leads to Skywalker Passage, an enlarging passage in the roof of the streamway. Also at the base of the pitch is a tall and narrow passage on the left, this is Wisdom Tooth Passage. Bradshaw's Passage starts off as a pleasant walking passage but soon lowers to crawling in the stream, emerging at an enlargement that was the original way into Skywalker Passage.

From this point on there are several ways to progress downstream as there are a series of higher oxbows that can be followed at times to avoid crawling in water. Eventually the stream drops down a small pot and this signals the start of a complex area where several crawls or climbs lead to the large jammed block across a higher oxbow crossing into the C.R.G. Extensions off to the left. Following the stream or the dry high oxbow on the right leads, in less than 20 metres, to the 3 metre waterfall at Limerick Junction, down into Far East Passage. By stepping over the top of the waterfall a small oxbow is reached, here a low entrance on the left leads to Limerick Passage.

**Wisdom Tooth Passage**

From the foot of Penknife Pitch this passage is best entered by climbing up to the obvious traversing height, as the streamway level is tortuous. The first part of the traverse is on gravel-covered ledges that become more solid after about 30 metres. The passage widens and a stal flow enters from the left, this sloping flow ends in a stal-choked bedding. Beyond this widening the passage continues as a narrow meandering traverse until a beautiful stal boss almost blocks the way on. After climbing up this stal flow (care needed!) a squeeze past formations leads down to the streamway beyond. A widening in the passage is soon reached where the water of Dire Straits Passage enters from an inlet 3 metres up the left wall. The next inlet on the left ends in a choke after only 15 metres of really tight ascending passage. The next passage on the left is an awkward oxbow ending back in a boulder strewn widening in the main passage where two small inlets unite, both inlet ends are too tight for progress. The main way on is a stream trench that eventually widens out into a boulder and cobble filled choke, only a few metres from a small chamber in the upper reaches of the C.R.G extensions.

**Molar Passages**

Emerging from the end of the crawl in Bradshaw's Passage a boulder slope on the left is climbed to a small chamber, from here left leads to Skywalker Passage but straight on gives way to the tight, thrutchy and meandering Lower Molar Passage. Although this passage is probably only 30 metres long it feels a lot more and passes, with difficulty, some fabulous helictites, before reaching an oxbow on the right then up boulders to a small chamber. The continuation passage is Upper Molar Passage but 5 metres up on the right in the roof of the chamber is the way to Danish Passage. Straight ahead, however, the passage is tall a narrow and the floor can be descended to and followed through many really tight bends to a too tight continuation. In the roof of the passage is the route to Dire Straits.

### **Danish Passage**

After climbing up from the chamber, the passage continues as a narrow and twisting canyon for over 30 metres to a chamber that ends in a sand choke. On opposite sides of the chamber and 5 metres up are two passages that have been entered but become too tight.

### **Dire Straits**

Starting from the chamber where Danish Passage leaves Upper Molar Passage, it is possible to traverse by staying high or descend steadily to the floor of the rift. The passage at floor level continues as a tortuous narrow passage following the line of the rift above until it becomes too tight. Above in the high level, a short traverse and then an awkward climb up through boulders and then back down to the same level, gains the rift continuation. Traversing at this level in a narrow winding rift leads eventually to a descent into a small chamber. A difficult climb of 5 metres back out of the chamber gains a very narrow and twisting rift, the Dire Straits. The passage continues until finally a short section of flat-out crawl leads to a larger passage. The larger passage exists on several levels, with loose flakes abounding, and holes in the floor. Above the holes leads upstream as Surprise Passage, a walking sized streamway to chokes. Down through the holes, the narrow and twisting streamway leads downstream to the 3 metre waterfall drop into Wisdom Tooth Passage.

### **C.R.G. Extensions**

This is best found by following the large dry oxbow on the left going upstream from Limerick Junction for 25 metres until a step up and over a large block gains entry to the muddy slope up into the extensions. The passage is very tall and has a tight streamway below that can be seen in places. The first part of the passage involves climbing up and down over obstacles until after being forced up to almost roof level a small gap between boulders allows a 3 metre climb down to the continuation at a more reasonable intermediate level. It is possible to continue traversing in the roof for quite a distance but this is not recommended, as descent at the end is fraught with danger. The intermediate level continues to be challenging with awkward muddy climbs until a wider sloping area is reached. Beyond the muddy slope the passage narrows again and then opens up at a small boulder covered floor chamber where the lower streamway can be seen meandering in the floor. The left wall of the chamber is slightly overhanging and a climb up here leads eventually to Cobweb Chamber.

The main passage narrows and an awkward climb down is followed soon after by a sharp bend with a 15 metre pit in the floor that drops to the Booth-Eyre Crawl. Across the pit in the main passage the roof lowers beyond an aven and climbing over large boulders leads to a small chamber with a slope down to the right to the streamway. Heading upstream, several small cascades and climbs lead to where the stream issues from a sloping and boulder-filled choked bedding, downstream leads to the Booth-Eyre pitch.

### **Cobweb Chamber**

The awkward 3 metre climb from the chamber in the C.R.G. extension leads to an unstable slope of boulders climbing almost 10 metres to a small sand-floored chamber where to the left a short passage leads to a smaller chamber

with a sand walled hole in the floor. A climb up the boulder rift at the top of the slope leads up to roof level where a traverse leads back over the slope now 15 metres below. The traverse drops into a chamber with a passage on the right leading back to a drop down to the boulder slope, sand choked passage straight ahead and a passage on the left, at the same height as the entry drop, that leads to Cobweb Chamber. This passage is small, low and tight but soon opens out, to the left a wider passage soon chokes, ahead leads into the large, dark, flat-roofed and boulder-floored Cobweb Chamber. A drop into the chamber lands near where water issues from a small aven ringed with dark stained stal in the roof and lands on boulders covered with more stal blackened with peat stains. There are holes in the floor of the chamber that appear to be directly above the left-hand inlets of Limerick Passage.

### **Booth-Eyre Crawl**

From the streamway at the far end of the C.R.G. extensions it is possible to go downstream in a narrow vadose trench until forced to traverse to the chockstone cobble from which the 15 metre pitch can be laddered. Alternatively, at the pit in the C.R.G. extensions, it is possible to belay below floor level and descend to the same roomy aven base as reached by the vadose route. From the base of the pitch a short climb down leads to a small passage where stooping and crawling give way to thrutching at roof level along a very small vadose trench. The passage is rarely more than 2 metres high and 30 centimetres wide and is liberally endowed with sharp flakes. Respite is only achieved at the many small inlets that enter where slight enlargements are encountered. After 165 metres a small widening is reached where a 6 metre pitch drops to a lower level beyond which it is assumed the water continues in a bedding to join at the wet bedding below the '68 Series near the lower end of Far East Passage.

### **Limerick Passage**

The stooping entrance to this passage is only a few metres left of the drop in the Top Sink stream to Far East Passage. The roof lowers and the cobble crawl soon open out into a larger passage with a stream trench in the floor that disappears under the walls only to reappear again. As the passage enlarges a junction is reached with a passage off to the right, this is Old Limerick Passage. About 25 metres beyond the junction the streamway reappears at an enlargement and aven, in the roof above this point is the small extension of the Grapes of Wrath. Crossing the stream just beyond the enlargement a boulder floored rift on the right holds the entrance, via climbs, to the Grapes of Wrath.

