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to catch a 'plane.

The next hour was fruitfully spent trying to start the vehicle ^{strip the engine,} attempting to negotiate for a tow back uphill and considering the limited range of possibilities open to us. ^(would the D.A. send a helicopter to help us out?) Finally, we decided that the only reasonable option was simply to enlarge the constriction with a little persuasion, in other words, to push the wall down. A happy ten minutes was spent throwing the boulders which constituted the wall into the adjoining field. We then began rolling slowly downhill, removing more chunks of wall as necessary. A telegraph pole proved no obstacle: it rearranged the protruding chunk of metal which we had bent earlier in the day (God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders, etc) and when the cab jammed against the pole, the local sheriff and I simply heaved on the bonnet to allow the van to pass with little damage. By this means we managed to reverse into entrance off the road. ^{Since we still could not move forwards} We were no better off, but at least the lady en route to Santander could now drive past.

We made further protracted efforts to start the

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van, all to no avail, until John, forgetting that he was in gear, turned the ignition once again. The van leapt forward, almost reducing the population of Amieva by 50%, but also bumping the engine back into life. With the massed forces of the village behind us, we pushed the van back up the hill and then, to the chorus of a thousand instructions, reversed back and turned the van.

Surveying the ruins of what was once an extremely functional wall, we first tried to offer to repair it and then tried to offer to pay for it. Both offers were firmly refused, so at the risk of offending the villagers further, we thanked them profusely and drove back down to the Rio Sella, John taking every corner very carefully this time.

[Stephen suggested that the other member of the party might like to finish this off.]
From this journey have gathered that I am a bloody awful driver. This is probably true but Stephen and I were in total agreement that nothing was our fault. Well, it couldn't have been Stephen's fault driving, you say yourself. Well actually...
You see as a mere traveller I must ^{only} be the better without hesitation. With this backing I know it was impossible for me to let the road out of my hands and maintain a wall and all the rest of

his master plan. Need I fear when only the might of his shoulder
 prevents the van finally collapsing, that creating telegraph post ~~car~~ ^{what}
 as he only told me ~~that~~ later, supposedly carry means electricity? (Certainly
 his confidence in my driving ability is reassuring ~~at~~, at least until
 I remember that the one simple solution to the expedition financial hitch-up
 would be for the main creditors to ~~be~~ fall off the edge of a cliff with all men records
 of ~~the~~ his credit ~~you~~ up in a ~~ball~~ ball of fire. But surely if Jere would
 go up at the same time, you say, which means me on to this point ~~with~~
 mini-expedition involving a one way trip for "Jere" and ~~starting~~ ~~and~~ ~~that~~
~~eventually~~ to the 5:30 am start, a very steep ~~and~~ return journey alone for me over
 some scenic but vertical scenery, at not 3, not 4, or not 5 but 6 hrs driving.
 I also think about that time on Billar when I had taken ~~the~~ (you who
 suggested) the wrong turning and we were ~~not~~ waiting in the car after you
 to get onto the airport road. Thanks to an earlier ~~error~~ error ("Lumber") a
 suitable sense of urgency had been built up (please note - 50 minutes). But jumps
 Jere rushing over a building site ^{up} to the road we want. An arrow waves; I
 follow. The track was designed for bulldozers so there was no worry of wheels
 too narrow. No, but the ~~road~~ ~~was~~ ~~designed~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~4.5"~~ ~~agreement~~ ~~with~~
~~the~~ ~~surface~~ ~~of~~ ~~loose~~ ~~pebbles~~. Wheel spin is not the word. Then
 you at the airport - "Plenty of room beyond by that time" he said. Pity
 about his wrong minor. Yes, Jere would still like me to pick
 me up on Wednesday. I'd just find out the time ~~and~~ ~~that~~ ~~you~~ ~~pick~~
 me up at 9.45 pm, please, so that I can be back for morning and you

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can have another = (?) day at Brindas. I write this in the happy knowledge that Steve will never read it for it will remain safe at base camp while I gently ^{simultaneously} rip off your what long night time journey back.

N.B. This is most unfair.

17/7/84 Sam + Fred ripped off all our food at the crack of dawn when they returned to top camp. (Actually it was just that I had no eye on that 300g of cheryot).

