

OO Cave Club

1984 Expedn

Base Camp Log

Oxford  
University  
Cave Club  
La Verdelluenga  
1984  
Base Camp Log Book

10 July 1984

Graham Naylor, Stephen Gate, John Hutchinson, Ukey Collie, Ian Houghton, Dave Horsley, Silvia Dacre,

L'autostopked "Custard yellow" left Berington Road almost on time, despite having waited for Sean, who, wisely trying to avoid our company, had made his way to Plymouth alone. An almost incident-free journey, although we were pulled in by the police on the A38 just outside Plymouth, where we were accused of white slave trading and released with a warning.

in Plymouth\*

Of course the van tied up about 1 1/2 hours after they said they would, but don't it is O.V.C.C.

However, finally united we set off into the countryside to hid a field to doss down in.

11 July. Graham, Phil R, Steve G, John Ukey, Ian, Dawn, Silvia, Mike, Sean, Fred, + Nicola!!  
The morning dawned with a shower of rain rather than a burst of beautiful sunshine, the sensible ones - Al + Steve, sheltering in the van! Breakfasted  
\* To pick up Phil R. Fred, Mike and Sean.

(1)

on high cheese + orange juice we  
recalled Plymouth + when silver  
had finally finished all her place  
calls suddenly necessary at the moment  
of departure we made it down into  
the ferry. Our departure was well  
delayed courtesy of the dodder style  
but after protracted negotiations with  
the brothers we were ploughing  
through the deep blue sea. I  
discarded an excellent conchito between  
dining larger + feeling decidedly ill.  
(No one threw up, the wine dub  
sea was not fermenting).

12<sup>th</sup> July.

We got up gradually (Some more gradually than others,  
which rather disturbed the breakfasting passengers) to  
a sunny day and hazy views of Spain. Spanish  
customs fortunately found the sight of a bright  
yellow van, with covers and rucksacks and helmets  
and food barely contained by the strip of Dexion  
bolted across the open back, amusing rather than  
suspicious. As did the pillion passengers who took  
photographs of the chaotic sight.

Disaster struck on the road to Lagos, but after last year's transport epics no one took a leaking radiator and a consequently overheated engine very seriously. Phil and Steve ran up to the lake for water, Fred ran up and down for the fun of it and John ran around with slugs on his hands. A pastor looked on sourly.

And so to Lagos and Amador's and Quarante-y-Tres. There's very little snow, and everyone's planning the next day's eaving, except for Sean who talked about his underwear.

On my first day in Spain I joined up with most of the expedition members in doing a carry up to Top Camp. With lighter (reasonable!) packs, Mike and I (Sean) got to the top first. On the way back, since it was a beautiful clear day, Mike and I decided to take a short cut back.

It very quickly turned out to be a mistake due to the huge number of ridges we had to climb ~~of~~ over, but we were making good progress. We had already decided (!) that the Arno path lay just in front of the furthest ridge we could see from Top Camp, so when we found a path

(4)

earlier than this we just assumed it was a minor path, and slogged on.

By the time light began to fail us, we finally realized that we had missed the path - we were running out of mountains to climb!

We started to head back on a converging path to hit the Arno path, and again walked for ages without recognizing anything. Eventually it got dark, but we continued by moonlight. When we emerged from a misty wood (Wood?) and still <sup>didn't</sup> recognized the vista dimly lit below us Mike and I decided to spend the night in my survival bag. We put on all of our clothing and dozed down in the mist. We would have been OK but for the fact that at about 12 pm the mist vanished and we were left shivering under a clear sky. When we couldn't stand it any longer we walked for a bit more in what I hoped was the right direction. Depressed we again gave up and slept (Mike) and shivered (Sean) until dawn.

Shortly before dawn we set off again - hoping to get back at a reasonable time to avoid too much worry back at camp.

By this time we had decided to head for high ground, then walk back into the mountains that we recognised, then work from there. To this end we climbed the nearest high ridge. Lo and behold! Below us lay the lake near the campsite - we had been going in the right direction!

We returned to find a very worried Steve who had been to Ario at 4am to look for us! We had a nourishing (?) meal of 12hr old curry and retired to bed.