The main passage continues, with the stream set off to the left under a bedding, but soon lowers at a sharp Z-bend where a climb up can be made to a higher oxbow and traverses to join back in to the main passage only a few metres from the oxbow start. Further along the passage the way on crosses over the stream at a complex of oxbows but it is easiest to stay out of the streamway itself as this is often festooned with stals. Eventually the dry passage gives out and progress is then in the cobble floored stream as the roof lowers. At this point a junction is reached where an inlet from the left enters but the main way is a stream trench in a mud and boulder floor. The inlet to the left soon bifurcates, the left branch eventually deteriorates in a low, wide cobble bedding with a small aven on the right, while the right hand branch ends in a tight aven. The avens in both these passages are not far below the holes in Cobweb Chamber.

From the junction the main way on enters a 6 metre high aven where a small blind passage at its top has been entered. To the right of the aven's base, under an overhang, a stream trench leads downstream back into the dry oxbows left earlier. Beyond the aven the passage lowers to a choked bedding where the upstream end of the trench can be seen on the right. From the aven the upstream continuation of the trench eventually splits, the right inlet soon deteriorates in a cobble filled slope and a small cobbled choked aven. The left inlet continues a little further before ending in a tight aven, climbed in two sections to a height of 8 metres, before becoming too tight.

**Grapes of Wrath**

From the bottom of the boulder floored rift an awkward width 3 metre climb around a jammed boulder lands on a ledge. From the ledge another smooth-walled, 3 metre climb requires combined tactics to reach the upper narrow level passage and a junction. To the right the passage soon diminishes and passes some fine red formations to the top of the aven in Limerick Passage. To the left at the junction the passage rises over boulders until it eventually chokes.

**Old Limerick Passage**

This passage starts on the right at the junction 15 metres up Limerick Passage from Limerick Junction. Soon after entry to the passage a choked side passage on the left appears and just beyond this a small low oxbow is met on the right. The main passage is a tall narrow rift but soon lowers until a boulder-floored chamber is entered with two ways on available. The climb down in the floor is the continuation of Old Limerick Passage but a climb almost above this leads to Saki Rift. Following the main route as a tall thin rift to a low chamber with the passage continuing to drop and split into two levels before eventually petering out not far from Far East Passage.

**Saki Rift**

From the boulder chamber in Old Limerick Passage a climb up passing a wedged block and up a slope leads to a step up and narrow passage. A tight squeeze down through a slot leads to a loose climb down to the Rock of Ages in Nagasaki.

**Limerick Junction to Assembly Hall**

Where Limerick Passage enters at Limerick Junction a short oxbow ends at a drop to the stream and a large step is required to reach the continuation oxbow that is followed for a few metres to another large step back over the stream into a lower roofed oxbow. Stepping up to a slightly higher level allows the last large step-over to be made into a small oxbow. An immediate climb up and leftward at the start of the oxbow gains a still higher level on the gravel and mud filled arch of The Bridge of Sighs, 6 metres above the streamway. The way continues over a trench where the other end of the small oxbow rejoins the passage. The tall main passage enters a boulder choke where, by climbing up and back over blocks, it is possible to ascend to the beginning of the massive Nagasaki. Climbing up and over large boulders at the start of Nagasaki leads quickly to the huge fallen block of the Rock of Ages, here on the left is the broken walled climb up to Saki Rift. The sandy right wall of Nagasaki is followed to a drop down a sand chute to land in the 17 metre high passage near a large hole that drops to Far East Passage. A short distance further along the passage an inlet enters from 10 metres up the left wall, this is the start of Fukuyama. Just beyond Fukuyama there are two ways to proceed. An awkward climb up the right wall and the boulders above, Fairy Steps, leads to a col and scramble back to the same level as before the climb up. Alternatively, descending boulders below the Fairy Steps, then along a trench to a step up to join the route above. The end of the trench has a pit on the left dropping 5 metres to the downstream continuation of Far East Passage. After a further 25 metres Nagasaki closes down to a narrow passage starting just below a slope leading up rightwards to a 16 metre high aven. Sideways movement is made along a well-decorated narrow passage until a small pit is reached. Here it is possible to do an 'airy' traverse into Easter Grotto, or by dropping down the pit and going through a short bedding, to reach the climbs down to Assembly Hall. The bedding ends at an awkward slot onto the 4 metre climb to a small alcove. Out of the alcove it is possible to climb up slippery boulders on the left to reach the other end of the traverse to Easter Grotto. From below the Easter Grotto climb up, a descent through boulders leads down to the head of the final 6 metre climb down to land in The Assembly Hall. This large, sloping and complex chamber has several passages radiating from its base.

**Far East Passage**

This passage starts at the foot of the small waterfall where the water from Top Sink drops as it reaches Limerick Junction. Beginning as a very tall passage below the oxbow 'step-overs', downstream of Limerick Junction, it lowers slightly as it reaches the Bridge of Sighs area. At this point the bedding plane above head height is well decorated but just beyond here the roof soon lowers still further until flat-out crawling in water is necessary. Soon, however, the passage rises up in a small boulder chamber and the stream sinks in a choked bedding. The small chamber leads up to the large hole in Nagasaki. It is not possible to follow the stream through the choke but it soon re-emerges at the downstream section of the large hole in Nagasaki. The streamway continues in a breakdown area beneath Nagasaki but quickly develops into a handsome and tall vadose feature. Several small passages interlink almost at the roof level on the left and a pot from near Fairy Steps enters on the right. The stream drops down small cascades until a wet 3 metre climb is reached, at the foot of this is a chamber with the Booth-Eyre Crawl water entering from the left and the combined waters leaving to the right. Downstream the water can be followed to a boulder chamber where it eventually disappears into a very low bedding near the dangerous boulder choke at the end of Thackray's Passage. This low boulder chamber has several small upward leads in it that are very close to Hiroshima in Boundary Pot. One of the routes in the roof climbs upward and crosses back over the small waterfall and chamber 8 metres up in the roof of the streamway from where a descent can be made to the stream floor.

### Mayday Series

From the small chamber at the foot of the waterfall in Far East Passage, a stooping stream passage soon lowers to a cobble crawl in water. At this point a bedding plane on the right almost connects to the low boulder chamber at the end of Far East Passage. A few metres further upstream a squeeze up on the right into a boulder-floored and low chamber is followed on the right by a slope up to a sandy walled termination. Yet further upstream an alcove on the right is the start of the '68 Series' leading into the Mayday Series, while upstream lowers again to flat-out crawling and is thought to be the lower end of the Booth-Eyre Crawl. From the alcove a tight squeeze up slabs leads to a boulder chamber that ends at a slope up to a 3 metre boulder walled climb upward. Levitation is useful at this point and caution should be exercised as the chamber above is also boulder floored. At the top of this chamber there is a squeeze up into another lower chamber that closes down. At this point it is possible to go down through boulders to a lower level and choked chamber but the way on is another tight squeeze up into a large passage. Part of this passage heads back over the entry point but is too narrow and festooned with stal to be pursued. Forward, the passage continues past impressive stals, until it narrows and after clambering over muddy boulders the passage appears to end near a small aven. A very awkward squeeze up and leftward between boulders lands, with effort, in a low chamber where over to the left more squeezes up in two steps gains a height of 6 metres. At the top of the climb a tight sloping tube and even tighter squeeze leads up in the passage leading to, the very well decorated, Neutron Cavern. The cavern rises up through boulders to end in a rising choke of large cobbles below the large surface shakehole, Gertoil.

### Fukuyama

This inlet entering from 10 metres up the wall of Nagasaki is the only inlet into the passage and is approximately equidistant from its ends. At the top of the pitch Fukuyama continues as an average 6 metre tall narrow rift with some false floor and floor slots. At the end of the passage a rising rift in the left wall chokes at the top and opposite is an inlet that enters on the right wall.

