

2019

1st January Gragen West Cave, Poulacapple

Tony Boycott

Overcast: mild: no wind. The forthcoming U.B.S.S publication required clarification of location of several entrances. This cave has four, obscured by terrain and inherent error issues within the Irish National Grid (1965). Today's aim was to establish their true location and record these entrances as Irish Transverse Mercator; I.T.M will shortly replace the old INGR (1965), (confirmed with Irish Ordnance Survey field operatives). TB had previously sought the Main Entrance and found it to be one of two possible sites. Today the actual entrance was identified, from compass bearings and GPS to indicate actual distance measured from the main entrance, Top entrance was judged to be identified as the adjacent Green Groove Cave and the vicinity of Green Stream cave, further to the north. Since the previous trip, (June 2005) vegetation growth has confused/camouflaged the entrances appearance. The deep depression thought to be Top entrance requires descending to confirm its ID. Adjacent this presumed entrance is another, entered by TB in gear to a squeeze in limonite at floor/stream level; it did not appear to be the one exited in 2005; will check this shortly.

Top Entrance; 0519190 x 0703294: Main Entrance; 0519281 x 0702892. To the Roadside, for a cool libation

To find Top entrance arrive at the track junction ITM 0518948 x 0703250, walk 250 metres eastward to (0519188 x 0703190), walk due grid north for 100 metres and aim for the shallow and large obvious tree.

To find Main entrance: from track junction 0518948 x 0703250, walk 370 metres to the end of the gravelled track and barbed wire fence, 0519381 x 0703207 follow the barb wire fence south keeping in on your right. Walk for 200 metres between the fence to the west and the low field wall to the east to a small stone hut. From here walk on a bearing of 190° true for 130 metres, aiming for a shallow valley marked at its end by a large, obvious Pine tree, the entrance is over the fence in the forestry in the bottom of a four metre deep, side sided depression.

3rd January Considine's Cave, (South End)

Jim Warny, Cathal Mullane, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Overcast: Cold: Small stream. The plan: Dig. TB & CM below, PC unloading, JW barrowing, CC winching. The presence of two digging below and two up top meant a more than normal pace; fifty kibbles lifted, of which seven were gravels, and a record twenty nets being raised. Hauling from bottom to top now takes about a minute, so around an hour was consumed lifting spoil. As the southern spoil pile was reduced CM exposed a fissure/rift formation at -11 metres; one side some one metre deep, the other side some two plus metres deep, another "leg" of the fissure is heading off south-ish, all trending away from the main shaft, the larger toward the west; a draught issuing from each. A cracking session with a lot removed. Perhaps the use of another net equally capable of lifting almost two kibbles worth of spoil at a time would increase overall productivity as depth increases, around 3.5 metres to reach the level of the "Plank": to the Roadside for pints.

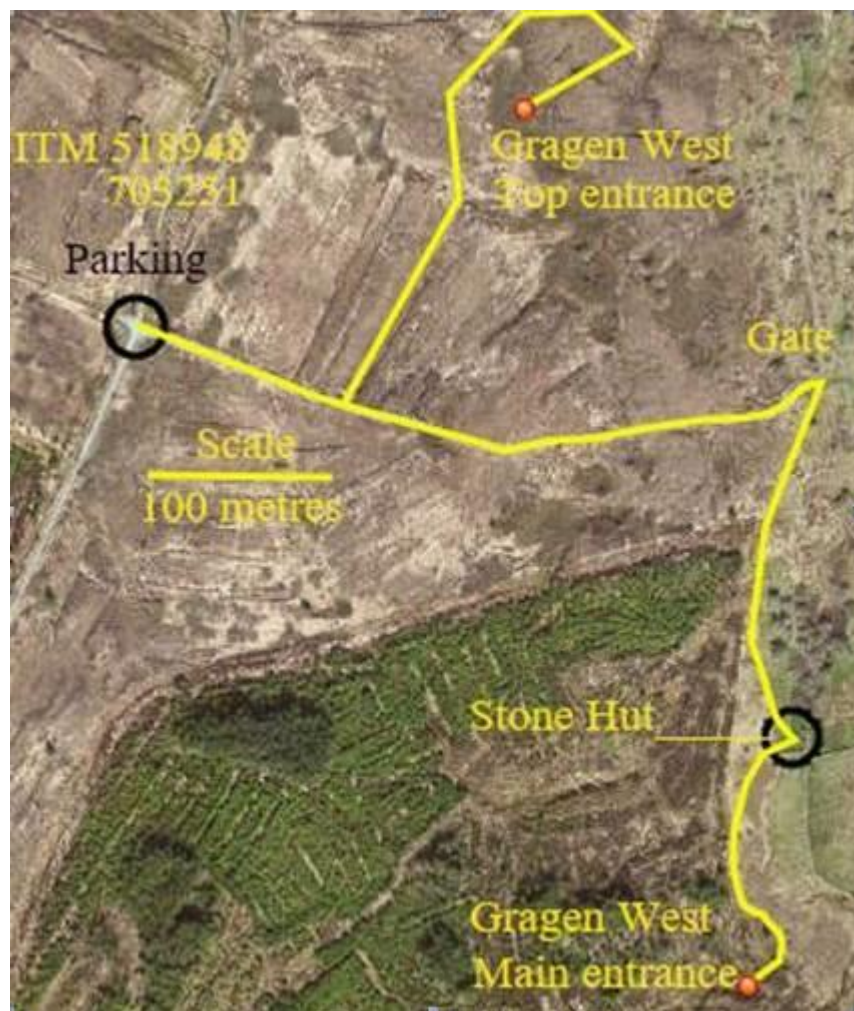
Hours 15 (1705), Southend (665), Kibbles, 50 (2081), Nets, 20 (404)