Since then we ~~had~~ have rigidly followed the paths - talk about stifling adventurous spirit.

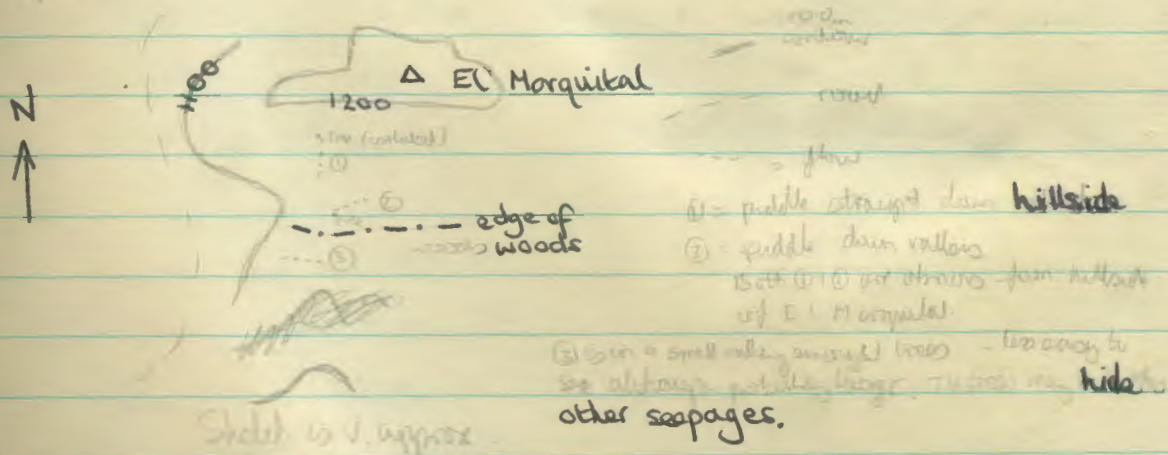
6.

14/7/84

# Hutch: Expedición to Soler de Dubou

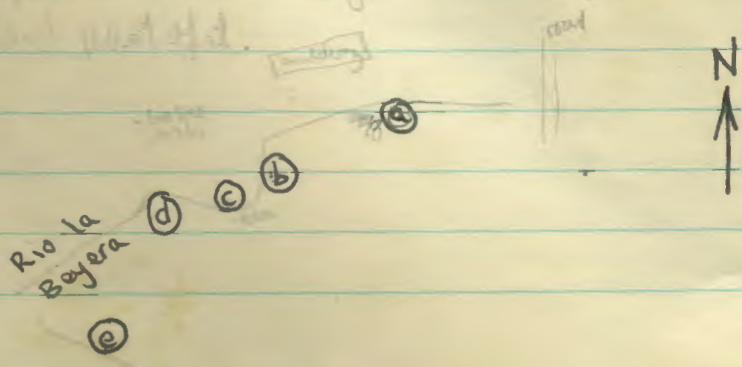
Walked back to camp to pick up parcel that I forgot. Started again. Walked back to camp to pick up supplies that I forgot. Started again (10.30 am). It was that type of day.

Objet no. 1: to find the entrance shaft <sup>of Pozo Palomera</sup> ~~we~~ <sup>we</sup> up after 2 hrs searching of S. slope of El Morquital. Looking again at Scales' map I probably ought to have looked further west, ~~and perhaps~~ but I suspect that its in the trees anyway and will be a hard to spot. <sup>A crude sketch</sup> ~~Some notes~~ on water flow above ground in this valley.



## Objet no. 2: make dye detectors in Rio la Beyera

(a) my plan was to make dye detectors in Rio la Beyera but obviously water had flowed recently and I had wasted effort.





