

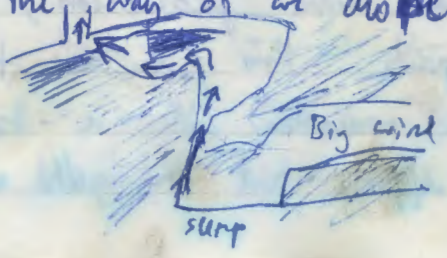
be 21/11. We left 80m of rope and some rigging gear in a tackle bag just inside 21/11, anticipating returning the next day to push 22/11. Finally, we had a quick look in a hole Rob found, which was just a dirt a few metres down into boulders with a monkey sheep's skull at the bottom. Rob Garrett is 18. ?

Steve

20<sup>th</sup> July - Rob & Tony's Pushing trip in 8/11  
(Better late than never!)

The weather this morning had been fairly miserable but nevertheless in a fit of pique I had agreed to join Tony on a pushing trip down 8/11. When, for a short period, the witness seemed to have gone from the dog we make a quick start, about rather late, to get underground before ~~our~~ enthusiasm lagged.

Our plan was to check up on some of the leads lower down 8/11 around Big Wind and to this effect we made good progress through the cave. At the main sump, at the beginning of Big Wind we checked on our first lead - the small inlet which feeds the sump. Climbing up this and then out there is a large inlet leading up which is exposed and practically unclimbable (without ropes). However, climbing across to the left and then up is another big inlet chamber. This is similarly unpractical to climb but we climbed it anyway (in fact it's two exposed climbs up). The dirt leads to a fault controlled passage which connects with the other inlet. It also leads leftwards along a route Tony claimed to have explored on an earlier trip with Chris D. The <sup>1st way</sup> way on we chose was a loose climb upwards.



Grade 0 swimming.

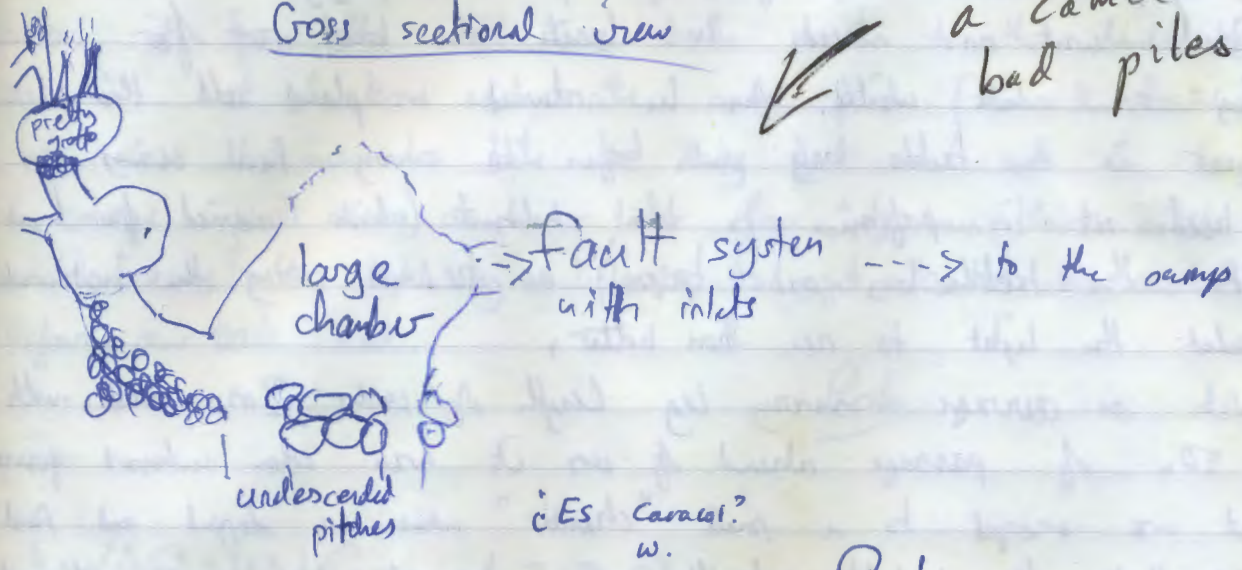
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The way on was all loose rocks and we climbed up to a chamber, about 30m above the pump, which was boulder choked with no way on. We traversed left along a slanting fault line (slope  $\approx 75^\circ$ ) climbing up any inlets we passed. The whole area drifted slightly and although the whole area was frequently checked we succeeded several times on coming close to the surface - even finding green vegetation at one point; obviously washed down by a storm.