### Easter Grotto

Reached from either the climb up from The Assembly Hall or the traverse at the end of the sideways passage from Nagasaki, this low and well-decorated passage is showing the ravages of many careless parties. Once a gem of the

Dales it has had many of its straw stalactites broken and most of the calcite floor and crystal pools covered in mud. The initial stooping passage lowers and an upward slope leads to the continuation that emerges in a boulder floored muddy chamber. A passage off up to the left ends in a very muddy dig, while a hole down through the boulders continues to a flat-out crawl on muddy calcite, sloping down to a short drop into The Palace at the upper end of Gypsum Cavern. (See Sheet 3 Companion Guide).

### **Perfection Passage**

The drop into The Palace from Easter Grotto lands directly opposite the climb up into Perfection Passage. This is an awkward passage, as avoiding the stal causes contortions and though very well decorated, it is a blind passage that runs almost back up into Easter Grotto.

### **The Assembly Hall to Holbeck Junction**

At the bottom of the slope down from the foot of the climbs the main way on is a fine decorated passage to the left, Whiteway, until it is possible to drop into the stream of Thackray's Passage. Downstream the high roof is covered in stalactites and there are oxbows first on the left and then right, passing the 'organ pipe' formations. The stream enters a wider but lower area passing a small dug passage on the left and a more complex tight passage on the right, before disappearing into a low section at the 'calcite window' on the left. Climbing onto the ledge and through the window into the bypass soon leads to a descent back into the stream emerging from the low section from the right. Downstream from here the passage is mainly walking until the cross over passage at Holbeck Junction is reached.

### **Below The Assembly Hall**

To the right at the bottom of the sloping chamber gives a damp crawl to the right in a straw filled trench that eventually drops into the upstream continuation of Thackray's Passage. Just left of the crawl a low calcite floored arch to the left leads to a small climb up into a small passage filled with stal. Between these two passages the way rises into a chamber with a large stal boss and further to the foot of a choked rift, believed to be below one part of the Hiroshima choke in Boundary Pot.

### **Upstream to Thackray's Passage Choke**

After dropping into the stream from The Assembly Hall the upstream passage becomes lower, wider and more cobbled. Eventually, the roof rises and as the small passage from the base of The Assembly Hall joins in, high on the left, it also becomes well decorated. Almost opposite the small passage there is a low bedding high in the right wall that chokes after 5 metres. Further on the stream bends right and on this corner a dry oxbow enters 2 metres up. The stream passage lowers at this point and finally rises into the dangerous boulder choke below Hiroshima in Boundary Pot. The other end of the dry oxbow enters on the left side of the boulder slope. Merely 2 metres from the downstream end of the oxbow is a climb up and squeeze into a bedding in the right wall at roof height. This bedding leads to a small complex of passages and avens that lead toward the main boulder choke. The choke itself has two small inlets high on the right wall that are too small to follow and the water, presumed from Far East Passage, enters low down on the left below the boulders.

## Other Ease Gill Caverns Entrances

Notes

### Pool Sink

SD 67718 80746 Alt: 323m

Situated on a small shelf on the true right bank of the gill this classic entrance to the system sits just above the pool, now often dry, that gave it its name.

### Pool Sink to Holbeck Junction

Sideways crawling soon leads to an awkward Z-bend, for the larger caver, followed by a flat out bedding beyond which the roof rises gradually. The passage, Pilgrims Progress, narrows and drops into a small chamber into which two tiny inlets arrive. From the chamber the passage continues downstream with a gradually rising roof until at a sharp right hand bend the 1<sup>st</sup> Pitch is reached. The 15 metre pitch is broken by a large ledge 3 metres from its base at Anemolite Junction, where the main Pool Sink water is met. Upstream from this junction leads toward Magpie Grotto area whereas the main way on is downstream.

The streamway is now a fine walking passage over 10 metres high and 25 metres from the junction a diagonal climb of 6 metres leads to the foot of the awkward chimney into The Baby Feeder Series. A further 20 metres downstream is another offshoot, 7 metres up in the roof, Asthmatic Duck Passage - Craven Extension. A short distance further downstream, the water drops 9 metres, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitch, to the floor of a small chamber. Alternatively, a traverse above the chamber, in a dry oxbow and over a pit, ends at a pitch of 8 metre, to join the wet route below. The wet route includes a further short climb down and it and the dry route unite until after a few further metres the head of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pitch is reached down to Upper 'T' Piece Passage.

A few metres downstream from the foot of the pitch a climb up gains the dry 4<sup>th</sup> Pitch Bypass Series, a complex of passages and avens that connect back into Upper and Lower 'T' Piece Passages. A further 5 metres downstream a climb up and squeeze through a letterbox lands at the foot of an aven in the bypass series. Two more entrances to the bypass series are passed high up in the left wall of the passage as it descends toward the wet, direct 4<sup>th</sup> Pitch and the dry, traverse to the alternative pitch, both these routes land in Lower 'T' Piece Passage. It is possible to climb up into the roof of Upper 'T' Piece Passage and traverse out well above the pitches and descend via a series of steps down on flakes, Jacob's Ladder, to the base of the pitches, a very exposed route.

Lower 'T' Piece Passage starts at a small chamber where the dry 4<sup>th</sup> Pitch lands and descends past the wet route into a tall rift, the bypass drops from the passage high on the left, just above the wet pitch. The passage widens and another passage from the bypass is past on the left before the water disappears in low bedding where a step up into a crawling sized oxbow is made. A higher step up across the stream gains a series of horizontal blades of rock, the 'Bacon Slicer', that can be climbed down back into the streamway. Further downstream a large boulder across the stream allows a step up to an oxbow level. On the left at this point is the tight bedding through into the bottom of The Borehole. Straight ahead and back down in the stream, deepening water continues to reach the junction, where left leads to the climb up to Spiral Staircase and Eccles Bypass.

To the right from the boulder leads through a series of oxbows, into Green and Smelly Passage, best followed to avoid the low wet bedding of the stream. From this point Upper Green and Smelly Passage traverses almost at roof level for most of the way from here to Holbeck Junction above the main passage. At the end of these oxbows, a pool on a Z-bend, signals the arrival at a high chamber containing a huge fallen block, beyond here two ways proceed. The wet way follows the stream through low passage to the lower end of Thackray's Passage and from there follows the water upstream to Holbeck Junction. The dry way steps up into a dry passage, and after passing a small, blind passage on the right, descends to Holbeck Junction in Thackray's Passage.

**Upstream of Anemolite Junction**

After a drop into the streamway at the base of the first pitch, the passage heading upstream is tall and narrow. A small passage enters on the right after only a few metres but soon closes down. The floor of the passage becomes strewn by large and slippery cobbles, then after only 15 metres, a junction is met. The more active inlet is to the right but the left hand passage leads to a complex of oxbows and passages near Magpie Grotto. Following the more active inlet the passage soon develops into a wide trench with a bedding at mid height. The bedding on the right gives a series of passages, mainly ending in chokes, some heading back downstream to join the main passage or Magpie Grotto complex, and others heading toward the gill. Climbing further up the streamway the trench becomes a cobble-floored bedding that eventually becomes very wet and finally chokes.

**Magpie Grotto**

Turning left at the junction upstream of Anemolite Junction leads into the passage to Magpie Grotto. The passage is narrow but tall and has several interconnecting high-level inlets, beddings and chokes, all containing fine formations. Eventually, the passage widens and lowers to a chamber full of black and white stals, Magpie Grotto. From the grotto, four passages lead off to the right ending in chokes near or under the gill.

