

## Secretary's Report, 1961 - 1962

### Meetings

Seven sessional meetings were held during the year: attendance at these has not been very good. As a result of inadequate support, the series of tutorials during the winter term on the geology of Mendip was cancelled.

### Caving

On Mendip, work on the dig at the bottom of G.B. Cave was much helped by dry weather in the autumn, and considerable progress was made until rain created a sump: digging was started again in the spring. Some digging parties have visited Rhino Rift. As a result of very heavy rain at the beginning of 1961, the swallet at Manor Farm became almost completely silted up: no work on the dig has thus been undertaken, but we hope to construct a system of drain-pipes to keep out solid matter in the future. The dig in Lower Twin Valley has reached a depth of 27 ft.; work continues here, and a strong fence has been erected round the site.

A party returned to Co. Clare as usual in July. Exceptionally heavy rain in the first few days of the trip caused the most extensive flooding that the Society has seen. This provided valuable evidence of flood levels both on the surface and underground. The survey of Poulmagollum was completed, and a second impassable connexion with Poulelva was found. Poll Omega was surveyed to the top of the pitch, and an ox-bow 1,700 ft. long was discovered in Cullaun II.

Away trips have been made to Yorkshire (August and January) and South Wales (November and March).

### Archæology

The Society has two Pleistocene sites under excavation. Dr. Taylor has continued work on the Almondsbury bone fissure. In August, work was started at Crook Peak on a site named Picken's Hole, after its discoverer. This has already yielded a considerable mass of material in a well-stratified deposit. Below a hyaena layer is a barren, frost-shattered bed, and below this is one containing no hyaena, but plenty of bear remains.

At Charterhouse, two more 10-ft. sided squares were opened. Part of a poorly constructed building was found, which, from the amount of industrial debris, was obviously connected with metal workings, possibly of both iron and lead. No coins were found, and none of the pottery is later than 2nd century.

**Headquarters**

During the summer, the front of the hut was rebuilt 3 ft. further out, and much necessary repair work was executed. The front is now much sounder than before, with a corresponding increase in interior size. The "child" has also been rebuilt. We are grateful to the University for a gift of timber for this work.

**Photography**

Some three dozen transparencies, mostly of Irish and archaeological subjects, have been added to the slide collection. Progress has been made in compiling a new negative catalogue, based on the Society's general cataloguing system.

**Equipment**

The Society has made 120 ft. of wire ladder, mostly replacing old tackle; our total is now about 300 ft. We are grateful for a gift of 210 ft. of sisal rope. A suggestion was received from the Bristol Exploration Club that Mendip caving clubs' tackle should be colour-coded, to avoid confusion after rescue operations. As a result, ours is being given orange distinguishing marks. The wind generator gave some trouble during the summer, but has been repaired and is now running satisfactorily.

**Museum**

Much work has been done on washing, preserving and cataloguing the finds from Picken's Hole. A temporary exhibition has been prepared of some of the best finds from this site, and from the Almondsbury and Charterhouse excavations.

**Library**

The Library has continued to expand, and a number of additions to the exchange list have been made. We are grateful for several donations. Work has been started on a catalogue of British cave surveys contained in publications in the library.

**Acknowledgements**

We are very grateful for grants from the University of Bristol and the Colston Research Society towards the cost of *Proceedings*, and for a number of private donations for the same purpose. We are also grateful to the University of Bristol Union for a grant for general purposes during the Year.

D. H. HOUSTON,  
*Hon. Secretary.*