The way on was not always obvious and after hard going and treacherous - at one point Tony sent a pile of loose rocks falling 30 ft from above us and one of them failed completely to make a favourable impression on my helmet!

The fault also extended down as far as could be seen, presumably to an old stramway but this was not investigated. Instead we eventually climbed up an awkward tight dirt into a very large chamber comparable in size to the Big Chamber but probably much taller! Unfortunately we were at the only entrance from our direction - a window halfway up directly above a large hole in the floor of the chamber. The climb down/draught was not too difficult and from the centre of the chamber bouldery floor we could see two holes in the floor - both large and side by side descending  $\approx 10m$ . With loose rock all around and no obvious way to free climb down we continued out of the chamber from the opposite side to the one by which we had entered. This was a bouldery floor sloping upwards to a small chamber where a technically awkward dirt up through a boulder choke was the only reliable way on. This led into a pretty grotto full of flowstone. A low wall led southward but three tubes up behind the flowstone were explored. Two were impassable but the third (on the left) was subjugated (with a little persuasion) and Tony went up it to a junction. To push this further towards the surface would require a little more persuasion with a hammer or crowbar and is probably not worth the effort - but the grotto was pretty!

This looks like a camel with bad piles.

Gross sectional view



ES Camel? w.

Rob

2<sup>nd</sup> August - Paul & Rob attempt to detach 8/11's rifts

In view of the shortage of ropes and rigging gear at Ario it was decided to dig the rifts from 8/11 (a October, the Chard, and Few Pitches). The original plan was to enter via 26/11 (the bottom entrance) and come through to 20/11 (the new top ~~pitch~~ entrance) descending as we went. Then Paul suggested surveying 20/11 on the way so I suggested that we might as well survey <sup>with the</sup> 23/11 (the middle entrance) on the way in as this ~~bag~~ would bring us right into the heart of wet chucks rift - and so the trip was planned.

But as the old cliché about clay pots goes (obscure joke - blame the knock on the head in the previous write-up) things didn't run quite as intended...

We started first getting charged at 20/11 and walking down to 23/11 - descending and thus removing our SRT gear. Some, if you read Tim's account of when it was pushed, it is apparently quite tight and outward. Having negotiated the loose boulders of 23/11's entrance series without dislodging too many large boulders we soon reached the rift and made good progress again to the current limit of surveying. We also had with us a fackle bag for the digging later as well as the

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survey equipment and SRT gear (in pressure bags).

Paul went on ahead to locate the best spot for surveying or what waited. When he returned we placed all the spare gear in the tackle bag and began to survey. Paul using my Petzl head set in preference to his helmet (which I carried for him along with the tackle bag and tape) as he was using the instruments and needed the light to see them better.

With an average survey leg length of under 2m and with our 50m of passage ahead of us it was slow awkward going. At last we engaged to a small "chamber" where we stopped and Paul explained that he hadn't actually gone beyond this point yet and so didn't know the best route (only route) on to reach Wet Chicks Rift. He then looked down at a lower level through a hole whilst I climbed up to look along the rift. I carelessly somehow managed to get in front and found myself pushing a rift about 1cm narrower than my expanded chest. Encouraged by vague signs that someone else had passed this way before I proceeded round a couple of hairpin bends until I could see Wet Chicks before me. Unfortunately, to negotiate the last piece of rift you must needs be horizontal and I chose head first... whoops!

I was soon stuck horizontal into a wide part of wet chicks rift high up with my legs still in the 23/11 rift. This interesting predicament was fortunately solved when I eventually managed to wriggle on my out underneath me. However, I still had to return to continue the survey.

This we did, carrying the tackle bag and Paul's helmet with me until just before the final hairpin bend when with about three legs outstanding Paul dropped the tape - it fell down a very long way! Then once we had abandoned the survey the tackle bag finally decided it had had enough and refused to move - coming loose into the rift as I tried to persuade it to continue.