4th January Gragen West Cave and area

Tony Boycott

60% cloud cover: Cool: ground wet. The plan: to revisit to identify the location of Top Entrance, Gragen West Cave, prior to copy date, 10th January), for the forthcoming

U.B.S.S publication. Made straight for the previous northern cave entrance reached on the 1st January; descended same by climbing down through the thick undergrowth. This is a wonderful pot beset with beautiful features and a narrow passage leading off best passable a stream level. Though an enjoyable place this was confirmed as not being Top Entrance. Climbed out and moved with difficulty into the next hollow, en-route finding a little hole in the bole of a small tree; TB descended the two metre drop using a ladder into the top of a small chamber, like an oculus, and explored a crawling passages for some twenty metres, which continued; with only two hours of light left the pair decided to press on with the most important part of the project. After much wandering across this vast featureless landscape eventually located a gully on the eastern side of the shallow valley which generally runs north/south. Again a thrash through dense thicket dropped into a stream fed depression, downstream some ten metres was finally found the Top Entrance, wide open: recorded the site in ITM using two GPS receivers: adjacent sites also recorded: to the Roadside for well earned pints.



Poulacapple, showing locations for Gragen West Cave entrances

Top Entrance	ITM 519159 x 703371	Main Entrance	ITM 519281 x 702892
TB1 pot	ITM 519176 x 703312	TB3 small pot	ITM 519192 x 703310
TB4	ITM 519193 x 703319	016	ITM 519182 x 703327



Gragen West, The Rabbit Warren area

5th January Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Turning cooler: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. TB below: PC unloading and barrowing: CC winching. Thoughts turned to the time taken lifting kibbles to surface, which will increase further with depth: the team reflected and will not increase the speed of winching, (40 feet/minute). This present rate of lift allows larger rocks, suspended in the net, to be safely negotiated through the lower and upper shaft collars. TB continued the now normal procedure of excavating a one metre deep hole in the middle of the "Narrows" to create two working faces, out from which easily tumble the loosely compacted spoil, (hence the rate of digging). With the exposure of the "Fissures" TB focused on clearing away the south end, lowering the presently uneven floor level around a foot below that at the base of the hauling shaft. Of the forty kibbles raised seven were gravels, four of which were used as levelling material for the next section of dry stone walling to retain the expanding boulder pile; among the boulders lifted in the kibbles were some very large cobbles. Other kibble content was thrown up to further increase the height of the party wall with the northern field. Of the fourteen nets several contained huge boulders, at least one ≈ 120 kilograms for which a 2:1 was initially considered. Many of the large boulders were of a flatter shape useful for constructing the next section of retaining wall. The development of this neat and tidy spoil containment area will not only reduce the time and distance involved to swiftly disposed of the spoil on its arrival at surface, but also demonstrate to any passing observer, particularly local Farmers, the strange doings of a responsible group of individuals. CC brought down a large replacement battery for the comms and signaling system, which should serve the needs for quite some time: to the Roadside for cracking pints.

Hours 7 (1712), Southend (662), Kibbles, 40 (2121), Nets, 14 (418)

7th January Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Mild: Large stream: Cool wind. The Plan: Dig. TB Below, CC winching PC unloading and barrowing. PC arrived early and brought down a beer keg as a seat for the winchman, which worked well significantly reducing strain on back and legs. Normal digging began with TB continuing to lower the southern end and part of the "Narrows" to further expose the recently uncovered east and West fissures. Even though quite mild outside, both fissures continued to draught though not as strongly as previously felt. Of the thirty three kibbles lifted seven were gravels, the remainder of the content thrown up onto the boulder pile to increase its height and length along the northern field boundary. Almost every one of the sixteen nets contained a big boulder most of the huge irregular ones manhandled to the far spoil area; the others to be used for walling; to the Roadside.

Hours 7 (1719), Southend (669), Kibbles, 33 (2154), Nets, 16 (434)



Gragen West Cave Joyce's Hole entrance approximate location, (Pat C)

Typo! ITM of general area should read **519367** x 702799

8th January Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

Dusk: Mild: Overcast: Small stream. The Plan: Maintenance. In order to avoid delaying digging on Thursday evening PC opted to reposition, (lower), both shoring cable anchors today. The signal button was also relocated to a lower, more reachable location. Tasks completed, PC looked at the "Fissures"; the smaller, eastern one is presently choked with debris from digging. The western fissure is very much the larger, (at this level); a 30 odd

kilo boulder was dragged away improved the view showing that two metres below the opening widens in the main rift wall to about $\frac{3}{4}$ metre; from the vertical rift wall the space retreats at least 0.6 metre. With recent fallen debris removed the assessment is that an adult could kneel in the present visible space, at the very least. The rear of the fissure takes a gentle bend left obscuring further view. At around -9m are the beginnings of a very thin calcite vein which enlarges steadily to at least -11m where it disappears below the digging floor surface. This western fissure and others in the south end all seem begin significant development between -9m and -11m; similar to those in the north end. To the Roadside for a very nice pint

Hours 3 (1722), Southend (672), Kibbles, (2154), Nets, (434)