**The Baby Feeder Series**

Starting in the roof of the main streamway just downstream of Anemolite Junction, the awkward to enter passage begins low with a boulder floor and stream trench below. The way on becomes narrower beyond a stal-covered alcove on the right and soon awkward traversing, above a very tight and blind 13 metre pitch sequence, leads to 'The Teeth' formation. This feature forces one to crawl while hugging the left wall in order to pass its constriction and avoid contamination of the stals. From here the passage continues past a small aven and slowly degenerates as it splits into smaller inlets below the pool of Pool Sink entrance.

**Asthmatic Duck Passage – Craven Extension**

Further downstream of Anemolite Junction is the climb up to this tortuous small passage, made more so by the need to avoid the numerous stals. The passage becomes more difficult as it approaches the pitch-heads of its 8 metre, then 14 metre pitches, landing finally in the large aven of the 4<sup>th</sup> Pitch Bypass Series.

**Fourth Pitch Bypass Series**

There are three upstream ways into this complex but only one easy and safe way out of the downstream end. The first entry into the passages is just downstream of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pitch, here a 3 metre climb, then traverse, leads down into a large aven. The second entrance is up another 3 metre climb just downstream of the first and through a letterbox squeeze into the base of the same aven. The third is even further downstream, where a climb up into a small high inlet on the left enters a tight passage to the foot of the same aven. This passage, however, has a cross rift with the downstream end finishing high above the main stream, while the upstream leads to a small well-decorated chamber.

From the aven's first entrance passage, it is possible to climb up the right wall and traverse a loose boulder slope, with another large aven at it's top, to gain the continuation passage on the other side of the aven. From the aven base a climb of 4 metres up the downstream end wall gains the continuation passage. This passage drops to a chamber with several exits. The main passage drops down dry cascades to an awkward climb down into an oxbow, to the left ends above Lower 'T' Piece Passage, whereas to the right descends ledges to the base of the 4<sup>th</sup> Pitch. Back in the chamber, the obvious passage to the left continues, passing three small passages on the right, through a boulder-floored rift to end just beyond a pit. The pit can be bypassed to the left down climbs to a beautiful stal-choked bedding. Of the three small passages the first two unite to end in a drop into the dry oxbow leading to Lower 'T' Piece

Notes

Passage. The third small passage picks up a small stream and continues tortuously to a junction. Right at the junction leads down through a nasty boulder choked climb to a 'jump' down onto a ledge above Lower 'T' Piece Passage. Left at the junction finally ends at a 7 metre pitch down into Lower 'T' Piece Passage but a tight continuation can be seen on the other side of the climb.

### **The Borehole**

SD 67704 80709 Alt: 323m

The entrance is in the true left bank of the gill in a small tree-lined gorge just downstream of Pool Sink.

### **The Borehole entrance to Mottershead's Chamber**

The small entrance leads to a series of climbs down to a tiny chamber in a streamway. Upstream the passage leads to Blissful Aven, while downstream is a low wet crawl until the second of two small avens is reached. Beyond this aven the passage is walking-sized to a junction in a pool. The passage to the right has been pushed to several tight ends. The way on here is left at the junction through a stooping wet section to a small aven beyond which the roof lowers to a cobbled-floored bedding plane. Crawling forward and to the right a squeeze up through and over boulders enters a cross rift. The rift to the right climbs to a choke, while the passage on the left rises to choked inlets near St. George's Cave. The way on drops through boulders into the stream passage where crawling for 20 metres is followed by a fine vadose streamway with some fine formations. At a very sharp right hand bend a junction is reached and the low, left-hand entry to Galaxy Passage can be easily missed. The main passage continues as a narrow streamway until boulders in the roof signal the entry of New Slit Sinks high on the left. It is now possible to traverse high in the streamway or progress more awkwardly at stream level. High in the traverse part of the passage, a crawl through a bedding on the left, leads into a double aven with a connection in the floor to Slit Sinks. Both high and low routes end at the 15 metre pitch, rigging is only possible from the higher level. The descent passes an inlet, Slit Sink, and lands on a ledge from where a climb down into a narrow streamway is made. A few metres downstream from the pitch a passage enters on the right, this has been followed to a choke beyond which falling water has been heard. Downstream the passage lowers and becomes narrow and wet until a boulder slope on the right is met. The boulder slope leads to a loose climb into a bedding plane area that ends in chokes. The walking sized main passage is followed downstream to Mottershead's Chamber, where straight on leads to a sandy crawl and into a complex series of boulder-choked chambers, while to the right is 4-Ways Junction. (*Beyond this point see Ease Gill Caverns Companion Guide – Sheet 3, County Pot*)

### **Blissful Aven**

From the drop into the tiny chamber below the entrance climbs, the way to Blissful Aven is upstream. The streamway, Slit Finger Passage, is tight and awkward with squeezes through calcite blockages. After almost 40 metres of difficult progress Blissful Aven arrives, this is a 14 metre high aven with a tiny inlet in its roof.

### **Galaxy Passage**

From the junction at the very sharp bend, midway between the end of the bedding crawl and the Slit Sink inlet, this passage begins as a twisting crawling over mud and gravel ledges. The passage soon reaches a junction in a small chamber. The climbs up to the right enter another chamber from where a climb up leads to a continuation that becomes blocked with cobbles in a tight tube. Left at the junction the low and tight passage, passes three inlets on the left, until rising steeply to a boulder choke below the gill.

## New Slit Sinks

SD 67658 80700 Alt: 319m

Roughly 50 metres downstream of The Borehole, in the true right bank of the gill, this cave is at stream level at the upstream end of a small scar and has a large area of exposed bedrock slab at its entrance. The tight, awkward entrance slot, is followed by low passage to a 3 metre climb down into a small chamber. Beyond, the passage narrows at the head of a 5 metre pitch, dropping into a canyon passage. The passage though generally of walking size has a desperate squeeze in a tortuous and narrow trench, beyond which is a junction. To the right is a rift passage to a choke, whilst left leads to a junction in the roof of the main passage of The Borehole, not far upstream from the 15 metre pitch.

## Slit Sinks

SD 67656 80698 Alt: 319m

This entrance is at stream level less than 2 metres downstream of New Slit Sinks. A low crawl leads to a small drop into the start of a narrow canyon. At the base of the drop a passage on the left climbs steeply to a choke, just downstream another passage on the left soon forks and chokes. A few metres downstream the stream trench enters an aven and there is a short high-level passage on the right. Continuing downstream, tight sideways shuffling for a reasonable distance leads to a climbable 4 metre pitch. At the foot of the climb, a narrow trench continues downstream to an obscure junction after 15 metres. Here a narrow slither up emerges into a double aven chamber and bedding crawl route to emerge in the roof of the main passage in The Borehole just upstream of 15 metre pitch. Downstream from the obscure junction a narrow trench continues past a series of cascades to the head of a pitch entering part way down the 15 metre pitch in The Borehole.

