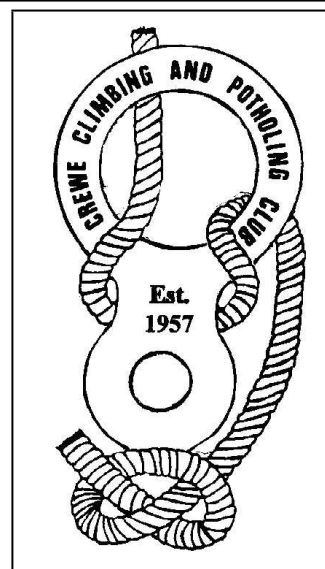


C.C.P.C. Newsletter 117 December 2018

Log on to www.ccpc.org.uk



Recent Club Meets during September, October & November 2018

Sat. 15 Sept.	Ibbeth Peril, Yorkshire	
Sun 30 th Sept.	Ogof Hesp Alyn, Mold, North Wales. (Grade 5)	Alternative: Poachers Cave.
Sat. 13 th Oct.	Lancaster Hole (Grade 3, +), Yorks.	Alternative: Numerous Easegill Caverns routes.
Sun 28 th Oct.	Gautries Hole (Grade 3), Derbys.	Alternative: P8 (Jackpot).
Sat 10 th Nov.	Penyghent Pot (Grade 5)	Alternative: Little Hull Pot.
Sun 25 th Nov.	Peak Cavern, Derbys.	Alternative: Plenty of route choices.



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:- 15 September : Ibbeth Peril, Yorkshire.

Due to heavy rain, the Sat 15th September trip to Ibbeth Peril was deemed unsuitable for persons without gills! The party wisely had a re-think, electing for a trip to Calf Holes / Brow Gill instead.



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:- 30 September : Ogof Hesp Alyn, North Wales.

Two styles of report from the weekend in Wales:

From **Jenny Drake**:- "Seven of us underground. We made it to sump 1. Standout feature, MUD! Lots of it from the bottom of the pitches to the sump. An interesting, but physically demanding cave."

From **Ade Pedley**:- "It's full of gluttonous s**t, that's all I need to say."



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:- 13 October : Lancaster Hole, Yorkshire.

On Sat 13th October, five club members, plus a guest, enjoyed an excellent but rather “damp” through trip from Lancaster Hole to County Pot. Neil Conde noted that at the time there had been a collapse in Wretched Rabbit, which has since been remedied.



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:- 28 October : Gautries Hole, Derbyshire.

The trip was unaffected by rain! Eleven members spent 2 ½ hours exploring Gautries Hole beyond the ducks, including the new extensions. A trip was also made to P7 however the descent was cut short prematurely, due to a surfeit of pitches & a paucity of rope.



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:- 10 November : Penyghent Pot, Yorkshire.

The venue was changed due to the weather, as Penyghent Pot would probably be horrendous, and Little Hull Pot, as well, so Alum Pot was chosen instead.

Trip report by **Jenny Drake**: Five club members met up in a packed Inglesport cafe for breakfast. The water levels were up, but were OK, and we were in a window of dry weather between one rain front and the next. Des and Dan did Upper Long Churn while Rob started rigging Dolly Tubs, with assistance from Jenny and Grace. The Upper Long Churn team soon joined us as we descended to the open Alum shaft and negotiated the traverse, the bridge and the long drop to meet the water. A final pitch and descent of the cascades took us to the sump. For some reason, the brown peaty water and floating froth on the sump pool made Jenny long for a Guinness! The waterfall coming down the final pitch of Diccan was very impressive - a trip for a less wet day. As we made the return trip we met with some ULSA students taking novices down. After getting changed we stopped off at the Golden Lion (aka the Brass Cat) in Horton, before heading home.



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:- 25 November : Peak Cavern, Derbyshire.

17 Members and guests enjoyed a trip into this ever-popular venue, with parties separating to explore the Victoria Aven SRT route, the trip up to Moss Chamber, and the usual 'tourist' trip.

Many thanks to all those who take photos during Club Meets, and then make them freely available to the rest of us. It is greatly appreciated, and helps to show-case our activities for others. Ed.

Coming Soon to a Saturday or Sunday near you !