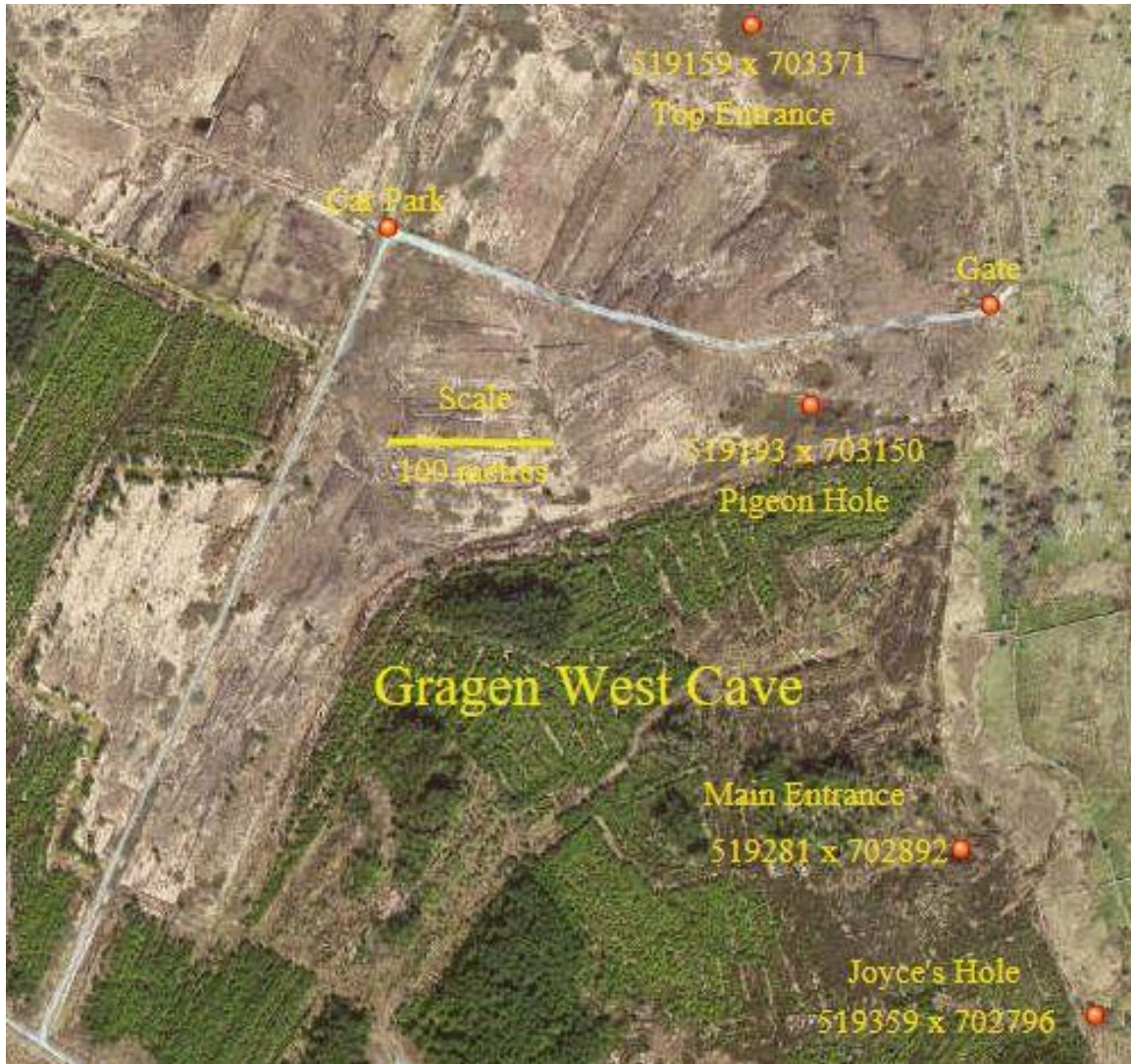


Gragen West Cave, Pigeon Pot entrance approximate location, (Pat C)

9th January Gragen West Cave
Tony Boycott

Further work to assist TB to precisely locate the other two entrances prior to the U.B.S.S copy date for the forthcoming new guide book. The estimated locations worked out reasonably accurate drawn from the 1955 survey data. Entrances listed from north to south; the surprise was Joyce's Hole, a fifteen metre long rift/canyon taking a significant sized stream. Talk turned to doing a trip from Joyce's to Top entrance. Drove up to Poulacapple Pot to double check the ITM 518757 x 704086; taken overlooking the climb down: a large stream heard; extricated Hilux twice from deep pools created by turf cutting machinery: to the Roadside for a very nice pint.

Top Entrance ITM 519159 x 703371 Pigeon Hole ITM 519193 x 703150
 Main Entrance ITM 519281 x 702892: Joyce's Hole ITM 519359 x 702796.
 Poulacapple Pot ITM 518757 x 704086



Gragen West; cave entrance locations and ITM's

Pat Cronin

10th January Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

Dark: Mild: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. Unfortunately the starter rope broke, so the session changed to unscheduled maintenance. Unprepared, while CC lubricated the receiver's wheels and conducted minor service to the winch, TB descended and filled all the kibbles ready for the next dig session; PC completed the water supply to the wash tub and the wash-down cistern and their overflow pipes. Three kibbles rope handles were replaced; all are now of a uniform length which solves several issues for both winchman and below. To a deserted Roadside for a very nice pint

Hours 3 (1725), Southend (675), Kibbles, (2154), Nets, (434)

12th January Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Cathal Mullane

Very dark: Wind F4, increasing: Dense mist: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. PC arrived half an hour late, delayed by a further Coast Guard callout, this time to Liscannor. CC winching, TB below, PC unloading and barrowing, meanwhile CM recorded events on camera for posterity. The character of the spoil removed has definitely changed to a greater percentage of larger rocks, clearly evidenced by the increasing number of heavy nets lifted containing said DBR's, (Dam Big Rock's), The large, lumpy ones, of no immediate use for wall building are deposited around the perimeter of the gravel and clay area. Fourteen nets were lifted, of the thirty eight kibbles raised five were gravels; a cracking session considering the delayed start. TB has lowered the area between the "Narrow" to the South End some three feet below floor level at the base of the Hauling way; this depth approaches -12m. Both water cisterns function well, as does the overflow pipes, thus avoiding excess water running down into the dig. The receiver now moves back and forth without any sense of weight or friction, this requires the regular use of the lock during unloading kibbles or nets. To the Roadside for a welcome drink

Hours 9 (1734), Southend (684), Kibbles, 38(2192), Nets, 14 (448)

14th January Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Drizzling: Wind West F3: Mild: Small Stream. The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and Barrowing. The team had set up by around 18:10, ready to commence. A steady pace raised fourteen nets and forty five kibbles of which four were gravels. TB is now clearing spoil from beneath the Hauling shaft; another session may see this achieved to form a level floor. The average floor depth was measured at -11.8m, (38 feet), which leaves a little under three metres to reach the "Plank" depth at -14.5m. The large lifting Karabiner was replaced by TB for a scaffold personal safety clip; a monster of a device but a very safe and secure device.

