

FIELD TRIPS: The search for Donlan's Cave near Snoqualmie Pass.

The Cascade Grotto was introduced to this cave by Mr. Frank Lynch, in the June 13, 1951 issue of his column, "Seattle Sconce" in the Seattle Times newspaper. This cave was found in the year 1902 by Joseph P. Donlan, who at the time was working as a blacksmith in a mine in Snoqualmie Pass. The mine was almost exactly where the South Fork of the Snoqualmie River crosses the present day highway. On one of Donlan's trips from the mine he stopped to do a little climbing. This spot was in a ravine, some 1½ miles due east of the mine. To the south and across the creek were low hills. The mountain Donlan climbed was Denny Peak. Poking around in the drift, rock and earth he came upon the entrance to a cave. The entrance was low, and slightly in back of the drift, fairly long, but not high. When in the cave he could see that it was broken up by "pillars of stone," resembling logs, though some were not round. These pillars were all smooth as though worn by the flow of water. Donlan proceeded until he felt that he was too far from the entrance, which was now far behind, as he had only matches.

Many years later Mr. Donlan returned to the very same spot but the entrance had been sealed by drift.

Warren Gibson, who has been leading the search for this cave reports progress as follows:

"The first trip to the cave area was made by Del, a demolition expert friend of his with his girl friend, and myself. We were led by Joseph Patrick Donlan himself.

"Because Mr. Donlan had been to the area of the cave only once since its discovery in 1902, and that return trip in 1928, he was unable to recognize anything about the country.

"After piecing his story together as best I could, I returned on three separate occasions by myself and have been able to identify several landmarks Donlan mentioned -- I think.

"Del, his wife, and I went to the cave area late in September or early October, but the weather prevented much exploration.

"An old friend of mine who is fairly familiar with the Donlan Cave area has identified another landmark just last week (21 Jan '52). This makes me feel confident that we may find the cave this spring, after the snow has gone."

FIELD TRIPS (continued): Lapush Sea Cave.

Warren Gibson reports:

"On my summer vacation trip I attempted to reach the Lapush Sea Cave, but found that access to the cave can be had only at low tide, which was about 2:00 AM at the time." No further attempt was made to enter.

FIELD TRIPS (continued): McQueen's Cave.

Located near Concrete, Skagit County, in the vicinity of the "3-Lile Creek Cave" reported in CCR #2.

Again this cave was introduced to us by Mr. Frank Lynch. Some thirty years ago Woodman H. E. McQueen came upon the cave site above Everett Lake, but recognized it only as a sink hole. Last autumn Fred Jensen, State Forester, chanced upon the same spot and investigated the hole. He notified McQueen and State Forester Roy Benham. Local Editor, Charles Dwalley, was then notified and on down the line to the Cascade Grotto.

On December 2, an expedition composed of Grotto members, friends and officials descended upon the cave. In the party were Johnellis Jones, John Tate (guest), Peter McLellan, Warren Gibson, Lucy and Del Neely; State Foresters Fred Jensen and H.E. McQueen; Editor Dwalley and Art Dwalley.

To enter the cave it was necessary to divert a small stream that was pouring into the sink hole entrance. The first chamber was roughly 40 feet long and 15 feet wide with a steeply inclined ceiling which gave just enough room to stand erect part of the time. From this room, a narrow crack at the lower end wound in a 12 to 15 foot passage which

opened into another room almost as big as the first. The only way it could be reached was to crawl head first under an outjutting ledge, lie flat on your back and wiggle for the length of your body, then work around a right-angle corner for a few more feet before emerging on the floor of the inner room. All members of the party made this inner room. Here a stream of water cascaded down one side of the room and disappeared into a hole at the lower end of the room. A number of very small passages lead from both rooms but none were large enough to explore with more than a light beam. High water marks and drift wood indicated that this inner room is subject to complete flooding. In all the total length of the cave, about 80 feet, making this the largest to date in Western Washington. (Precise location map sent by Mr. McQuoon on file).

The area around Concrete is probably an ideal location for many caves but the dense coniferous rain forest completely obscures them. The sink hole of McQuoon's cave is visible from an abandoned railroad track.

RUMORS, Our main source of inspirations:

Warren Gibson reports: "I have picked up rumors of three other caves near Seattle. Two in the Snoqualmie Pass area. One of these Pass caves is a known opening on the south face of Granite Mountain. The other Pass rumor is of some caves suspected near or on Snoqualmie Peak. The third rumor is of a supposed cave near Brunclaw and involves an Indian prospector and two suspected murders."