~~At last~~ huge breakfast of Marmite + Alpen + Sports to compensate for yesterday.

I hunt dragonflies while Nicola handily guards camp. Another box of Alpen bites the dust (bitten by law).

→ Men camp around cleaning up rubbish, dissuading the scouts from feeding the cows their rubbish. We dissuade men from cleaning up our water bottles etc.

1 swim.

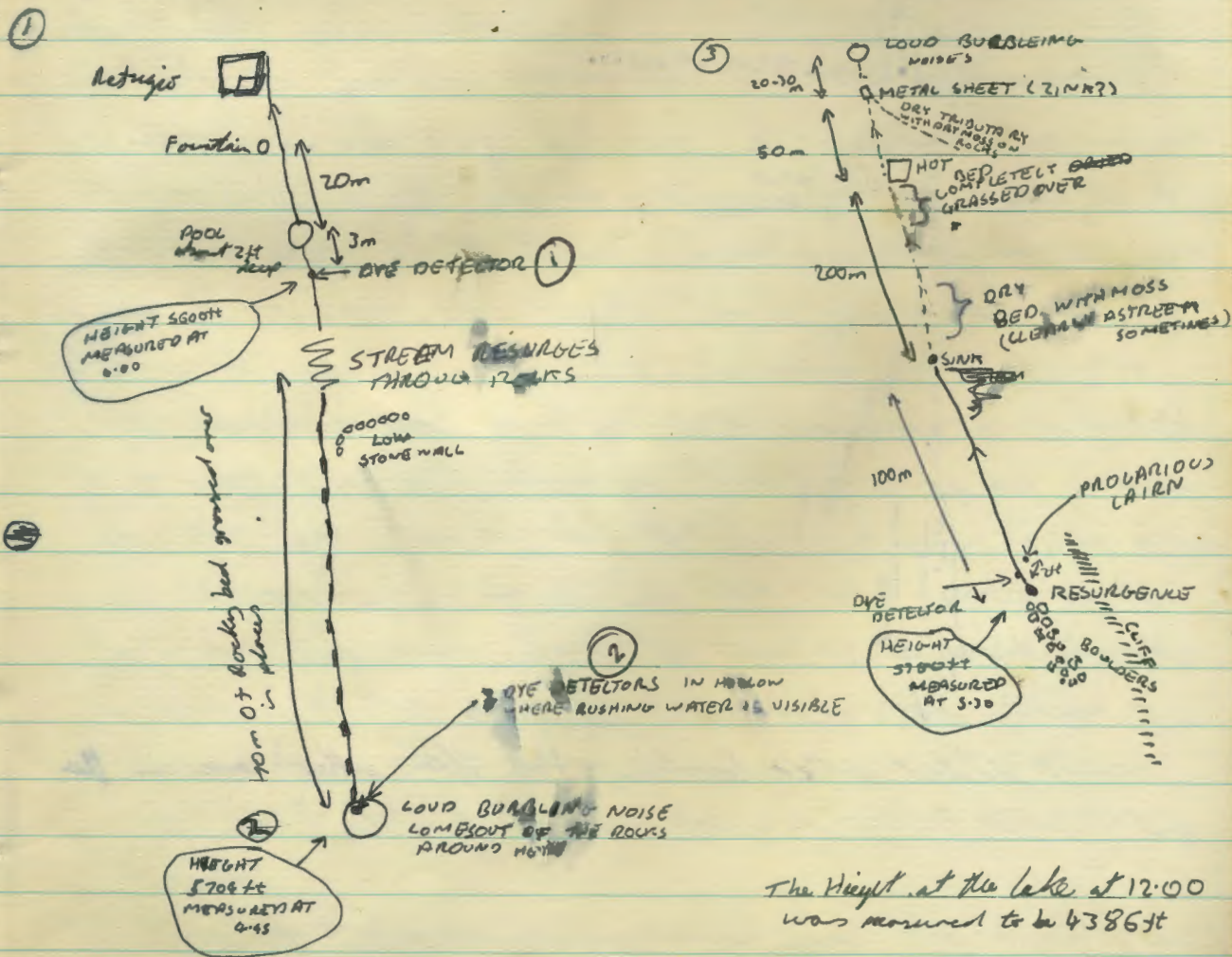
Nicola leaves me

11 days worth of the best's
sub-we bread.