Hours 8 (1742), Southend (692), Kibbles, 45 (2237), Nets, 14 (462)

17th January Considine's cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Thin cloud cover: Wind N, F3: Cold: Small stream. The Plan: Dig. TB below: CC winching PC unloading and barrowing. Normal procedures followed; digging, sorting rock, depositing said debris in allotted locations. After another session or two the northern boulder pile will require its retaining wall increased in height. This session produced forty five kibbles, of which five were gravels, and eleven nets. The session's first kibble was the 2700th lifted from the southern end; hooray for the winch! The previous estimate of 20kgs per kibble is increasingly doubtful, they are most certainly heavier; scales required? With the drop in air temperature every orifice was draughting well.....? Though the strongest issued from the western fissure found by CM; a clear view of its true nature presently remains elusive. As PC shortly departs for Panamá a strategy was decided for the next five sessions, TB will again create a pit in the "Narrows" and dig north toward the shoring, which immediately prior to departure PC will remove as many pieces as possible. This means maybe ten or so pieces remaining down to the "Plank": to an empty Roadside for a superb pint and roaring fire.

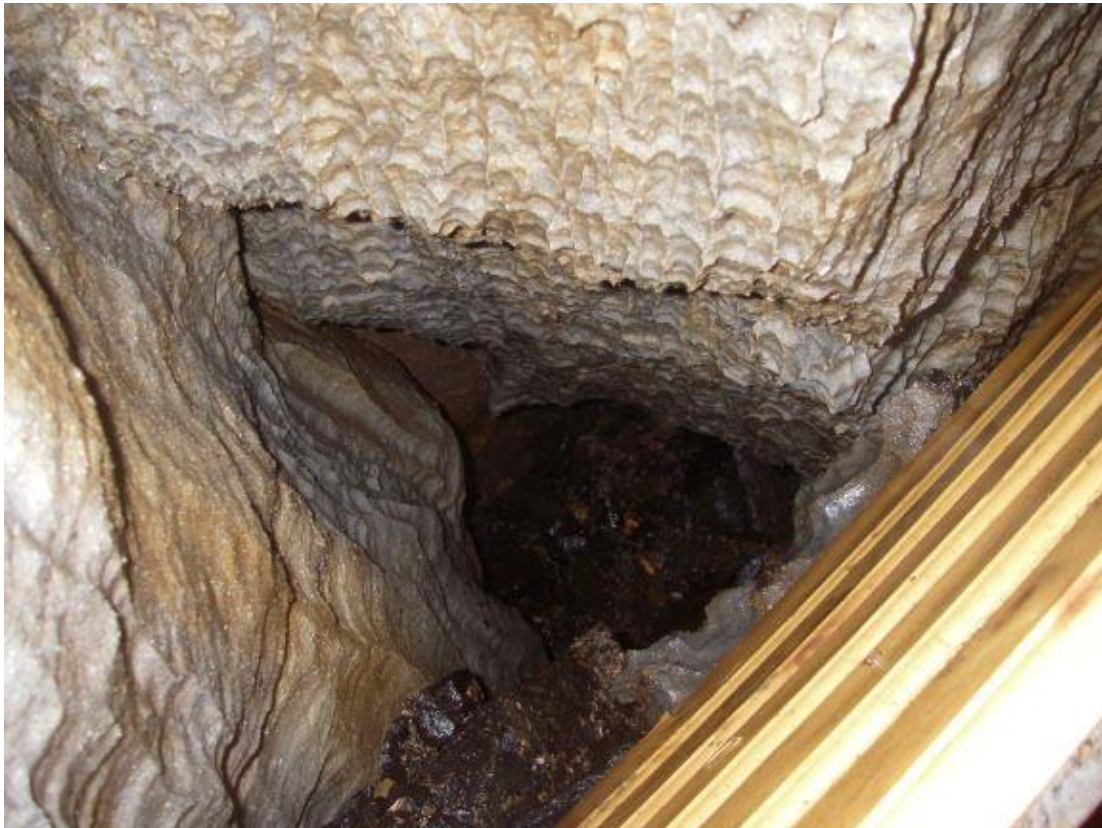
Hours 8 (1750), Southend (700), Kibbles, 45 (2282), Nets, 11 (473) Total 2755

19th January Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Mild: Large stream: Clearing fog: The Plan: Dig. Prior to starting PC & TB descended to search for a tiny piece of camera equipment dropped by CM; alas no luck, PC did find a broken tripod leg some four inches long. Whilst at the "Plank PC counted the remaining pieces of shoring to be removed: 22. CC estimates that roughly, something like 300 – 350 kibbles worth lowers the floor of the dig by a metre. TB below: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. TB continued to remove the base of the Hauling way, up to and against the shoring so the pace tonight was a little slower. Of the forty kibbles raised eight were gravels, one containing a minor amount of the thick cream coloured clay hoped never to be seen, ever again; the twelve nets lifted contained some well rounded boulders. Gaps among the floor of boulders continue to appear. The western fissure exposed by CM on the 3rd Jan 2019 appears to pass behind a thin-ish curtain of limestone possibly linked at around -13m, to the descending, widening vertical rift that starts near the surface adjacent the shaft collar and continues below present dig floor level. The main boulder pile needs its retaining wall heightened; most of the larger boulders were set along the south side of the approach path as forthcoming wall building material. The piped route of the stream is almost ready for burying beneath the extended boulder pile. PC has located a possible replacement for the generator kindly loaned to the Team over a year by Matt Randall: to the Roadside for tasty drink.