## Wretched Rabbit Entrance

SD 67633 80677 Alt: 319m

***WARNING! The low passages of Spiral Staircase at the end of the Big Rift, the cascades beyond in Wretched Rabbit and Eureka Junction may become impassable in high flood.***

The entrance is located in the true right bank of Ease Gill immediately upstream of a large pool. Once inside the entrance a short crawl leads to a series of short but awkward drops into the Big Rift. At the bottom of the first climb there are three ways on. Two passages on the right, one an Inlet and the other a tight bedding plane crawl, while up in the roof is a passage that is best entered via a traverse from high in the right inlet. The inlet rises quickly to end in two smaller inlets blocked with massive gritstone boulders. The very tight bedding plane drops awkwardly into the upper part of the Upper Parallel Streamway. Three more drops in the passage land in the Big Rift where forward over boulders leads to a widening. In an alcove to the right at this point is a 4 metre climb into the Upper Parallel Streamway. An obvious excavated pit in the floor leads down through a wet slot into the top end of Spiral Staircase Passage, and eventually to Holbeck Junction. The main way on, however, is straight across this pit to a stooping passage that quickly enlarges into a walking, meandering canyon passage. (see the Companion Guide to accompany Sheet 3 for complete route to Eureka Junction)

## Upper Parallel Streamway

Starting from the alcove at the downstream end of the Big Rift, this passage first climbs up 4 metres to the stream passage above. The streamway is generally tall and walking sized, passing two small oxbows before an inlet enters from the left. This inlet can be followed for over 40 metres to two cobble-choked inlets below the gill. Further up the main passage a short climb on the right finishes overlooking the last climb in the Big Rift. From this perch a bedding plane on the right leads to a crawl and a junction, straight on the passage crosses the Big Rift and is Cross Over Passage. On the left at the

junction is a small passage that is part of the route in the roof from the first climb, it finishes with an airy traverse to the first entrance inlet. Part way up this passage is a step up to another slightly higher passage on the right, Unsurveyable Passage.

The Upper Parallel Streamway continues a few metres to where the bedding from the bottom of the first climb drops from the roof into the passage and just beyond this point there is an oxbowed inlet high on the left prior to a junction. The left hand passage at the junction chokes soon after climbing upward. The passage on the right at the junction is an oxbow, whereas, the passage straight ahead leads to a choke with the bottom entrance to New Cave on its right.

### Entrance Series

From high above the Big Rift both Cross Over and Unsurveyable Passages continue downstream as tight, twisting and mainly crawling passages. They drop separately into the main wet passage in the Entrance Series that eventually leads down to a pitch into the Big Rift above the Spiral Staircase hole. Upstream in the wet passage is at first crawling but soon enters a taller section, a route here leads up to an upper level. The wet passage lowers and becomes a bedding plane choked with stals. In the upper passage after a 3 metre climb, in the downstream direction the passage soon chokes with mud, but the upstream end leads to Stalactite Chamber, with the inevitable chokes at both its ends. Downstream of where Cross Over and Unsurveyable Passages join the wet passage, a twisting streamway, drops down an awkward step to a cobble-floored chamber containing a pool and junction. To the right leads to the pitch but to the left after a few metres is the climb up to a bedding and into the aptly named Mud Inlet. Further on up the passage the rises and degenerates in width to become too small and boulder filled.

*N.B. Mud Inlet is thought to connect to a bedding plane in Swindon Hole and that when this cave floods the water backs rapidly up the bedding and then overflows dramatically through Mud Inlet pouring torrentially down the pitch into the Big Rift and down Spiral Staircase Passage.*

### Other Caves within Sheet 4

#### Boundary Pot

SD 67876 80838 Alt: 331m

This is the furthest entrance upstream in the true left bank of Ease Gill and is situated in a depression cut into the riverbank. A few metres higher and further south is another entrance, but this 7 metre shaft is an unpleasant way into the cave.

In the depression a short low crawl followed by a 3 metre climb down enters a chamber where the daylight pot enters. From the chamber the way on drops through boulders to a wide crawl and then down a 3m climb to another chamber. Three small inlets enter this chamber, the first being on the immediate left from the climb down. This inlet is 3 metres up the same wall and leads to a few metres of tight passage and may contain the Pickwick Pot water. Further left in the chamber is a very tight aven from which water issues. Almost opposite the climb down is a small alcove at the top of which three higher tiny inlets converge. The exit from the chamber is low down to the right and a passage leading off to the right at a junction is soon reached. The small passage straight ahead ends in a mud-choked dig after 37 metres.

To the right at the junction leads to a clean washed passage, this originates in an inlet chamber with a too tight roof connection back to the daylight chamber at the entrance. The way onward is a short drop to the left into an aven, this can also be reached by a short flat out crawl part way along the passage from the junction. Short easy climbs down either of the routes lead to the base of the aven. Beyond is a crawling passage, with oxbows on the right reaching an enlargement and pool, here in a bedding plane on the left is the flat out crawl of Bar Stewards Passage. On the opposite side of the pool where Bar Stewards Passage begins is a tight shingle-floored crawl, the Savage's Bypass. Beyond the flat-out section of Bar Stewards Passage a junction is

reached where an inlet series enters from the left, this soon bifurcates and degenerates. Downstream from the junction the stream drops down steps to the head of the impressive 16 metre pitch to Fusion Cavern.

Upstream from where the pitch from Bar Stewards Passage lands in Fusion Cavern, an inlet rises until after 30 metres it chokes. At the downstream end of Fusion Cavern a cobble crawl bypasses a boulder choke into a wide and arched passage with fine formations. A large double aven festooned with a large calcite flow is soon entered. The calcite has been scaled for 10 metres to a ledge but the aven continues upwards. From the ledge, a low and calcited bedding leads off with a squeeze to a large fossilised rift, choked both upstream and downstream. Continuing downstream from the aven the passage, containing crystalline false floors (**CARE!**), leads to a narrow stream passage. Further downstream, just before the Hiroshima Chamber, is a short passage up on the left that leads to a climb down to where the stream sinks below in a small pot. Hiroshima Chamber itself has a choked rift passage continuing straight ahead and an extensive bedding plane to the North East containing a very tight slot at its right hand end down to a choke in a bedding.

### **The Savage's Bypass**

This passage starts as a bedding-crawl, first right then back left, to a tight stream passage and awkward 3 metre climb down to a ledge, with a 7 metre pitch into a large inlet passage. Several inlets enter the passage, the first is upstream of the pitch and comes from part way up a boulder roofed and tall aven. Almost opposite the pitch are two inlet passages that combine to form a 30 metre long passage that eventually becomes too tight. Further down the passage from the pitch is another inlet, awkward to enter, which soon degenerates in a wide bedding chamber. At the lowest point in the large passage from the pitch is a choke, the lower end of which can be reached from Fusion Chamber. On the same side and downstream of the pitch it is possible, by climbing onto ledges, to reach several combining passages from which connections can be made to the upstream end of Fusion Cavern.

### **Bank Holiday Hole**

SD 67727 80591 Alt: 336m

Approximately 120 metres South East of Wretched Rabbit entrance, the cave is at the downstream end of a shallow stream valley on the slopes Leck Fell. As the stream nears the hole it cuts down through the bedrock and forms a narrow trench. Dropping the 2 metres into the stream leads to a low crawling section with a way on left or right. The left route through boulders is easier to follow as the way to the right is low and in cobbles and water. Ahead, crawling and then stooping leads to a fine walking stream passage almost 100 metres long and between 3 to 4 metres tall. Finally the roof lowers and crawling over cobbles leads to a sometimes sumped section before a terminal boulder choke.

### **Best's Hole**

SD 67626 80649 Alt: 319m

Situated in the true left bank of the gill, just downstream of the pool near Wretched Rabbit entrance, the hole is a narrow, wet and muddy sideways passage for 6 metres. Here a small inlet on the left emerges and just beyond is a widening where another inlet on the left is met. Ahead a small climb reaches a chamber, here to the left a roof inlet enters, straight ahead is a choked rift and to the right the passage is too tight.

