

# MASSON CAVING GROUP

British Cave Research

Association Library

## 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



### POTS

'N'



### PINTS

On a trip into Clatterway Level last year, a shaft was reached right at the far end of the mine workings. The shaft went upwards as well as downwards. It was not possible to ascend the shaft but the shaft was descended down to a total blockage.

Earlier this year I decided to investigate to see whether this shaft could be found on the surface. After looking round for a short while not finding any trace of a shaft, I came across a narrow open mine level in the woods above and over from the Clatterway Level. I went back to my car to fetch my lamp and helmet etc. and then I proceeded to explore this level. After only a short distance a shaft was reached covering the floor of the level, the level continued over the shaft but was backfilled with miner's deads. NB: Waste rock). Being on my own and not having any ropes or ladders with me the shaft was not descended on this occasion.

A few weeks later, on the evening of Tuesday, 12th April, myself and a couple of other members of the Masson Caving Group assembled at the entrance to this mine level to continue exploration. The only suitable delay for the underground shaft was a tree at the entrance to the mine level. Ladders and ropes were fed from the tree, along the mine level and down the shaft. The shaft was descended by myself and a level off the shaft was soon reached which I managed to step into. The shaft continued downwards but the ladder did not reach the bottom and in any case the shaft looked as if it was blind. The total depth of the shaft was estimated at 40 feet (12m) with the level at about 20 feet (6m) depth. There was no other levels off the shaft. As soon as I stepped into the level I noticed a bat flying around. I watched fascinated as it ascended the shaft by a spiralling motion. I continued along this level until I reached a second shaft approximately 15 feet deep, again covering the floor of the passage. The level continued over this shaft but was not explored on this occasion, neither was the shaft descended.

The following Tuesday evening, 19th April, myself and four other members of the Masson Caving Group assembled at the mine entrance to continue exploration. The first shaft was descended down to the level 20 feet down. On entering this level I immediately recognised it as being the same level that we had previously explored 6 months or so ago from the Clatterway Level Lower entrance, and that the 40 foot shaft was the same one we had reached on that occasion. The shaft had been descended then and found to be totally blocked. When the rest of the party had descended down the ladder I broke the news to them that a through trip was now possible. The second shaft was soon reached, the passage which continued over the shaft soon ended in a forefield. The second shaft was descended using tackle belayed to the 40 foot shaft ladder. (The second shaft of 11 feet can, in fact, be free-climbed with care). From the bottom of the second shaft numerous passages radiate, the main way on is the largish descending passage which can be followed to eventually emerge at the Clatterway Level Lower entrance, thus completing a through trip. Note: Through trips can only be undertaken in one direction, unless the upper entrance shaft is rigged beforehand.

CLATTERWAY LEVEL, Brief description, grid reference, tackle required etc.

Clatterway Level consists of approximately 1,000 feet (300m) of pipe workings, the majority being dry but occasionally muddy. The size of the passages varies but is mainly hands and knees crawling. The pipe workings are quite complex and they contain a number of short blind shafts going downwards, one shaft which rises vertically for at least 60 feet or so and which has not been ascended and another shaft which rises 60 feet or so vertically to daylight. (This shaft has again not been ascended, nor has it been located yet on the surface). The pipe workings in places consist nearly totally of calcite mineralisation.

Grid References

Clatterway Level Upper Entrance 282578  
Clatterway Level Lower Entrance 283577

The upper entrance is found by following the public footpath between the stone cottages; immediately beyond 'Burton Place' cottage, climb up bank and entrance is found by bearing to the left through the trees and undergrowth.

The lower entrance is a low opening in the wood south of the first cottages going up the hill from the 'Pig O' Lead' pub to Bonsall.

Tackle Required

Clatterway Level Upper Entrance Shaft: 40 foot (12m) ladder, spreader, 60 foot (18m) lifeline rope, three 8mm bolt hangers plus karabiners etc. (three 8mm anchors have been placed at the top of the upper entrance shaft because there is no other means of belaying tackle, except for the tree at the mine level entrance).

CLATTERWAY SOUGH - this is also worthy of a visit if you are in the area.

Brief description, grid reference, etc.

G.R. 282577

The Sough entrance is in the garden immediately north of the cottages. First 300 feet (91m) is 4 feet (1.2m) high with 3 feet (0.9m) of water; then dry totalling some 1,000 feet (300m) of levels with small solution cavities. There are also a number of shafts both upwards and downwards (difficult free-climbs, (best laddered) in the levels beyond the wet section. There are three short low airspace sections in the wet part of the Sough, the airspace can vary from as little as 3 inches in wet weather to 6 inches in dry weather. Permission for access to Sough from Hollowbrook Cottages owned by Mr D White. No permission required for Clatterway Level Entrances.

References

(1984) Caves of Derbyshire, D Ford and D W Gill, p.35

Clatterway Level Upper Entrance re-discovered by Masson Caving Group in April 1988. (Survey see Page 3)

P. CHANDLER

(CONTINUED)



SURVEY DRAWN BY PAUL CHANDLER MASSON CAVALT GROUP  
 AUGUST 1988

SCALE: 1" = 15 FEET