A long hard fought wrestling match followed between myself and the tackle bag with his ally - gravity. When at last I

succeeded in getting the tackle bag up enough so that Paul could remove it from the rift we both went to the double ladder pot in wet chucks and ate some food (from the tackle bag).

By now it was too late to dig the cave and we hurried out to emerge just over an hour later (no infamous third pitch to contend with), leaving the tackle bag behind, to get back at least 15 mins before our call out.

Rob

WARNING - 3.8.93

15/5 has acquired a new resident.... He/she (gender unknown) is about half a meter long, thin, brown, legless with a darker zig-zag pattern running lengthways. He/she may answer to the name of Adonis the Adder.

Preferred location would seem to be anywhere you would like to put your hands / feet / other parts of your anatomy, as well as all the cracks/crannies around 15/5!

This shy individual prefers not to make his/her presence known until it is most awkward and he/she is easily offended and is much disposed to venomous and biting criticisms of clumsy unobservant wanderers.

Do tread carefully around 15/5... you have been warned!

Rob

P.S. Don't get caught with your trousers down.

P.P.S. Apologies for the last P.S - I couldn't resist it

4/8/93

An Appeal (or 2)

Please - think about the needs of other groups (ie. the Top Camp Crew ©) - It would have been more sensible for the team who've gone 'touristing' down Xitu to have derigged Opt. in its or 379/11 so that there is more rigging gear and rope available. It is needed!

Or possibly someone else could have spared themselves for camp guarding or a supply run etc.

Paul needs people to guard base a.s.a.p tomorrow. Could one or two people please go down ~~to~~ for him as early as possible in the morning? Maybe an Hungarian ~~but~~ <sup>friends</sup> could help here?

Dave 'n' Sean  
they done gov'n.

Steve

- ps. I have topped up your car side  
 with some of my load intended for Top  
 Camp. Would it have been more  
 sensible if one of the 'taxi' crew  
 had fetched some more today? You have  
 only two lumps left!  
 (OK - live just fuel a bit more  
 but not much).

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3 Aug '93

Xitu - Pushing William's Bit

Moha, Steve P., William

Rerigged stream pike  
with half of the Optimisto rope.

Down ca <sup>1245</sup> 1230. Took Optimisto entrance rope + 50m of 9mm rope.

Showed Moha & Steve where the tunneling to Snowcastle was, then backtracked to William's bit, which is v. slippery with a tackle bag. Moha pointed out that the passage is v. old plastic with short sandy/mud floored Sumps. Came to the pike ca 1515 + banged in 3 bolts. Then Bridged over 1<sup>st</sup> hole in floor, then Moha put in another bolt to get down the next hole in the floor. Discovered a long mud slope leading to... an old, clogged mud sump. Sorry. It's Must have had a bad dream.