### **Dragon Hole**

SD 67756 80751 Alt: 326m

Situated almost 40 metres upstream of Pool Sink but on the opposite side of the gill, this entrance is covered by a few rocks in a grass slope. The lower resurgence is easier to locate, as it is usually a small dip full of water at stream level and only a few metres South. An awkward 2 metre climb down lands in a small chamber where a slope leads down to water level and the small arched

sump leading to the resurgence. Away from the pool a slope leads up to a T-junction but both ends of the passage are too tight.

### **Gintrap Hole**

SD 67740 80720 Alt: 328m

This hole is situated in the North West face of a shakehole, 35 metres South East of Pool Sink and on the Leck Fell side of the gill. A squeeze down through boulders gives on to a small boulder floored rift down to a small chamber. A low arch in the left wall leads through to a junction. To the left chokes after 2 metres, whereas right enters a small chamber containing a high bedding inlet 2 metres up that becomes too tight.

### **Fox's Lair**

SD 67614 80665 Alt: 320m

This tiny entrance lies in the grass just over the fence, a few metres downstream from the end of the crag running from Wretched Rabbit entrance. A small vadose-shaped tube extends a few metres into the hillside but soon becomes too tight. Below the entrance, a dig in the floor may be associated with it and also New Cave.

### **New Cave**

SD 67633 80673 Alt: 318m

The entrance to this cave is in the very tight bedding plane, behind the large boulder, just left of the entrance to Wretched Rabbit. The bedding is awkward to enter and ahead after about 10 metres a slot in the roof is reached. Straight ahead a small trench leads to a drop and 6 metre pitch to a lower level. (*At present the base of the climb is choked with cobbles.*) From the base of the pitch, a tight and tortuous passage leads on passing a tight squeeze to a series of very awkward tight bends before emerging at the very top of the Upper Parallel Streamway next to the terminal choke. The slot in the roof of the entrance crawl intersects a passage with a short section heading over the entrance of Wretched Rabbit to a cobble choke. In the opposite direction the passage continues small to a right hand bend where a too tight passage enters on the left, possibly associated with Fox's Lair cave. Beyond this point the passage becomes a trench until it begins to drop away leaving progress to be made in the top level of a very tight rift. The rift has been descended with aid but little further progress has at present been made.

### **Pickwick Pot**

SD 67842 80820 Alt: 333m

On the same side of the gill and 40 metres downstream of Boundary Pot entrance, this cave lies in a shallow trench-like shakehole, on a bench 15 metres from the centre of the gill. A 3 metre descent through boulders to a small chamber, here a slope to the left leads to the stream as it disappears into a bedding, possibly to emerge in Boundary Pot. Ahead a short, tight narrow passage forced at floor level, enters a small aven with water issuing from a tiny inlet in the roof. The water runs off back through a bedding toward the entrance and the way on ahead in the aven is choked.

### **Rebar Pot**

SD 67830 80798 Alt: 331m

Lying South South-West and 20 metres distant from Pickwick Pot, this small pot entrance is on the upstream lip of a large elongated shakehole. A piece of rebar rod is used for a ladder belay to descend the 4 metre pot. At the base, a drop into a bedding heads left, while a too tight hole in the floor drops away below. The bedding crawl continues and trends back into the hillside to choke after only 4 metres.

Notes

## Rowan Tree Rift

SD 67793 80776 Alt: 330m

The entrance has collapsed and at present the actual position is undetermined, so the reference given here is for our best guess and digging at this location is in progress in the hope of getting it reopened.

## Second Best Hole

SD 67657 80671 Alt: 323m

This small entrance is near the top of a slight outcrop, on the slope, 20 metres due East of Wretched Rabbit entrance. A squeeze down through boulders lands in a small stream as it continues through the choke to resurge further down the slope. Upstream continues as a crawl over cobbles until after 8 metres the cave develops into a large bedding plane and the stream splits into two, barely separate branches. The right branch has a small leg off to the right but the bedding ahead slowly becomes too low after 10 metres. The left branch gradually widens out and also closes down after 10 metres.

## Sheepfold Cave

SD 67609 80604 Alt: 319m

Due East and almost 40 metres from Swindon Hole, this entrance is almost hidden at the rear of a sheepfold. Dry crawling soon arrives at a fork in a small streamway. The left soon closes down and becomes too tight, whereas, to the right continues as a narrow twisting passage. After 10 metres a small inlet on the right is met and just beyond this the cave ends in a small choked aven with an inlet.

## St. George's Cave

SD 67705 80720 Alt: 323m

This small cave is entered through a low arch almost opposite but slightly upstream of The Borehole. Above the entrance crawl is a small choked aven but the passage ahead chokes almost immediately to the right in a clay and cobble wall and to the left is a boulder filled slot in the floor. The slot obviously takes water when the gill flows and may connect to inlets in The Borehole.