The final section of the CCPC Meets List for Autumn 2018 includes the following:

Venue	Region	Grid Ref.	Grade	Alternative Venue	Region	Grid Ref
Notts Pot (2) (Permit)	Yorks	(SD 671778 - Notts 1)	3			
Giants Hole (pay £3 at farm)	Derbys	NGR: SK 1194 8268	3 / 4	Oxlow (Pay £2 at farm)	Derbys	NGR: SK 1241 8218

(Dates are intentionally removed – Members will already have the full Meets List, and will be reminded of forthcoming Meets by e-mail.)

There are always additional chances to go caving or walking (..... and ?) with other Club Members, with many trips being arranged at short notice.

***** 28th December CHRISTMAS WALK : Check your e-mail for time / place / route !!! *****

E-mail is the easiest way to keep in touch, and can be used to let other Members know what you are up to, and to invite them along, where possible. Remember, to get the most out of Your Club, you have to get out there, and get involved. Have fun ! Steve Knox

.....

Waterways Swallet - Saturday 24 November 2018



At the recent DCA meeting, I was asked if Crewe would consider "gardening" the cavers car park at Waterways Swallet. For those who don't know the area, Waterways Swallet is a natural cave in a dry valley on the Okeover Estate in Staffordshire, not far from Ashbourne. It is an exceptionally deep cave, 6th deepest in the Peak District, originally explored in 1958 by the Stoke-on-Trent Potholing Club, but later extended by Orpheus and, this century, it was extended "in spades" by the Keyhole Caving Club, including none other than our very own Pete Dell. Regarding the gardening - if you remember, we did this a few years back a couple of days before the Via Gellia version of "Ralph's Revenge". It used to be an Orpheus job, as they originally sorted out the access for the cave (and off-road parking is a condition of access) but OCC said that they didn't currently have the staff! (I was told that the tidying of the car park was something which the late lamented Boyd Potts used to administer, and, since his passing, there was nobody willing to take up on the responsibility.)

Any road, I raised this at the last CCPC meeting and got the thumbs up and, to my great delight, there were five of us turning out on the day, armed with all manner of grass and tree cutting implements. And with such a willing army, the job was done in just over two hours! Many thanks to Will Cooper, Pete Savill, Steve PA and Neil Conde for stepping up to the plate - it's great to see Crewe cavers sorting out the caving infrastructure. Just like old times. Coffin Dodgers in the making?

The other part of the task entails ensuring that the cave itself is fenced effectively, and that the fence stile and lid are OK too. So we all took a



walk down to the dry valley at the bottom of the field and examined the structures. The fence was OK, but the stile plank was loose and will need some attention, and the plate swivels on the lid are very bent and could do with being replaced. Something to sort out in the near future.

So, chores over, Steve and Pete headed for home, while Will, Neil and I kitted up for a trip into the Swallet. Now it is indeed called a swallet, and yet it very rarely takes a stream. If you look on the map, you will see that there is a stream marked on it which rises in Dunlowmoor Wood and flows around the boundary of Waterings Wood, where the cavers car park is sited, finishing up (sinking?)

in a pond in the dry valley some 60 metres before it meets the cliff which forms the main wall of Waterways Swallet doline. So our swallet is only a swallet in flood conditions; normally the water from the pond finds its way to the resurgence in Hinkley Wood near Ilam without entering the known part of the cave. Probably the most awkward section of the cave is the bit between the entrance and Main Chamber, and, apart from a couple of digs in the Main Chamber, this is probably the total extent



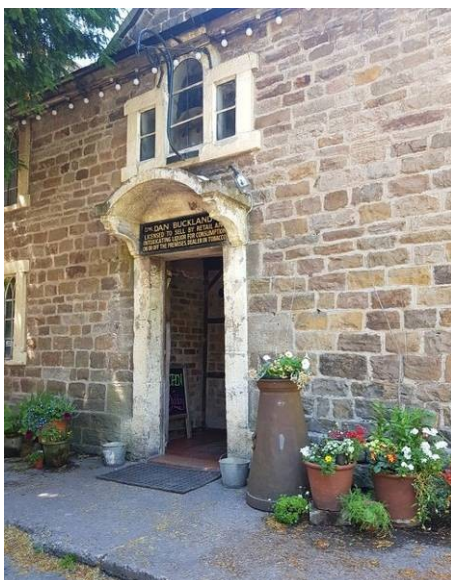
of the cave before Keyhole forced their way downwards. Right enough, we were quite relieved to stand up in the chamber and clamber down the awkward climb into Rift Passage, where the digs commenced. Our route was down the furthest "dig", still marked by a pulley in the roof, and a hank of electrical wire dangling and vanishing into the rubble at the side of the dig.