(b) small tangle for ~~forming~~ <sup>spring</sup> ~~spring~~ guided by a pipe with a couple provided for drinking

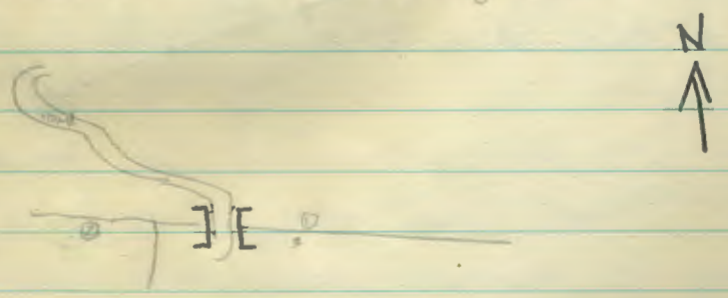
(c) larger spring [1 dig detector] Barometer 4145, 4204 (10 min later) ft.

(d) even larger open spring at base of a 7ft drop <sup>v. steep</sup> [1 dig detector] 4185 ft

I was ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> base that I had the good fortune to find a Cepaea ~~shell~~ which had just laid it. Fortunate because the ~~bird~~ <sup>bird</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> still sticking into it is ~~disruptive~~ <sup>disruptive</sup> and very ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> normally ~~obscure~~ <sup>obscure</sup> by ~~disruption~~ <sup>disruption</sup>

(e) side valley is dry

Objet 3: Rio Redamina dry detectors



N.B. Can get car over the river. But there is low tree round a non-reversible corner ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> with the ~~valley~~ <sup>valley</sup> ~~top~~ <sup>top</sup> of the first ~~obscure~~ <sup>obscure</sup> ~~spring~~ <sup>spring</sup> ~~place~~ <sup>place</sup> ~~well~~ <sup>well</sup> ~~which~~ <sup>which</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> long long - large round the ~~new~~ <sup>new</sup> ~~pen~~ <sup>pen</sup> ~~land~~ <sup>land</sup> after the road splits

N.B. Map is wrong in that tributary <sup>actually</sup> comes in below bridge

(1) [1 dig detector] 60m<sup>2</sup> ~~near~~ <sup>near</sup> bridge - after a clearing, big stream, trees clear again. Grass island in stream is what I is anchored to.

(2) Right at a large resurgence 30m ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> below where ~~low~~ <sup>low</sup> comes in. ~~This~~ <sup>This</sup> is ~~formed~~ <sup>formed</sup> in by ~~cliffs~~ <sup>cliffs</sup> 7ft ~~cliffs~~ <sup>cliffs</sup> on 3 sides



15 July 1984

Stephen G., John Hutch.

Another day of interest and incident. We awoke to find that despite the previous night's effort to establish Fortress Los Lagos in the food tent, our bovine colleagues had effected entry. Not only had they dispatched much of our Alpen, all the fresh vegetables and the pasta and bread, <sup>but</sup> they had also left other little trademarks of their presence. Well, not really so little: the place was turned upside down and everything, the tent walls included, coated with plob, piss and shit.

Making a desperately late start after clearing up the mess, John H. and Steve G. set off for Amiera with the intention of putting dye detectors all the way along the Rio Dobra. A couple of detectors were emplaced on the way down to Covadonga, but the van <sup>also</sup> clipped a boulder en route and bent out a chunk at the rear of the body. (This made it really match the other side of the vehicle) Wove was to come however. Passing through Amiera, we found that the road which was so confidently marked on our map became very narrow through the village. A first constriction was passed with only inches

(10)

to spare, although we did manage to take a couple of tiles off an overhanging cowshed roof.

A second constriction, however, proved more testing. Although the road was wide enough, the van was too high to pass without demolishing yet another overhanging roof, ~~in~~ this time of rather more substantial construction. John therefore faced the daunting task of reversing round the bend through the previous constriction. We were in the middle of a rather delicate series of back and fro movements to get us round the bend when the engine stalled and refused to start .... and refused to start ... and ....

Since we were on a steep hill we could not go forward, whilst we had insufficient room for us to do anything but reversing straight into the wall. We were soon surrounded by a group of villagers, all loudly supplying us with gratuitous information, little of which we could understand. Fortunately, they seem amused by our predicament rather than upset. Just then a vehicle appeared on the scene to find us doing our cork-in-a-bottle act. Its occupants were rather less happy about our presence, particularly the one who was trying to get to Santander.