19/7/84

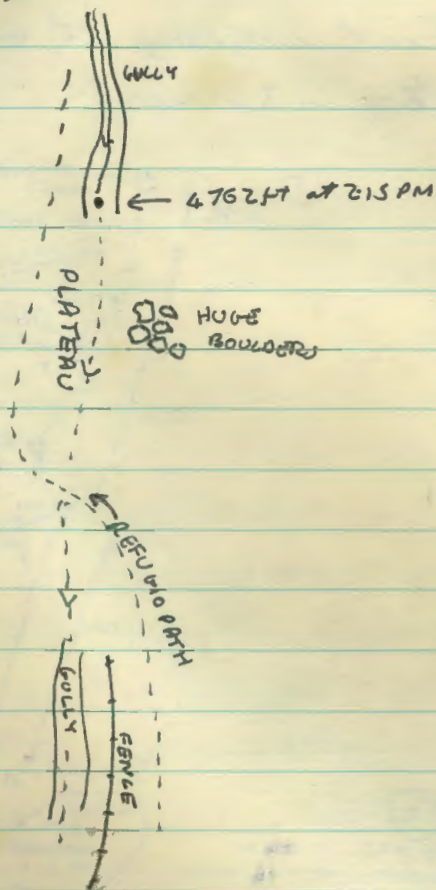
Mike Dye Detecting around the Retegio de Vega Redonda

The plan was to put dye detectors in all the most easterly tributaries of the Surgencia starting around the Retegio and working up stream. ~~The~~ Progress was hampered by mist which was thick enough to enable me to walk within 50 yards of the Retegio without noticing it on the first attempt. In the end I got detectors in 3 places



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I was also supposed to locate two cones and find their height. I roamed about for hours looking for Vents but couldn't find it. I took an Altimeter reading from ~~the~~ a place that I thought must be ~~at~~ ~~the~~ within 50ft of the ~~max~~ height of the cone



I didn't bother looking for the other cone in the mist

Hutch. 19-20/7/84

Small Caves around Osu.

Dumped maximum thermometers etc in Osu, and crawled around in jeans. It's a bit stingy for ordinary clothes really, however. A couple of rodent skeletons located. Dead snail shells only found but I didn't look v.

thoroughly through the dead leaves. I wonder if cost ~~price~~ dissuades them

Prz 9 is incorrect in describing Cueva de la Caña as SE of Osu - look on the survey to see that it's NW. Skips + snails in entrance but I didn't go any further.

Stone Lid Cave. The recommended 4m ladder on the entrance is unnecessary, one can bridge up + down. I put it instead 1/2 way down the climb below where a handline is recommended. This, at least from the top, looks more tricky although I think it would be possible to climb out. Lots + lots of lovely skeletal skeletons in the 15m pit, mostly sheep + cow but at least one carnivore (paw, fox) and a few rodents. Removing some of the stones ~~would reveal~~ might well reveal some more of the smaller skeletons. The bones were all rather disarranged. Thankfully nothing very fresh was down there and it was also lucky that few leaves got in to cover everything up. Salamanders + an Anuran seen live, also carrion beetle and a few ~~very~~ snails. Some of these were live and unlike ~~these~~ those up above at this time, active. Most were broken open, I thought by ravenous trapped rodents but the harvestmen might well be responsible. I would like to look at the 20m pit to see if any rodents found their way down there.

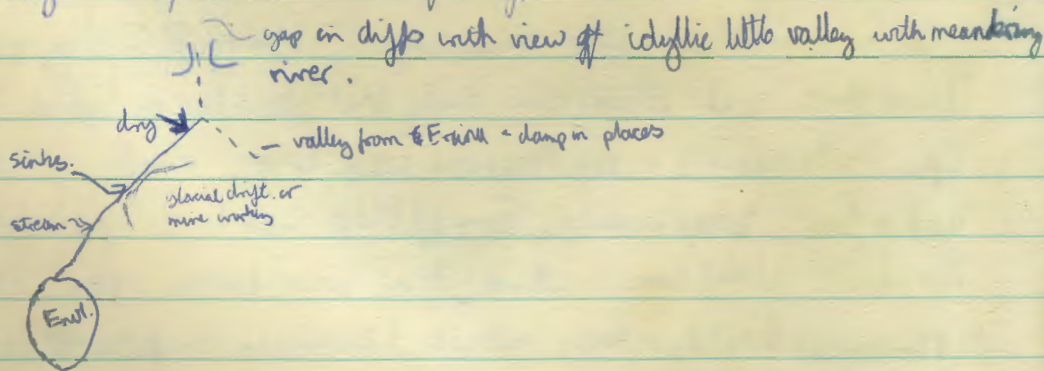
~~Es~~ I found a couple of small caves. And Another Cave