Doc Neely reports a series of caves possibly in McLoughline Canyon, near Tonasket. Here, it seems, that "McLoughlin's men" took refuge there from the Indians but all were killed. There are said to be fissures in these caves that have no measurable bottom.

Duke, the lad that lead the group to the Mt. Issaquah talus cave last spring (see CCR #1), is investigating another cave near Issaquah.

A possible cave entrance was observed from the "Mountain Loop Highway", just south of Barlow Pass. Warren Gibson tried to reach the cave alone, but found that it was no one man undertaking.

AGENTS MEETING: A brief meeting was held this fall, but nothing definite was to result from it. On November 20, 1951, a business meeting was held at Doc Neely's house with Johnellis Jones, Peter McLellan and Phil Gilhousen in attendance. The following items were discussed: (1) Records; (2) Expense; (3) Publicity; (4) Membership; (5) Participation, and (6) Election. Under item (1) it was decided that Peter McLellan should keep and maintain all records of the Northwest caves and, in general, act as Historian for the Grotto. (2) No dues are to be collected from any NSS member to belong to the Grotto. The publication of the CCR will be financed on a pro rata basis. On this account \$1.00 was contributed by Johnellis Jones, Phil Gilhousen, Doc Neely and Peter McLellan for this current issue. There was no election as the majority wanted the present members to remain in office. Namely,

Delford M. Neely - Chairman

Peter H. McLellan - Secretary - Treasurer and Editor

AGREEMENT: The following major project was negotiated by Peter McLellan with Mr. Douglas Osborne of the University of Washington. The Cascade Grotto will assist in the exploration of caves located by a field team of the University. Two graduate students will probably spend two or three months in the field searching for, recording, and evaluating cave sites from the archeological point of view. This will undoubtedly be of mutual benefit to both organizations. A meeting will be arranged in the near future.

MEMBERS: Virginia Alcorn writes that she is a Junior in High School and has toured in several commercial caves. She is very anxious to meet the members (remember she lives in Anguist) and correspond with anyone on caving.

Jim Moore is at the Geology Department at the "U" as a graduate student. (Here is where we can look for mapping to be organized on a going basis in the Grotto).

FOCUS: A statement has been received by the Grotto written by Noil Morgan concerning the many cave sites near his home in Boverly. (1) Indian Cave, Grant County, south of Vantage on east bank. After crossing the Vantage bridge going east, you turn right and drive about one mile south, and on the left hand side of the road the 30 by 30 foot mouth of this cave looms up. The cave is about 30 feet deep. It was used by the Indians as it is a collecting place for local "pot hunters."

(2) There is a hand made cave 4 miles west of Smyrna. It is called the Ico Cave. There is ice in this cave at all times. In the hottest summer weather, 105° F, the ice stays, the same as ever. The mouth is 4 feet wide and 7 feet tall. The depth is 20 or 25 feet. The cave has a door visible from the road.

(3) This cave is approximately 3 or 3½ miles south of Boverly in Grant County. It is found just beneath the highest point of the road going around the first rock cut below Boverly. It is impossible to get into this cave when the Columbia River is at its high points. This is a lava cave with a mouth approximately 60 feet wide and 45 feet high. The main part goes back 35 or 40 feet, here dividing into two, the longest adding 25 or 30 feet to the cave's length.

(4) There are a lot of caves on the lower end of Lower Lona Lake. Lower Lona Lake is near the Hanna Hanna River Guard Station just outside Olympic National Park. These caves were made by a slide of huge boulders and there are passage ways all through these rocks. The passages and small rooms go down under visibility of sunlight. Visiting the caves should be done in the early part of summer because when the lake is high one cannot get into many of the openings. The rocks are usually covered with heavy moss.

The survey this summer will be able to evaluate these reports.

An exploratory letter was sent to the "Tacoma News Tribune" on February 7 by the secretary, concerning the cave (?) that leads from the city of Tacoma to the Tacoma Narrows, a distance of 5 miles. The many curious reports on this seem very interesting.

NOTE: With the apparent scarcity of large caves in the Pacific Northwest, there is a tendency for almost any small opening to be called a cave and reported as such. It is quite obvious that this will give a false picture of the caving situation as it exists with respect to comparative numbers. It therefore seems necessary to establish a criterion by which we may eliminate or otherwise evaluate reports and observations as to whether or not we are dealing with a cave or a "hole-in-the-wall" cavity. It is therefore recommended that the following definition of a cave be accepted:

A ROCK ENCLOSURE HAVING ONE OR MORE DEFINITE ENTRANCES, AND AT LEAST PORTIONS OF THE INTERIOR IN TOTAL DARKNESS.