Hours 7 (1757), Southend (707), Kibbles, 40 (2322), Nets, 12 (485) Total 2807



Pat Cronin

View down the western fissure, 19th January; the scallop sizes suggest a swift water flow, on discovery it was 2m deep. Width at the top, (19 Jan), 0.3m; the brown object is a cupboard door to stop collapsing debris.



View to north shaft beyond; remaining shoring 19th January 2019; gloves resting on the Gantry which is the access to the northern shaft at -14m.

21st January Considine's cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dark: Chill: Ground very wet: Sleet: Wind W F6 gusting 7: Large stream: The Plan: Dig. TB below: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Vocal communications were an issue due to the noise of the streams in the pipework. By the end of the session TB had lowered the northern half of the floor some one metre below the Southern half exposing almost twelve pieces of shoring, producing forty kibbles and fourteen nets. The large boulders were placed along the path from JN's field for inclusion in the forthcoming retaining wall; the six kibbles of gravels were used to improve the barrow run on to of a clay area. Closing down for the night CC discovered that cattle, probably MC's, had pushed between the generator and the bushes, appearing to have stopped on the verge of the step down onto the platform. Attention to supplement the bush defenses required ASAP. To the Roadside

Hours 7 (1764), Southend (714), Kibbles, 40 (2362), Nets, 14 (499) Total 2861

22nd January Considine's Cave (South End) from the PCN log

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

An emergency site visit on a cold and damp morning to install a fence along the Eastern perimeter of the dig site. In daylight, the extent of the wanderings of cattle was quite alarming as they had almost circumnavigated the site but luckily had not picked up enough courage to walk on the platform itself. Fence completed, work was started on the extension to the retaining wall for the next area designated for a spoil heap. Pint as usual in the usual

Hours 6 (1770), Southend (720), Kibbles, 40 (2362), Nets, 14 (499) Total 2861. Cheg

24th January Considine's Cave (South End)

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

Dark: Cool: Mist/Fog: Ground very wet: good sized stream: The Plan: Dig. TB below: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. A minor delay meant lifting began at 18:30 even so forty kibbles and fourteen nets were swiftly lifted and processed by 20:30. TB lowered the hauling way floor further. Another possible hole or "fissure" may be appearing on the west side close to the shoring. Prior to departing for Panamá one idea arose that during the Saturday session TB lowers the floor against the shoring still further. Sunday PC removes all exposed shoring, repositions the two cable anchors, refits the "Gantry" and relocates the signaling button. It is possible that if fourteen sections of shoring could be removed it would leave seven of the seventy originally installed, in distance this would leave about a metre and a half above the "Plank". The fixed ladder finishes at about this height above the "Plank", from where rebar steps continue down, set into fourteen millimetre drilled holes for ease of removal to squeeze through to the north rift the far side of the ladder; this design meant the ladder would act as a brattice shielding the digger from falling debris during lifts. Later, in the Roadside, thoughts turned to a brattice in the much larger south rift, CC suggests a heavy plastic sheet, (curtain), deployed from the surface down the line of the Hauling Way secured at top and bottom.

Hours 7 (1777), Southend (727), Kibbles, 40 (2402), Nets, 14 (513) Total 2915.

26th January Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Dusk: Cool: Wind, NW F7/8 gusting 9: Ground very wet: Good sized stream: The Plan: maintenance. As TB was incapacitated following the previous frenzied digging session the plan changed to removing the shoring and reset associated fixings. CC up top PC below. Thirteen sections of shoring removed leaving eight; the top of the shoring - present floor of the dig is almost level, now only five feet above the "Plank"; not counting the two cubic metre pile of debris waiting for removal in the far south end. The "Gantry

was not refitted as there is now only a 0.7m gap between the ladder and the shoring, easy to step across. The end of the lowest fixed ladder is now just above the level of the shoring. The signal button was refixed one metre lower. Previously CM's fissure was theorized as possibly connecting behind the face of the west rift wall with the adjacent tall, vertical fissure, they do, but, the base edge of the wall where it turns into the western rift ends as a large suspended lump, projecting about a metre. Whilst it looks safe questions arise of its overall integrity considering adjacent bedding joints; CC suggests a method of securing the suspect area which would slow any possible parting or collapse of these lower extremities. It remains to be seen what exacting happens below this level of floor debris; whether there is a place upon which may be set a support, or if the rift which heads off west does in fact develop to accessible size; questions, questions.... The regular noise of a freight train clearly heard at -12m was in fact the wind increasing strength; much damage sustained throughout the County: to the Roadside for a well earned pint and much digging talk. During a recent visit to Mark, (Gonzo), Lumley gifted his Hilti drill kit to a reluctant yet delighted PC; further to Barry Sudell making a minor repair to the charger, with battery charged, the drill was used to great effect tonight; Hilti Drills are a magnificent tool far superior to anything else used by PC. Thank you Mark!

Hours 5 (1782), Southend (732), Kibbles, (2402), 1 Net, (514) Total 2916.