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was located. 2 other caves were also of a similar insignificant size but definitely caves, were found. one of which may correspond to C. de los Enanos ~~and~~ but seemed rather small and another seemed to be ~~in the area~~ near where Crows Caves ~~were~~ was marked but was obviously too small. ¿Estaba Fradesa? was definitely located and does have an impressive entrance. Absolutely ~~packed~~ full of leaves. Rumaging around underneath them revealed lots of small shells, again mostly broken open. Some skeletons also.

Hutch. 22/7/84.

Today's daring epic was up to my normal heroic proportions. A walk round Escina was followed by a walk over to Enol for a swim. This swim consisted of sticking a dragonfly for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs but eventually I did ~~per~~ manage to partake of the water. Another planned session around Osu sounded a bit daunting so I followed the outflow from Enol:



Letter to Ringtons 27/7/84 by Silvia -

On behalf of the ~~ouce~~ ~~expedition~~ I would like to thank Ringtons for ~~providing~~ ~~our~~ ~~expedition~~ with ~~it~~ generously providing ~~teabags~~ your fine teabags for ^{our} expedition. ~~Living in York my family~~ As my family lives in York I have ~~at~~ ~~been~~ ~~at~~ I have ~~at~~ I am familiar with Ringtons tea as my family lives in York and purchases ~~and~~ ~~am~~ ~~but~~ ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~especially~~ ~~appreciated~~ of it ~~even~~ ~~more~~ ~~on~~ ~~expedition~~, and I know my appreciation has been shared by the other members of the expedition. The first ~~it~~ thing everyone wants when they have walked up to Top Camp from Base ^{with supplies} ~~with supplies~~ or on returning from a hard casing ~~top~~ has been a 'Crew' of your tea bags, ~~to refresh them~~.

Once again then I would like to thank you for your reviving and refreshing tea.

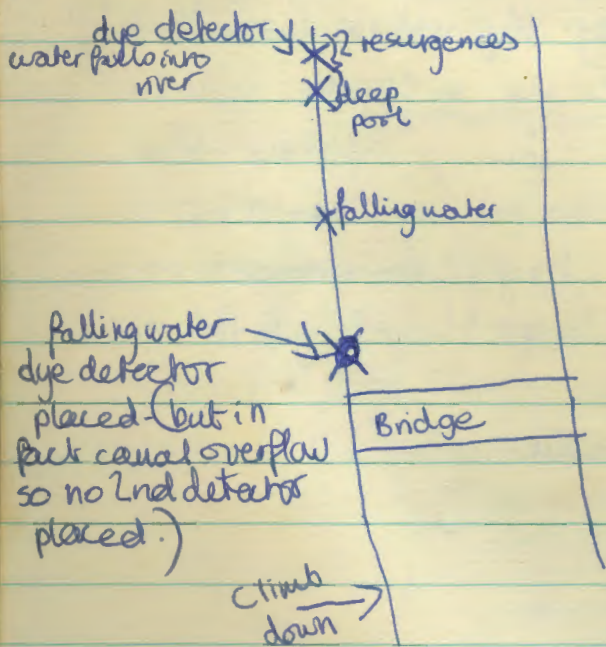
Why it tastes so awful.

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Eye Testing in the Gorge - Silvia + Graham 15/7/84

After the epic trip into the gorge (see Top Camp Log Book) we got down to the actual purpose of the exercise on Sunday afternoon, after reaching Cain in the morning. We did the First Cain, where we had an interested little boy watching - It has in fact disappeared so I don't need to say where it was.

2nd. Puente Bolin - In fact it isn't the one nearer Cain



Alt. 2280
 26/7/84
 4.25pm.

Then back to the resurgences above Cain →