As soon as possible the list of caves distributed by the Cascade Grotto will be revised to conform to this definition. Unfortunately this means that one of the two caves listed for Washington in the society publication "Palaces Under the Earth" is not officially recognized by this Grotto! This is Cholan Ico Cave which does contain ice at times, but is no deeper than three feet.

THE CAVES OF YOSEMITE VALLEY

By Peter H. McLollan

When looking for natural caves one usually does not go to Yosemite. Obviously, no limestone areas may be expected in a continuous granite formation, of which the park is principally composed. Discouragement was offered from every side, even from six other speleologists who were also in the valley. Nonetheless, in the summer of 1951 an effort was made to locate and describe any existing caves in Yosemite Valley, for its extensive talus slopes do represent opportunity for boulder caves to occur. The Indian Caves of the valley are, of course, a well-known point of interest; and they are also the only caves within the park known by the author to be on record.

For the purpose of this discussion I wish to define a cave as a rock enclosure having one or more definite entrances, and at least portions of the interior in total darkness. This immediately eliminates the majority of the "hole-in-the-wall" cavities which may be formed almost anywhere from the random accumulation of talus along the base of the high valley walls. It does, on the other hand, establish certain structures as definitely being in the cave category.

One of the more significant finds recorded this summer was that of Carbonate Cave, which is located near the bridle path between Indian Caves and Mirror Lake, just north of Iron Spring. This is a boulder cave having a small secondary entrance 32 feet beyond the largest or outer limit of the cave. This distance was measured north on a rise of 25 degrees from the horizontal. From this point the cave is dark and rises 14 feet vertically, having two standing levels within. The important feature of this cave is the encrustation of cave coral covering the granite boulder walls. This is a surface coating of carbonate resembling tiny stalactites and stalagmites, some being rounded or bead-shaped while others are cylindrical, pointed formations. Examination with hydrochloric acid suggests this to be the mineral dolomite, a calcium-magnesium carbonate.

This material is deposited upon the walls by evaporation of mineral-bearing water. Presence of the deposit is governed by the character of the ground water in the vicinity, which in turn is governed by the kind of water-soluble materials with which it has come in contact. As ground water is exceedingly mobile, it can readily pick up mineral material in one place and deposit it, for example, in a cave many miles from its source. It is thus possible to have, deposited on a wall rock, a mineral which is of an entirely different composition from that of the wall rock.

The occurrence of carbonate encrustations in areas of apparently continuous granite is rather rare. Surface coatings have been observed on some of the talus boulders of the valley and on the sides of a large erratic boulder a quarter of a mile north of the Lyell Glacier. Dr. W. R. Halliday points out in a letter to the author that cave coral has been observed in two southern California granite areas: Coachilla Creek Cave, near Anza Post Office in the San Jacinto area, and on the underside of a granite boulder about one mile west of Soda Creek Cave on the south fork of the Tule River. The proximity of our Carbonate Cave to Iron Spring, which is also seemingly out of place, might indicate a hidden lens or stratum of rock other than granite to be present.

There is also a certain amount of soil present between the boulders of Carbonate Cave. Small funnel-shaped holes, a quarter to half an inch in depth, have developed where the soil covers the ledges, indicating drips during periods of moisture. A live millipede and several dozen dead crane flies were found in the dark portion of the cave.

Just west of Carbonate Cave four lesser caves were observed, none of which contained cave coral.

A discussion of Indian Caves is in order to establish its place in the list of caves being located. The general appearance is one of massive boulders, with

one of them dominating the view soon from the parking lot. This particular rock, 40 feet high, forms the main cave room. The entrance is $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, but as the visitor will see, the average ceiling height is only 2 feet. If this is no obstacle one may proceed straight in for a distance of 44 feet until an accumulation of small rocks is met. Retracing steps to the entrance, one may circle the massive rock either to the right or left and find many small openings, while some are large enough to hide several people. A few hours may be spent examining and exploring these openings. By working one's way well up the talus slope, about 10 feet higher than the main rock, several more continuous openings or entrances may be found. One of the highest of these slants back down for 43 feet before ending in a pile of small rocks--apparently the same ones which terminate the main room below. Here the author made verbal communication with a person in the end of that room. No light could be seen filtering through the rock barrier, which may be 4 to 10 feet thick. If we assume a thickness of 8 feet for this partition, the cave proper is, then, with one discontinuity, about 95 feet long. Several side passages of a minor nature exist in the upper section.

The name Indian Caves is appropriate because flat rocks in the area outside have some mortar holes which the Indians made in pounding acorns. Logically, it may be supposed that the Indians used most of the more accessible portions of the caves for food storage and occasional shelter.