28th January Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Dusk; Cool turning chill: Wind NW F4: Ground very wet: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. TB below: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The first kibble lifted drew up the pile of assorted pieces of timber once used during installing the shoring, of the other forty four six were gravels, this material has been laid to create a decent barrow way across the mud surface of the far spoil dump, around the perimeter of which most of the forty and fifty kilo boulders raised tonight were deposited. The smaller stones and cobbles raised were used as packing behind the new section of retaining dry stone wall ready for raising its level. From among the sixteen nets several boulders of around eighty kilos a piece were lain alongside the path through the copse from Jonathon's field. A cracking session considering the time used hauling up from -12m. TB managed to clear the majority of the large debris slope remaining at the south end. To the Roadside: sculling pints near the fire discussion of how best to deal with the overhanging tonnage of limestone considered various options based on what could be assessed at this moment. However, it slowly became apparent that individual observations made over the last three sessions did not quite tally. In short, TB left the site, (24th Jan) where he could not see the beneath the protruding limestone into the narrow rift joint behind it, during the next session, (26th Jan), PC and CC noted the gap of some 0.3m beneath said projection and into the rift behind. Tonight the gap was assessed as 0.6m. The subsequent lull in conversation, whilst the implications were considered, ended with the realization the floor may actually be subsiding. The provision of a lifeline for the digger was swiftly raised. This narrow western heading rift does look like it may widen further down and develop into an enterable passage. Options for dealing with this possible safety issue will be settled after closer inspection of the surrounding integrity of the suspect lump. Winter weather approaches; possible delays in departing Dublin for Panamá.

Hours 8 (1790), Southend (740), 45 Kibbles, (2447), 16 Nets, (530) Total 2977.

30th January - 28th February Panamá 2019

James Cobbett, Roger Day, Dig Hastilow, Stewart Redwood

The expedition visited several areas to investigate rumour and reports of cave along the border with Costa Rica. Areas explored were....

- 1) Cueva Tigre recorded adjacent to Vulcán Barú, (11,400 ft); Talamanca Mountains
- 2) Angel's Cave, also reported as in the Talamanca Mountains
- 3) Levison Woods reported twelve hour exploration of a cave in the Talamanca Range.
- 4) Cueva Porton; explored in the wet season of 2001 by Keith Christiansen, the Team extended this 700 metre active stream cave to a deep sump pool
- 5) Lago Bayano; to explore the cave left last year, at that time flooded by the waters of the adjacent hydroelectric dam.

1st February Considine's Cave (South End) From PCN Log Cheg Chester

TB & CC

Bright and sunny but the temperature below freezing, causing parts of the platform to be like a skating rink, on real ice instead of mud. The plan to re-assess the safety of the large hanging limestone pendant on the West wall No further natural lowering of the floor was observed and a decision to go ahead with pinning the blocks together with steel straps was agreed. All the kibbles were filled in readiness for the next digging session. Work then commenced on further construction of the retaining wall along the North side of the site. A short video of no outstanding quality was taken to help you better understand the layout of the site and some of the descriptions in previous logs. Go to the website at www.pegasuscavingclub.org "logs" "Latest Log" to view.

Hours 7 (1797), Southend (747), 45 Kibbles (2447), 16 Nets (530), Total 2977

4th February Considine's Cave (South End) From PCN Log Tony Boycott

TB & CC

Bright, sunny & warmer; Spring is here!? Generator problems delayed starting, the petrol on/off tap is leaking fast when turned off - nearly a gallon in 3 days, and slow when turned on, not easily fixable, hope the new one is available soon. Solved temporarily by raising the left side of the generator 6" when leaving the site Remote pulley system devised for opening/ closing the trap for one man operation above worked well. TB below, now relatively level to the South End, holes appearing around most edges investigated & drafting well, lots of spoil dropping away, but no more visibility downwards. 30 Kibbles & 1 net raised, several net loads of boulders left below. Plan next session is to trench the west wall from the shoring to the middle rift to assess how unstable the area is.

Hours 6 (1803), Southend (753), 30 Kibbles (2477), 1 Net (531), Total 3008

7th February Considine's Cave (South End) From PCN Log Tony Boycott

TB & CC

Very wet. TB below, CC winch & dumping. Finished levelling the South End, then started a trench across The Narrows, intending to make a "T" along the West wall from the shoring to investigate what is below the hanging pendant. Encountered some very large boulders, some reduced by sledging, one too big to move.

Hours 5 (1808), Southend (758), 30 Kibbles (2507), 0 Net (531), Total 3038

11th February Considine's Cave (South End) From PCN Log Cheg Chester

CC & TB

Another maintenance day in reasonable weather for the west coast of Ireland. Many tasks carried out which included. Continuing to extend the retaining wall Westward. Raising the height of the water system to enable the overflow to function better. All the skips full at the bottom ready for the next hauling session. Recovering the telephone cable from the North end dig. Fitting a new shelf to accommodate the comms equipment. Re-aligning the pallet floor in front of the North retaining wall. Fitting a plastic floor to the top of the receiver to limit the amount of shite sticking to it. Using some of the old pallets the perimeter was strengthened against donkey intrusion. All this achieved in only 8 man hours and only rewarded with a single pint in the Roadside Tavern, not shared though; one each.

Hours 8 (1816), Southend (766), 30 Kibbles (2507), 0 Net (531), Total 3038

*14th February Considine's Cave (South End) From PCN Log Tony Boycott
CC & TB*

Digging session, fine weather but very cold wind. Very large boulders appearing need return of muscle! Dug W side of hauling shaft to expose another hole down, just passed a Productus layer about 30 cm up from the floor on the west side; 2 poles now exposed about half way across the shoring. Maximum depth of floor 13.2 m, ignoring side drops; average probably 12.7 m.