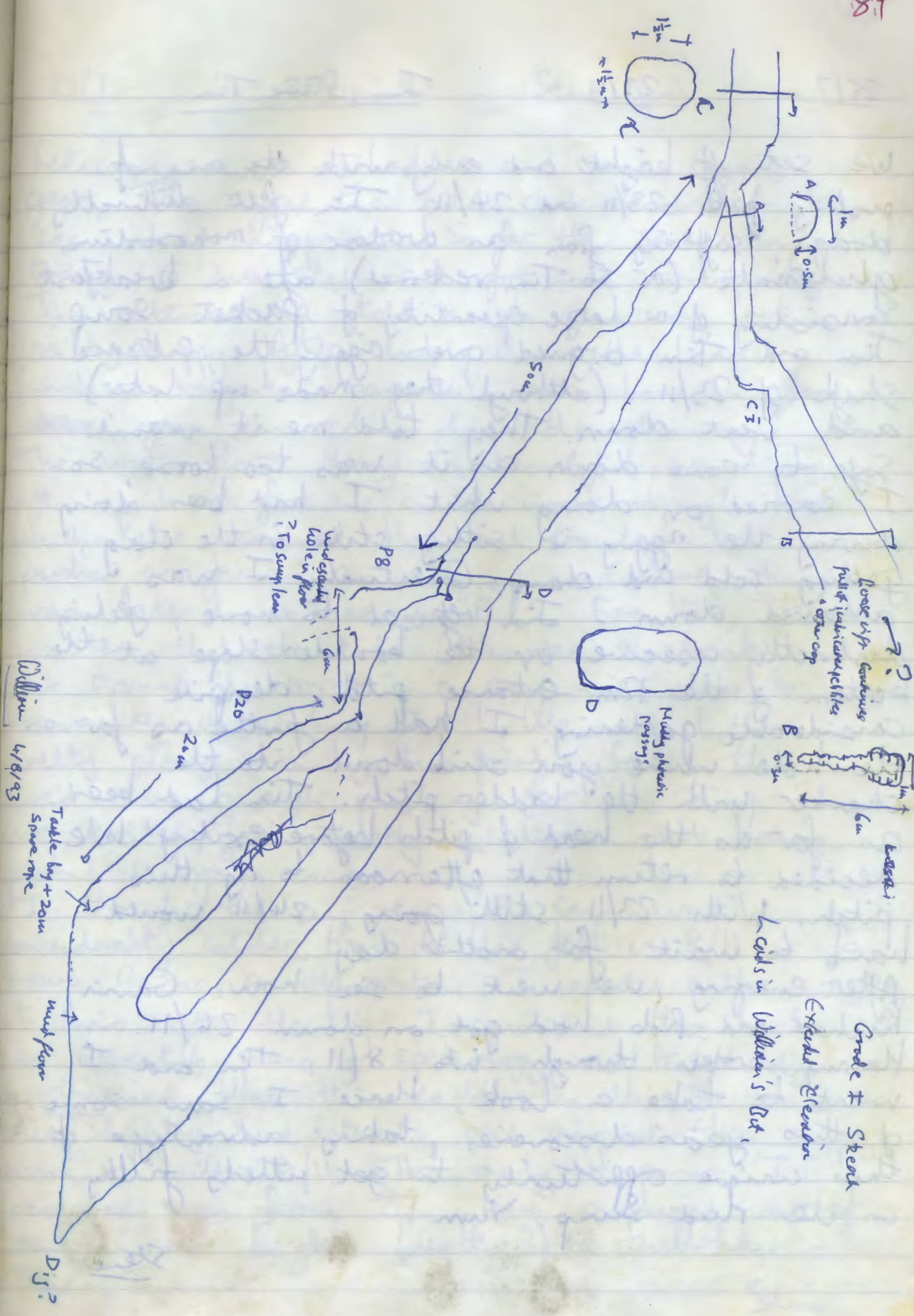
( $\Psi\chi\omega\epsilon\pi\eta\lambda\alpha\iota\sigma\delta\epsilon\gamma\kappa\iota\epsilon$ ). Moha on IT's quite easy to dig, though, as our own inconclusive efforts showed. Whether it would be worth it may be quite another matter. Maybe we'll find out in 2005. <sup>These is a lot of other passage around the Teresa series</sup>

Left me 2 short ropes at the entrance to William's bit, <sup>the short</sup> one for The Overhang & the less short one for the Snowcastle ladder. Took out the bolt kit & ridding gear

P.S. Moha is very enthusiastic about the other lead & sees it as a Sump bypass. Kalya + Pivo want to push it today. I'm far too tired.

William





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25/7

23/11

Jim, Steve, Tim

We set off bright and early with the aim of pushing both 23/11 and 24/11. Tim felt distinctly dodgy, suffering from an overdose of monosodium glutamate (or so Tim reckoned) after a breakfast consisting of a large quantity of packet soup. Jim and Tim argued over rigging the entrance shaft of 23/11 (although they made up later) and went down. They told me it wasn't safe to come down as it was too loose, so I carried on doing what I had been doing during the rigging i.e. sitting still in the dag, getting cold and damp. Eventually I was allowed down. Jim refused to move, feeling distinctly insecure on the boulder slope at the bottom of the 12m entrance pitch, despite considerable gardening. I had a furtive as far as the hole where you climb down into the chucker with the ladder pitch. Tim had been as far as the head of pitch before exiting. We decided to return that afternoon to rig this pitch. With 23/11 still going, 24/11 would have to wait for another day --

After emerging, we went to see how Gavin, Richard and Rob had got on down 26/11. Having broken through into 8/11, Tim and I went to take a look, hence I saw some of this year's discoveries, taking advantage of this unique opportunity to get utterly filthy in the mud Sump. Yum!

Steve