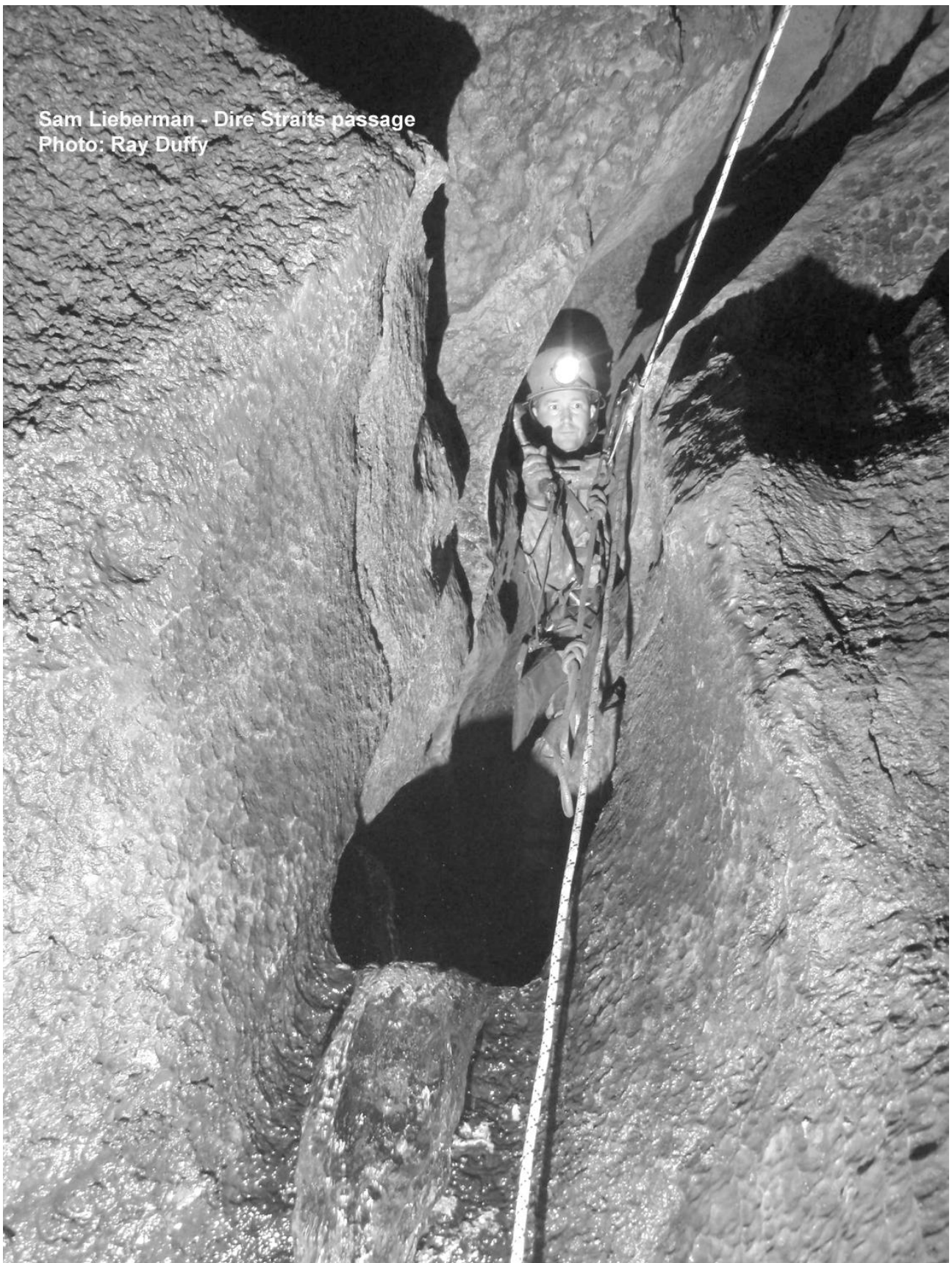
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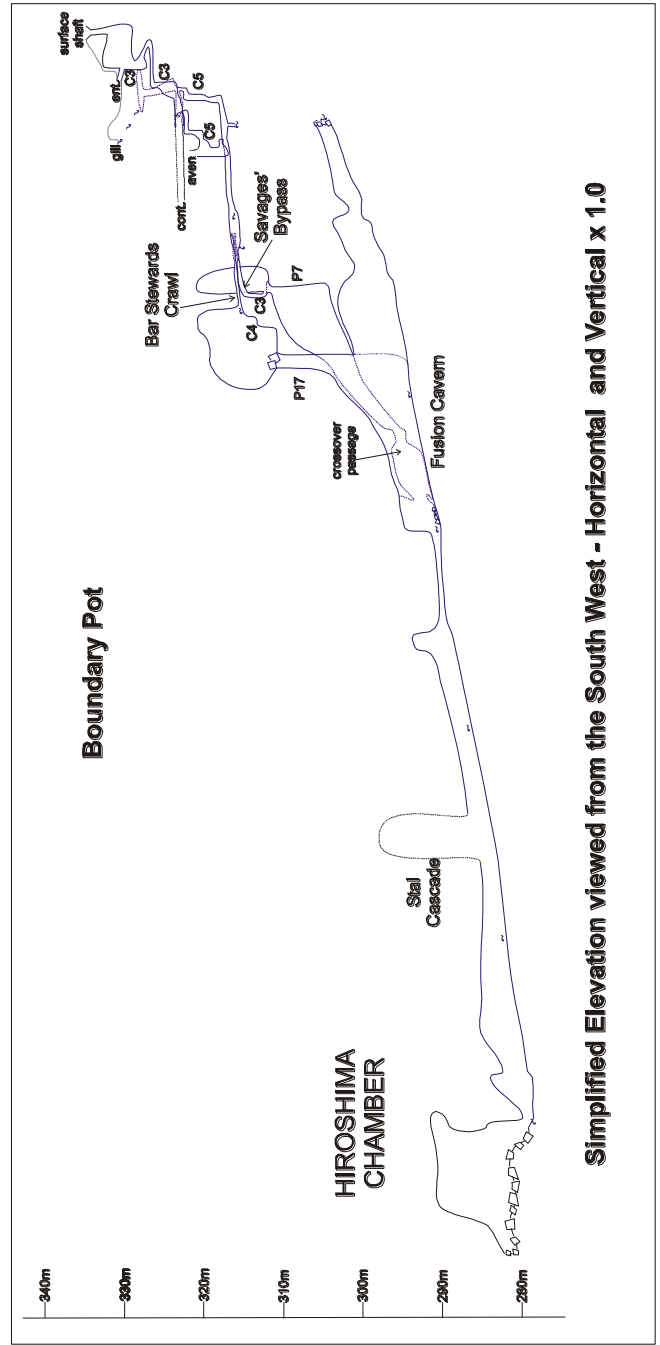
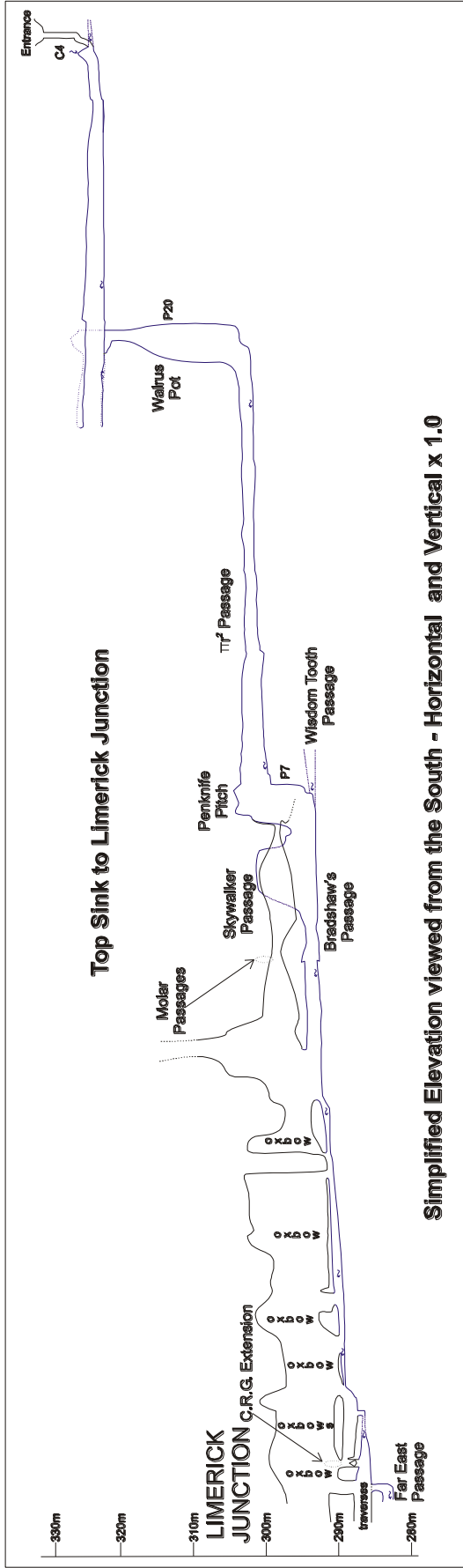
## References:

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.