Hours 6 (1822), Southend (772), 30 Kibbles (2537), 0 Net (531), Total 3068

*28th February Considine's Cave (South End) From PCN Log Tony Boycott
CC & TB*

First dig for 2 weeks as CC absent in the UK, PC flies back today. Fine weather before a week of rain? 26 kibbles raised & all empties filled, also a net needing a 2:1 loaded for the next session. More walling before a pint in the Roadside - black is back.

Hours 5 (1821), Southend (771), 26 Kibbles (2533), 0 Net (531), Total 3064

Corrected stats Hours 5 (1827), Southend (777), 26 Kibbles (2563), 0 Nets (531), Total 3094?

2nd March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

Daylight: Heavy showers: Blustery, forebodings of approaching Storm Freya: Large stream: The Plan: Dig. TB below: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The first six nets lifted required a 2:1 mechanical advantage. These six lifts took just over an hour to accomplish; each net weighing in at over 100 kilos. At this depth the rope was just a little short so while PC heaved on the up line to increase rope length from its stretch CC managed to wrap the increasing length around the capstan. Thirty kibbles were raised along with another seven nets. Three more pieces of shoring are now exposed, the area flat up to the narrows where the southern area has been left on which to stand a ladder to inspect more closely the integrity of the hanging west wall; all orifices place draughting well. To the Roadside for pints and discuss further the hanging wall options.

Hours 8 (1835), Southend (785), 30 Kibbles, (2593), 7 Nets, (544) Total 3137.

4th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

Storm Freya all but passed: Blustery: Hail/rain showers: Increasing cold: Large stream: The Plan: Dig. TB below: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. As TB filled all the kibbles a delay in hauling was caused by a reluctant generator; after much coddling by CC it eventually started. The area between the Narrows and the shoring was lowered still further; the southern half now some three feet higher. Four of the remaining eight pieces of shoring are exposed. Forty four kibbles were raised of which five were gravels and clay, along with only one net. TB departs tomorrow; most likely begin work on securing the hanging wall next session: to a quiet Roadside. *NB. Have just read the logs for Cowclose Mine and Wheel Shaft; delighted at the interest shown in these superb industrial archaeological sites. The vast system that is Cowclose Mine, its study and survey, it will prove of immense importance to mining history; it is a time capsule.*

Hours 8 (1843), Southend (793), 44 Kibbles, (2637), 1 Net/s, (558) Total 3182.

9th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Chill: Ground very soft and very wet: Heavy showers: Small stream: The Plan: survey the hanging wall. The generator would not start, flooding issues? So CC descended to commence surveying options supporting the hang wall; estimated at 3.5 tonnes. This is a protruding sheet of limestone tapering from 0.75m at the bottom to 1.5m at the top; and some 0.5m thick. It has been eroded at its south end to an unknown depth/thickness; this is the fact of most concern. It appears to be held by nothing, much, also a small

projection lay tight up against the solid west wall behind, offering it some means of support? Deliberation of the myriad issues was considerable. Previous suggestions considered heavy metal straps pinning the “dodgy bit” to the solid above with lateral stemples to keep it in place vertically, or, support it from below if a solid floor could be found once the debris was removed; another option, to bridge the rift with an RSJ and support it off that. It need be aesthetically acceptable. Drilling the sheet was finally rejected as it may disturb the entire mass. After an hour of discussion the plan was agreed as installing two heavy steel brackets to the east and west walls fixed with multiple 16mm steel pins. Upon and between these brackets set an RSJ at an estimated angle of 30° this mirrors the bottom of the sheet of rock. Between the rock and RSJ install two shaped wedges of hardwood to complete the support from below, these will be held in place by welded pieces of steel. Between the east wall and the sheet of rock, install at least one stemple adjusted to hand tight, to maintain the sheets vertical attitude and stop eastern lateral movement. On surfacing the generator responded to one pull of the cord?? Minor maintenance tasks were conducted before heading to the Roadside. The generator requires a service so PC will retrieve it shortly somehow, whilst being serviced he’ll try and borrow another. Comms box returned for upgrading and new voice system.

Hours 4 (1847), Southend (797), 0 Kibbles, (2637), 0 Nets, (548) Total 3182. (3197)

10th March Considine’s Cave, (South End)

Solo

Ran around Doolin scrounging an RSJ, or similar; eventually located a nine foot section of 8 x 4 inch RSJ; negotiated price down to one days labour. Could only use trailer for a short time so opted to drop RSJ at the rear of Jonathon’s place, to access his 240v power supply, to shape and cut the steel to length.

Hours 3 (1850), Southend (800), 0 Kibbles, (2637), 0 Nets, (548) Total 3182.

11th March Considine’s Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Storm Gareth approaches: Raining: Cold: Blustery: Largest stream ever noted: A filthy night. The Plan: begin constructing support framework. CC up top, PC below. The bracket was positioned about 0.35m directly beneath the “Guillotine”; 5 x 16mm holes were drilled into the west rift wall, these will receive the bracket securing pins; sat there working away below 3.5 tonnes of rock, PC was reminded of Alan, (Dark Satanic) Mills once remarking, after a dive in Swildons 12a, “its character building”. The proposed eastern bracket location was levelled across to the opposite wall of the 1.5m rift from western bracket; the fluted eastern wall surface dressed to the minimum, with hammer and chisel, to achieve some semblance of a flat surface to accept the second bracket. Alas, the drill battery became exhausted, so the eastern bracket yet requires completion of its securing holes. CC will complete the preparation of the brackets which will include location stops to inhibit lateral movement of the RSJ went in place and underload. The tally board and new comms control were secured at the “Banksman’s” position, adjacent the shaft collar, removing the chance of these items falling into the void below onto busy unsuspecting diggers. The removal of the shoring has obvious opened up the entire volume of the rift; descending the 50 foot fixed ladder a climber who pauses may be presented with a delightful sense of exposure. Tonight’s elevated water flow on the western wall clearly demonstrated the origins of the “Guillotine’s” shape and formation. Matt’s sick generator will be recovered for a thorough service within the next day, or so.