The route down is a masterpiece of scaffold work, and climbing down feet first is very absorbing, as well as making you very warm! Soon enough, we popped out of Keyhole's Christmas Breakthrough, into solid passage and a piece of tatty rope marking a short two metre climb. This was our first junction, and we opted to take the Room 101 route, which meant following the rope back underneath the climb, and down a steep passage which eventually pops out into Room 101, one of Keyhole's last discoveries. The rope we used as a hand line used to start at the foot of the two metre climb but, lately, somebody moved it to the top of said climb which might make that climb easier, but it also means that the rope finishes two metres above the floor of Room 101. But we managed!! (Note to self: take an old rope in to replace this next time.)

Room 101 is a very large collapse chamber, floored with boulders and sporting a high aven at one end. I'm unaware as to whether the aven has yet been climbed, but the chamber always looks impressive after the preceding passageways.

The route out of here, known as Richard's Kennel, is one of the dodgier bits of the system, being a sketchy route down through an unstabilised boulder choke. With care it's not too bad, and you're soon back in a scaffolded section of the main route which leads down to the second junction.

Here we opted for the low crawl to the head of Toad Haul, a huge chamber almost at the lowest point of the cave. The low passage suddenly pops out onto an airy pulpit some 20m above the floor of the chamber, with a knotted hand line to assist the climb down. A squeeze between boulders here took us down into Wotno Streamway which then led us to Wotno Sump which at 125m (410ft) is the lowest point.



The return to the surface took a loose boulder choke from Toad Haul (rather than the knotted rope climb and the crawl), and Bloor Street and the Floodgate Pot fixed ladder were used instead of the Room 101 climb. As always seems to be the case, climbing up sections is easier than the descent, and we seemed to be back on the surface in no time; in fact the whole trip took us less than two hours.

Back on the road we were concerned to see another car parked at the entrance to the cavers' car park, and, just as we were wondering whether some scally was robbing our wheels, Steve Knox appeared. "Just popped over to see how you were getting on!"

After a quick late lunch and a sloe-harvesting session, we closed the gate on the car park and headed over to Cauldon Low to visit the Yew Tree, probably the most fascinating pub in the world. A nice way to end a great day gardening and caving with mates.

‘The Yew Tree’, Cauldon Low.

Alan Brentnall

DCRO Training Exercise: Sunday, 25th November – Lathkill Area Search

The scenario involved the classic situation of missing cavers, somewhere !!

- two young cavers had supposedly gone digging, and had failed to return home. Their vehicle had been located on the roadside lay-by at the top of Lathkill Dale, so the DCRO vehicle was located there, and we assembled to be briefed on the search area. Like many of the Derbyshire limestone dales, there are numerous holes to check, some being known caving locations, but others with no established caving interest – yet !

With limited numbers of available searchers, we were sorted into small teams and allocated known caves/mines to check first, for any signs of recent activity, and to locate pre-placed, laminated information sheets. I joined Andy Beardmore, Chris Beardmore and John Preston and we set off to check sites in Fern Dale, then to go on through One Ash Grange and into Cales Dale.

A significant part of such exercises is to familiarise DCRO Team Members with some of the more obscure locations (far better than during a rain-drenched night on a real call-out), or even just sites not previously visited. The maps provided to each search team had locations marked and numbered, but with names omitted, and this led to an interesting situation:

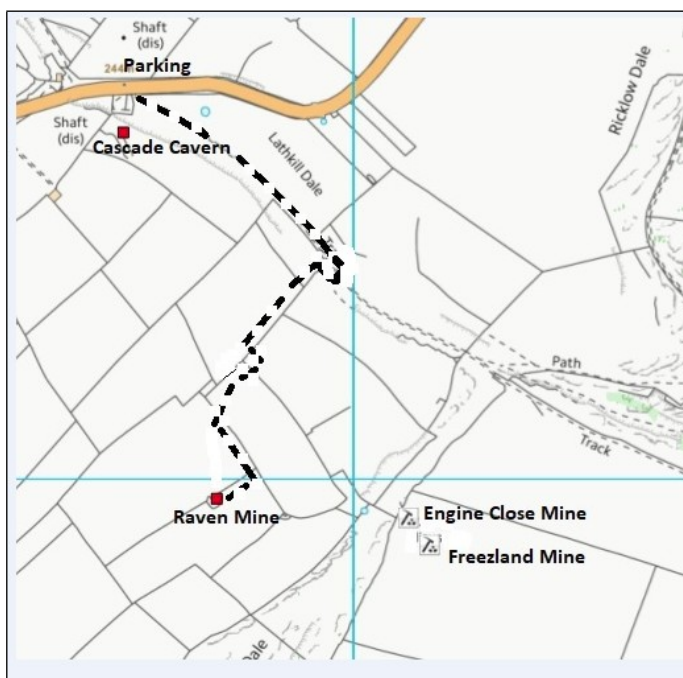
Being reasonably familiar with the area, but having always used 'Caves of the Peak District' to locate and identify sites, I was convinced that **Raven Mine** was one of the shafts on the south-east side of Fern Dale (as shown on the map on page 227, and as described on page 242) but Andy had been down Raven Mine and assured me that it was over on the north-west side of the dale, several fields away, in the location labelled as **Eagle Mine** !

Caves of the Peak District (2010 edition) states:

Page 242 - Raven Mine, SK 1609 6590, 'On the south-east side of Fern Dale'.

Page 232 - Eagle Mine, SK 158 661 ,

These grid references are exactly as entered in the 1991 edition of the guide, although the 2010 description for Raven Mine has additional information concerning the 1991 extensions, however on the map on page 179 Raven Mine is shown closer to the Eagle Mine location, and Eagle /Mine isn't marked at all. No wonder I was confused.

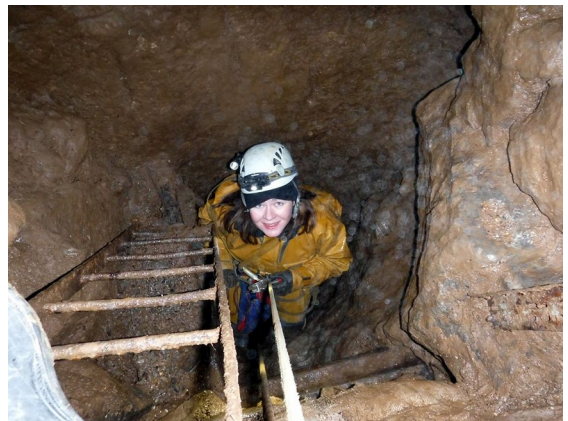


When in doubt, ask an expert, so I contacted **Alan Brentnall** who confirmed the correct location for Raven Mine, and supplied the access map included here. Alan added: 'Raven Mine is indeed where COTPD states Eagle Mine is. Here's the route I send out to folks trying to get to it - the red squares and pick-axe symbols are from the Peak District cave locations file. A useful source of locations is the DCA Cave Registry –

see <https://registry.thedca.org.uk/sitedetails.php?id=188> which gives SK 158 659.'

Incidentally, the 'Descent' write-up on the Raven Mine extensions (issue 112, June/July 1993 - page 18) gives a grid ref of SK 152 660 which is even further to the west, close to Derby Lane, and no-where near the actual location.

Looking back, I can see that a CCPC group enjoyed exploring **Raven Mine** on 15th December 2017, and **Des Kelly** kindly posted a selection of his photographs on the CCPC Facebook page:



All photos courtesy of Des Kelly.

(Who do those feet belong to ?)

During our continuing DCRO search we checked the marked sites of Engine Close Mine, and Freezeland Mine, finding three shafts, all well sealed and stock-proof, and clearly no-one had attempted to descend either mine for a considerable time.

Moving on to Cales Dale, we spent some time scouring the vegetation on the semi-vertical dale side (west), up as far as Lynx Cave and One Ash Cave (SK 1723 6509 & SK 172 651 - north and south sides of the same buttress), then back down the dale to Lower Cales Dale Cave. There are two entrances close together (SK 174 654), just below the footpath, and usually wet, but dry on this occasion, and with a laminated DCRO sheet just inside – so at least our team found something ! Straight up the hillside above took us to Upper Cales Dale Cave (SK 1730 6544), then round the corner into Lathkill Dale proper, for our final target, One Ash Shelter (SK 1730 6556), a rock shelter, located in the undergrowth at the foot of the upper cliff by Andy and Chris.

Throughout the day radio communications had been fully utilised, with the various teams reporting their locations and progress back to the base radio, and with further instructions being sent out. This was the other major purpose of the exercise, and was carried out successfully, despite the sometimes challenging nature of the terrain. With all allocated target sites investigated and all information sheets recovered, the exercise was brought to an end and all teams returned to the DCRO vehicle for a debrief.