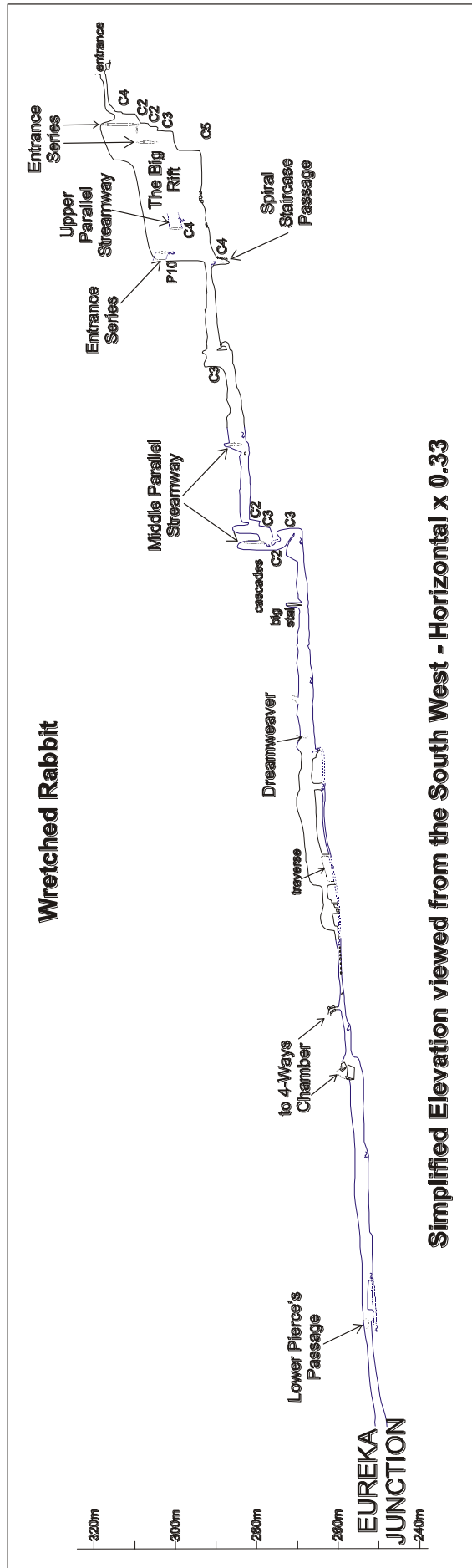
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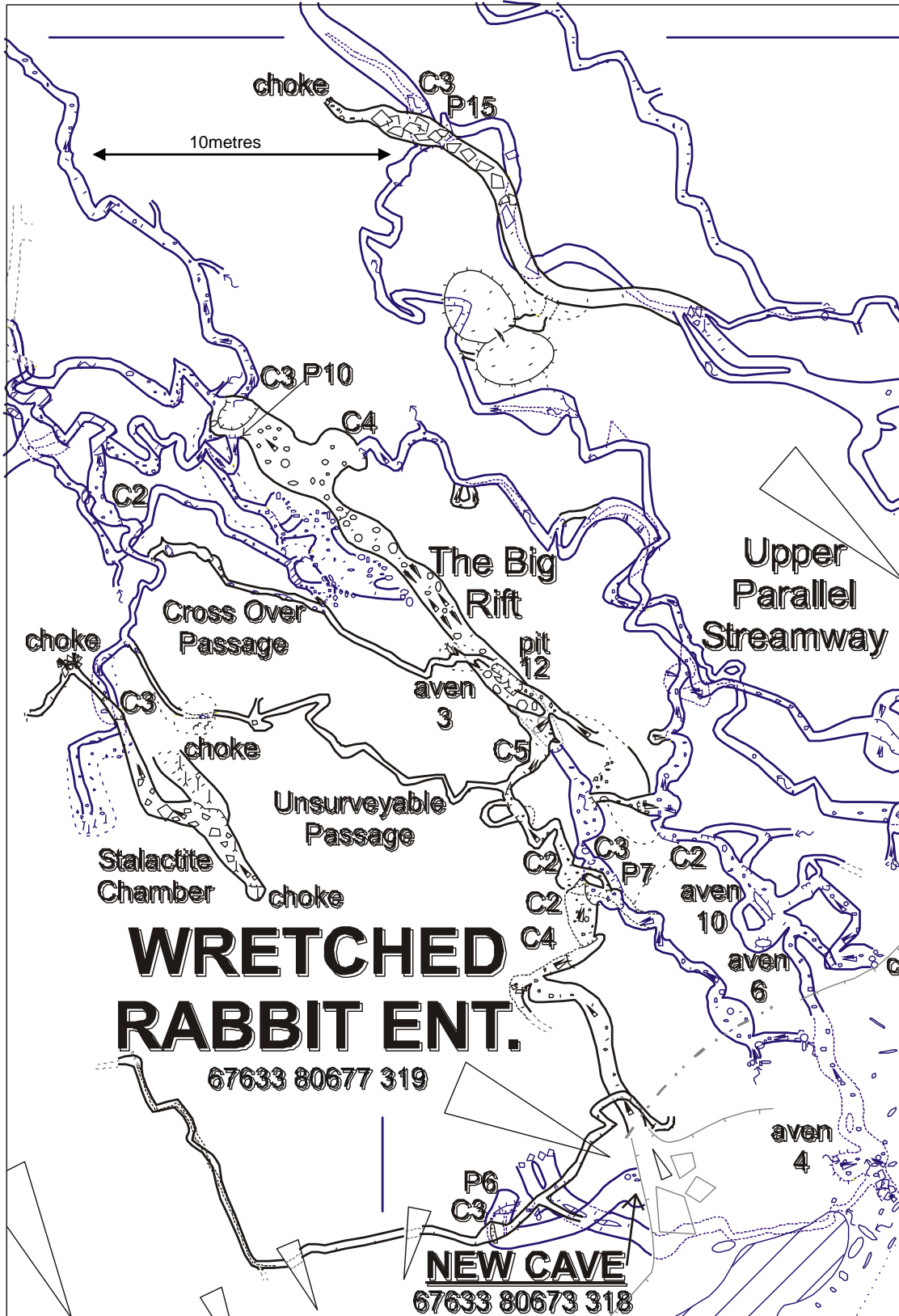
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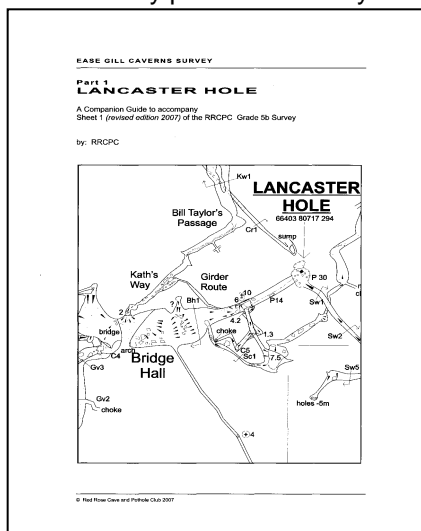






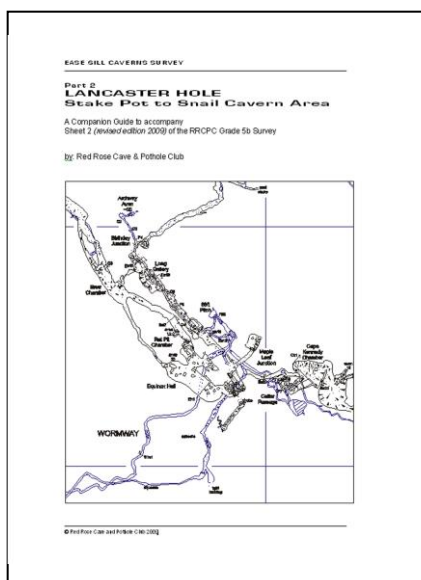


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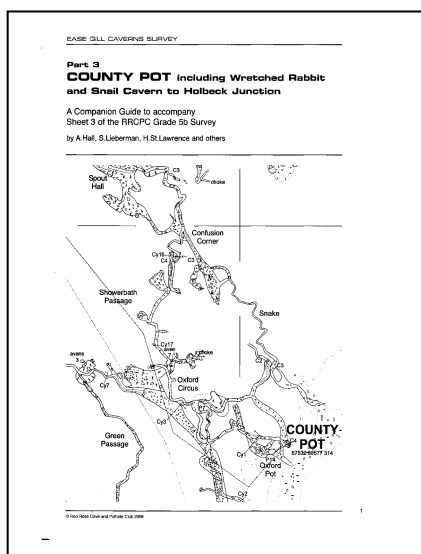
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