

## OBITUARY



J. C. COLEMAN, M.A.

Jack was a victim of a car crash on April 20th 1971. He was only 57. With him the society has lost a fine friend and an Honorary Member of long standing.

He was born and educated in Cork and was rightly proud of his home town. He was very happily married and had four children, all of whom survive him. In 1951 he joined *Fogra Failte*, the publicity arm of *Bord Failte* and he soon rose to be head of his department. In 1965 he was awarded an M.A. by University College, Cork for his spelæological research and one can safely say that this was well earned.

His earlier caving was done with N. J. Dunnington and their joint paper on "The Pollnagollum Cave [Cahir Bullog] of County Clare" was published in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy in 1944. This was a major landmark in caving in Ireland and was a fine piece of work. It was through this paper and correspondence with Jack that the U.B.S.S. first became interested in caving in N.W. Clare. The resulting contacts proved very fruitful. The Society owes much to Jack for many things in Ireland.

He had published four books and another on "The Burren" is nearly ready for issue from the Anvil Press, Tralee. All his books are well worth reading and give glimpses into the life of the countryside of his youth. Perhaps his outstanding one is "Journeys into Muskerry," an account of cycling excursions into the countryside around Cork. In 1965 he published "The Caves of Ireland." This is a superlatively good guide, which far outclasses the general run of guides on individual caving areas. It has deservedly become a best seller. In addition to his books Jack has contributed numerous papers to various journals and those given at International Congresses on Spelæology have invariably stimulated discussion.

He was a pleasant and jovial companion. His fine bass voice was well worth listening to when he could be induced to sing. I have vivid recollections of his singing with Czechs in an inn in Germany several excerpts from operas.

For many years he was almost the sole Irish Caver in Ireland. Yet eventually he founded the Irish Spelæological Association to cover the whole of Ireland. He became its first President and under his guidance it became truly an association covering the whole of Ireland and ignoring political boundaries. This was no mean achievement.

Our sympathy goes out to his wife and children in their tragic loss. Caving has lost a distinguished exponent of this science and sport. We have lost a good friend. Jack will be greatly missed by us all.

E. K. TRATMAN.