Doubtless we all learned something (not to believe everything in 'Caves of the Peak District' in my case), and enjoyed working with other team members, and finding some of those less frequently visited locations. An excellent day.

Steve Knox

More Mine Related Graffiti :-

You may already be familiar with this item, but if not, the next time you are walking through the upper section of Lathkill Dale take a look at the rock-face next to the oddly named, Ricklow Cave. Odd that is because it clearly isn't a cave ! The alternative name, Beresfords' Level, is far more appropriate as the passage is a neat, well cut, horizontal mine passage, now fitted with a gate to keep random tourists out.

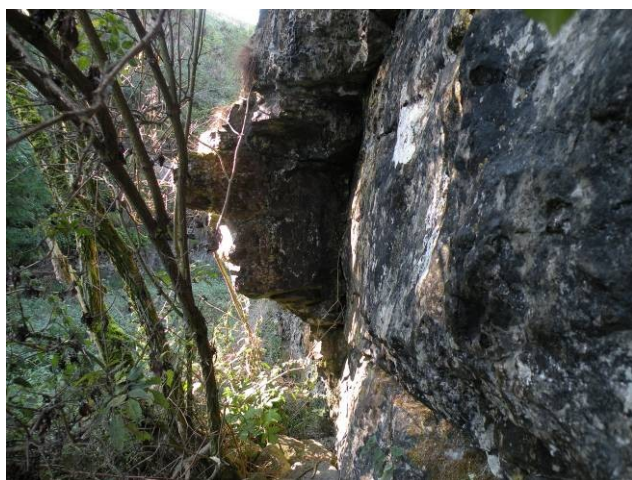
It seems hard to believe, but this is claimed to have been intended to be a link to the Magpie Mine, at Sheldon [J.H. Rieuwerts – 'Lathkill Dale: its mines and miners' – Moorland Publishing – 1973]. The passage was started by a local miner from Monyash, Isaac Beresford, assisted by his sons, and was originally called 'Beresfords' Level', or 'Barsett's Cut'. Clearly the venture was soon abandoned, and it is only in recent times that cavers dug and enlarged their way through constricted and choked natural passages to make a connection with the Northern Lights in Lathkill Head Cave. Isaac Beresford left his mark on the rock-face just to the left of the entrance, carving his initials and the date into the limestone:

I B 1787

Less obvious, and not so well known is the second, much fainter inscription:

R P 1802

I'd be glad to know who R P refers to. This one is even more difficult to find !



The 1780 graffiti is on the shadowed face of the protruding rock 'nose', just to the left of the passage entrance.

Steve Knox

(PS. It's probably not a good idea to go round carving your initials and the date on cave walls these days, - and claiming it is 'historic' won't work if the date starts with 201....)

Christmas Traditions:

There must be many traditions associated with the underground world and those who spend their time there, apart from the obvious one of going to the pub after the December Caving Meet !

A longstanding Peakland Yuletide tradition was the Christmas Eve candle. The lead miners of Castleton left half a tallow candle burning on the best ore in the mine on Christmas Eve, hoping it would bring good luck the following year. An old book noted: "The miners used to find the best piece of ore they could, stick on it the best candle they could procure, and squat round these on Christmas Eve, singing their old carols until the candle was burnt."

Bradwell miners left half a candle burning for t'owd man (the spirit of the old miners) and they also left a portion of their dinner. An old Bradwell miner, in his late 80s in the early years of the 20th century, recalled they left the candle: "for the old ancient man to have his posset by." [BBC – Countryfile Magazine]

German schwibbogen (candle arches) were first handcrafted around 1726 out of wrought iron. The german term schwibbogen refers to a type of arch constructed in gothic times when an arch between two walls was called "Schwebbogen" (floating arch). The look goes back to a tradition of miners, who hung their burning pit lamps in a semi-circle over the pit entry hole before they started their last shift before Christmas. The german schwibbogen, or candle arch, expresses the longing of light by the miners during their workdays. Schwibbogens today are frequently used as home decorations on window sills at Christmas time – we have one in our house.

(I bet you didn't know that !!)

There must be many more traditional Christmas activities, or superstitions, associated with mining (perhaps from Eastern European countries). Can anyone enlighten us ?