Continuing west along the north edge of the valley we come to the Yosemite Falls Indian Caves. The main cave in this area is only about 100 yards north along the footpath to the falls from the parking lot, and is at this time the largest known cave in the park. Although a few people have known of this cave it may be assumed that certain portions of it have not been entered since the withdrawal of the Indians. A member of one of the exploring parties this summer found an oblique Yuma spear point lying on the floor of one of the more inaccessible rooms. This is the first record of such a point being found in Yosemite Valley; the point probably predates all other Indian culture in the area.

On approaching this cave from the trail several things about the entrance should be noticed. There are two mortar holes in the large flat rock just outside the entrance. Beyond, there appear to be the remains of an old wall of the kind commonly used by the Indians to block the entrance. About this area a strong cold draft seems to come from the cave. Looking above, it may be seen that there is no lichen growing on the rocks just over and around the entrance due to this localized draft. The draft ceases inside the cave although a cool temperature prevails throughout.

The size of this cave is not readily apparent to the casual observer who enters. Many places require struggling through narrow passages, some no larger than the width of a medium-sized person. Some require crawling on one or the other side, stomach, or back, or head or feet first. Just how large the cave is would be difficult to say, since two reconnaissance parties spent a total of 8 hours in only part of the cave. Over $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours were spent in mapping part of this area. New passageways continually came into view and new rooms appeared after crawling through small holes at what, even at second glance, would appear to be a dead end.

Part of the south side of the cave has now been mapped. Three levels were found here. The upper level is the most frequently visited, if judged by the papers dropped about. The second lower level contained the room where the Yuma point was found. The lowest level is damp. One room here has a sandy floor. In another section of the cave, probably middle level, cave coral was found. The map now being made will indicate just how large the cave is and, with the aid of the letter bench marks that have been burned onto the rocks, will show the best route to follow in exploring the cave.

A fairly large number of spiders live near the entrances. Just 25 feet into the dark area from an entrance a Sierra Nevada salamander (*Ensatina sierrae*) was found. Acorn cups appeared frequently in parts of the cave.

It is strongly recommended that no one attempt to explore this cave unless accompanied by several people all carrying adequate light source and possessing some

degree of climbing skill. Above all, some very strong clothing should be worn as the rocks are quite sharp and immovable in close quarters.

There are undoubtedly many more caves to be found. Already there are reports of a cave near the Mirror Lake Loop Trail and of two in Tonaya Canyon. Another has been reported north of the Yosemite Falls Indian Caves. With stimulated interest it may be possible to locate these as well as others. There is a certain amount of value in knowing just where these caves are and to what use they were put by the Indians. In addition to indicating former Indian campsites, they can, if found in their original condition, be of considerable archaeological value to the park.

Reprint from YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES Vol XXX, No. 12, pp. 117 - 120.

There are more known caves in the valley than are referred to in the article. Discussion with Mr. Robert McIntyre, former Assistant Park Naturalist in Yosemite, now here in the Northwest at Mt. Rainier National Park, has led me to believe that the talus caves are quite numerous. His information was obtained from "Chief Loemco" who was born in a cave not far from Bridal Veil Falls. This cave is situated well away from the cliff. Going west from the Falls on the main trail, the cave is about 100 yards along and on the right hand side, partially visible from the trail.

Another cave mentioned was near Happy Isles. This is supposed to be of fair size but not as large as the Yosemite Falls Indian Cave. If a detailed study were to be made of all the Ranger and Ranger-Naturalist reports it is certain many caves would be referred to. Special notice has never been given to the reports on caves, but they have been reported.

It is strongly recommended that if anyone wishes to contact Lence that they make local inquiry of the Naturalists on good terms with him before approaching him directly.

A good contact in Yosemite may be a Mr. Frank (Kim) Dunn, who is an employee of the Curry Company. Mr. Dunn has expressed his interest in caves and difficulty in finding people to accompany him on trips in a letter to Peter McLellan.

Edward Lanchy, of Stanford Grotto, writes that Sierra Club climbers have reported a cave above Lower Yosemite Fall. He also refers to an article written by J. M. Hutchings on this cave. It can be added that John Muir has also written about this. It was not recorded because it does not fit the criterion established for defining a cave, i.e., light enters all portions of the "cave."

A detailed study has been completed on the situation of the "Oblique Yuma point" found in the Yosemite Falls Indian Cave. Several other diagonally flaked points have been found, also being called "Yuma points." Study has shown these not to be the classical Yuma points of the High Plains. Instead, these points are found to be well known from the southern Sierra Nevada foothills, in fairly recent sites. For a complete report on this with references watch the Yosemite Nature Notes for its appearance or send a request to Peter McLellan, plus postage, and the article will be mailed to you. It will not appear in the CCR.

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