

OBITUARIES

KATHLEEN MARJORIE CROOK (1901-1987)

It is with regret that we record the death of Marjorie Crook on 12 November 1987, at the age of 86.

She was born on 27 June 1901 in Worcestershire, the only child of Captain H. H. Willmore, Royal Navy, and Mary Kathleen Willmore. Educated at St. Mary and St. Anne, Abbots Bromley, she came to Bristol in 1919 to study medicine. She graduated M.B., Ch.B. in 1925 but never practised.



FIG. 1—MARJORIE CROOK (EXTREME RIGHT) IN A GROUP AT BALLYNALACHAN CASTLE, CO. CLARE, IN 1951. E. K. TRATMAN IS NEXT TO HER, WITH FRANK FROST EXTREME LEFT; BACK ROW (L TO R) BERTIE CROOK, MOLLY HALL AND MAISIE O'CALLAGHAN
Photographer unknown

It was from the time of her first coming to Bristol, living at Clifton Hill House, that her connection with the Society began. As her first membership card (reproduced in the history of the Society on p. 12 of the Jubilee issue of *Proceedings* (12(1), 1969)) shows, she joined the Society soon after its formation in 1919, when L. S. Palmer was secretary.

As a student Marjorie was an enthusiastic caver, often travelling from Bristol to Burrington on her motor cycle. She was also keenly interested in archaeology and was actively involved in excavations, including those in Aveline's Hole (FIG. 2) and Read's Cavern, where her activities in 1922 or 1923 are shown in plate 2B of *Proceedings* 12(1), 1969. She spent a great deal of time doing field work in the Cotswolds, as well as on Mendip. She kept meticulous records of her work and wrote or contributed to eight notes in *Proceedings*, on barrows, megaliths, earthworks and Roman coffins. She was on the Committee from 1922 to 1925.

Marjorie met Bertie Crook while a student and in 1927 they married. Her time was spent mainly in looking after a busy doctor's household at Timsbury, and in caring for her three sons. None of the sons became cavers but the family tradition is being carried on in South Wales by her granddaughter Sophie, who has very kindly allowed the Society to copy parts of

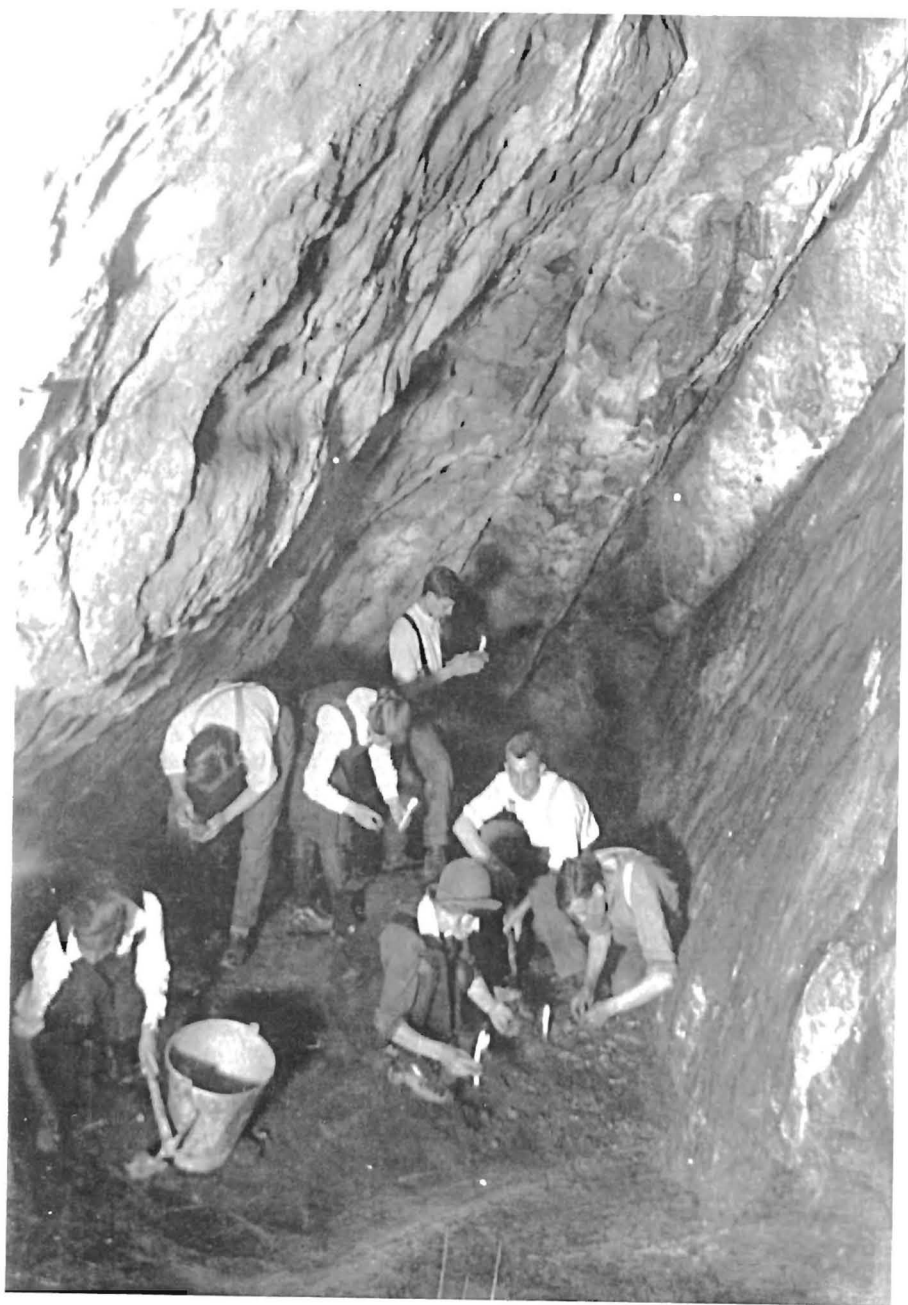


FIG. 2—MARJORIE CROOK (FRONT CENTRE) EXCAVATING IN AVELINE'S HOLE ABOUT 1922. E. K. TRATMAN IS ON THE RIGHT; J. A. DAVIES IS BEHIND THEM
Photograph: H. Taylor?

Marjorie's albums of photographs (whence these two pictures) and newspaper cuttings. Bertie and Majorie were generous hosts and many generations of Spelaeos were welcomed at their home at Timsbury, where full use was made of Bertie's workshop.

In 1941 she helped excavate the burnt-out debris of the U.B.S.S. Museum, which had been totally destroyed in the disastrous air raid on Bristol on Sunday night, November 24th/25th. Some few sad remains were housed at Timsbury for the duration of the war.

In spite of a busy family life Marjorie never lost her enthusiasm for caves and she went underground whenever an opportunity occurred. Perhaps it is not generally known that it was she who suggested the name G.B. Cave on the grounds that Francis Goddard and Charles Barker had done so much to promote its discovery. Her caving extended beyond Britain, to Eire, France, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Her last trip, in 1969, was in Read's Cavern, to celebrate the 70th birthdays of Trat and Bertie, complete with wine, cake and candles, at which I was present also.

Right to the end of her long life, she maintained a lively interest in the doings of U.B.S.S. and remained a member until she died.

She had wide interests and a volume of unpublished poems, written by her and found among her books after her death, shows only too well her deep love of Mendip and what that stretch of country meant to her.

Molly Hall