Sticking with the **Christmas** theme, I wondered how many seasonal links could be found in Peak District Cave names - very few it seems:

Christmas Hole, Castleton – a 'lost' dig, south-east of P8.

Christmas Swallet, Castleton – otherwise known as P9, between P8 and Snelslow Swallet.

There is, of course, **Crimbo Hollow Engine Shaft**, **Crimbo Pipe Inlet**, and **Crimbo Swallow**, in Knotlow Mine. – there is no overall accepted definition or origin of the word '**Crimbo**', however most sources claim that it is a slang or colloquial word for **Christmas**.

Sadly, there is not a 'Holly Hole', 'Shepherd's Shaft', or 'Angel's Aven' to be found anywhere – unless you know of one, or something equally seasonal ?

(Incidentally, we did have a CCPC member named 'Carol Potts' years ago, which is very close !)

Happy Christmas to all our Members, past and present, and to friends everywhere,

Steve Knox

.....
Editor's Note: I know you have heard this before, but please, please, please, do try to contribute something towards the next Newsletter ! Getting Members to send write-ups/reports of Club trips, or other activities involving Members seems impossible sometimes. There is plenty of stuff going on, and sharing it with other members helps to maintain interest in the Club, and might even encourage some new faces to come and see what CCPC is all about. CSK.

colinknox@btinternet.com

'Just For Interest'

An occasional series of obscure, cave-related locations in the Peak District:

No. 2. **Ludchurch Cavern** or **Lud's Church** – SJ 987 657.



It always surprises me that this site, amazing though it is, should be listed in 'Caves of the Peak District' (2010 edition, page 190). Firstly because it is in Gritstone, being nowhere near the Peak District Limestone where we normally expect to find caves. Secondly because it is not a 'Cavern' at all - it falls into that group of natural fissures or cavities usually created by landslips or fracturing of rock strata, and frequently open to the sky, as this one is. None the less, it is a remarkable place, and over the centuries has attracted the attention of locals and travellers alike, and has gained various anecdotes, legends and folk tales in the process. There are various ideas about the origin of the name - it was certainly called Lud-Church as far back as the seventeenth century, being mentioned in Robert Plot's 'Natural History of Staffordshire', published in 1686, where he claimed that winter snow often remained in the 'stupendous cleft' all year.

02-11-2018:- Paul Nixon at the west end. Can you see the other figure though ?

Even earlier, during the reign of Henry V (1413-1422), a group of **Lollards** (a pre-protestant religious group) led by Walter de Lud-Auk, supposedly met there to hold their services in secret - hence the 'church'. Accounts claim that Walter's daughter, Alice, was killed by a cross-bow bolt when soldiers attacked the group.

Another account claims that **Luddites** (protestors who broke up mill machinery between 1811 and 1816) led by Alice Lud, used the ravine as a hide out, until (wait for it ...) Alice was shot dead by soldiers !

In about 1860, the wooden figurehead from the wreck of the ship 'Swythamley' was put up on a high ledge and was called 'Alice' in memory of one of the slaughtered girls, or both, or ? As you might expect, Robin hood and Friar Tuck get included in the stories too, using the place as a hidden camp. Others who get a look in include 'Bonny Prince Charlie & Flora MacDonald, who just happened to need somewhere to rest, and Sir Gawain from 15th century Arthurian legend, visiting the 'Green Chapel'. I'm guilty of recounting one story to visitors (without having ever checked the truth of it): 'Squire Trafford of Swythamley Hall was riding over the moor in pursuit of a stag, and he suddenly found himself on the brink of the ravine, and too late to turn, he tried to make his horse jump across. The horse almost made it, but didn't, - however the squire was saved by grabbing a tree branch as the horse fell backwards, hence 'Swythamley's Leap'.

To return to **Caves** etc.: On my first visit here, in about 1964 or 5, there was a hole down between boulders at one end of the ravine. I squirmed down for about fifteen feet (at least !) but it was tight, filthy, and going no-where.

It certainly wasn't the meeting place of the Lollards, as described in the *Sheffield Independent*, 30th September 1938:

'There have been attempts to explore the cave in which the meetings were held but falling stones have prevented any definite conclusion. The cave is estimated to have been 200 yards long and 100 yards deep.'

That small, bouldery hole was still there about ten years ago, but is no longer visible.

.....
.....

Write your own caving story here !!!

Happy Christmas, and so say all of us.
End.

The

.....
.....