Hours 4 (1854), Southend (804), 0 Kibbles, (2637), 0 Nets, (548) Total 3182.

13th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

After much phoning around located a generator which the Team may borrow for six weeks: Hooray!

14th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Jim Warny

Storm Gareth all but passed: Cool: Wind southwest, F6: Rain: Very large stream: The plan: to install the prepared wall brackets. PC picked up a generator earlier on to temporarily replace Matt's whilst that's being serviced; this was carried to the dig, the other retrieved. Whilst JW trundled Matt's back to the truck PC descended and completed drilling the eastern wall holes. CC arrived with the prepared brackets and securing pins which were then checked against the 16mm holes; all fit snugly. Content with progress digging commenced to finish the evening; JW winching: PC unloading and barrowing: CC digging. Of the 29 kibbles seven were the awful grey clay, indicating CC was up against the remaining shoring; three nets were also lifted. The floor was leveled from the shoring to beneath the intended RSJ position to facilitate its heavy, imminent installation. Ideas regarding support between the RSJ and the rock were extensively discussed; hardwood set aside in preference of a vertical off cut of RSJ with a steel top plate set tight up against the rock. To a quiet Roadside

Hours 9 (1863), Southend (813), 29 Kibbles, (2666), 3 Nets, (551) Total 3214.

15th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Solo

Showers: Bright spells: Ground waterlogged: Cool: Large stream: Rang JN for permission to use electric supply; given the OK. Eventually cut the RSJ to length using 4 and 9 inch cutting discs; a difficult, lengthy task. Once de-burred and edges identified, conveyed the 1.625 metre x 200mm x 100mm H section to the dig; left on top of the receiver; it's a fierce heavy piece. But all set for the next session. NB, the off cut is almost of an equal length. Shagged out, en-route home delivered Matt's generator to Cheg for servicing: great fun.

Hours 3 (1866), Southend (816), 0 Kibbles, (2666), 0 Nets, (548) Total 3214.

16th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Rain: Cool: Ground waterlogged: Big stream: The plan: place the RSJ on its brackets and assess any alterations. Several inches of rain fell during the previous twenty four hours, evidenced in the base of the south end with a well washed floor, but particularly a well washed out west rift; fallen spoil debris hitherto scattered down the steep slope toward the depths was entirely washed away offering a better view of this gently widening rift. The borrowed generator started first pull but then began to run ill; abandoned it to get on with sorting the RSJ. CC & PC below: lowered and set RSJ in position, reviewing the gap between its topmost surface and the underneath of the "Guillotine"; after some discussion, moving the RSJ some two inches north it will be possible to create a gap of 200mm into which may be fitted a short section of RSJ as final part of the support. This avoids fabricating a specialized item to fit into the gap. If a 4" angle grinder is applied to prepare a flat surface area on the underneath of the "Guillotine" the RSJ may be fitted smoothly up against this base. Surfacing, the erratic running generator was looked at, likely needs minor attention. Tasks required; cut a 600mm length of RSJ, and prepare edges for welding. Carry the larger RSJ back up to the house; and prepare edges for welding both pieces of RSJ together. Trim southeast side of RSJ lower web from 0 to 1 inch, to allow the whole to move a little further southward, between the prepared fixing

holes in the eastern bracket. Carry completed mass back down to the dig. Paint it; lower and secure in place. Sort out generator. Get back to digging; to the Roadside.

Hours 3 (1869), Southend (819), 0 Kibbles, (2666), 0 Nets, (548) Total 3214.

18th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Rain easing: Strong breeze: Ground sodden. The plan: to prepare the RSJ. PC arrived early and began to cut a 600mm piece from the previous off cut; this leaves a piece some 600mm long. CC arrived and whilst preparing the section for welding PC headed down to the dig and brought back the main RSJ. The rain stopped just as the last pieces of welding were completed. The even heavier assembly was carried back down to the dig and positioned under the weather canopy to thoroughly dry prior to painting. Yesterday CC had serviced Matt's generator and once again it starts without any issue. It was decided that the extant generator needs checking, (likely a failing spark plug), so it was carried back to the truck to take advantage of the return journey. Several sections of large diameter plastic pipe off cuts were taken from a waste trailer, to pipe the remaining sections of stream prior to depositing spoil across the area. No Roadside; gulp!

Hours 5 (1874), Southend (824), 0 Kibbles, (2666), 0 Nets, (548) Total 3229

21st March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Mild: Light breeze: Ground still sodden: Medium stream: The plan: install completed RSJ assembly and dig. CC had visited the dig on the 20th March to paint the RSJ with a protecting coating. PC arrived early to take down Matt's generator, (now serviced), with Mark's drill, and prepare the RSJ for lowering, suspending it on ropes and slings from the hauling line to create a balanced position. As CC controlled the hauling line PC balanced between both shaft collars to manoeuvre the long piece through the hatches. With tools and drill etc. lowered to CC PC descended. The RSJ was lifted into its final location, secured with 12mm and 16mm steel pins drilled into the rift walls to maintain the RSJ vertically in place when/if any pressure is received from the "Guillotine" if it ever decides to move. This project was the result of repeated examination of the "Guillotine", which could not establish where and by exactly how much its estimated 3.5/4 tonne was attached to the known solid western wall. Several attempts were made to assess precisely how far water erosion had penetrated around the rear its pronounced shape; likely, on a normal caving trip this lump would be passed without a second thought. However the area below this lump is where digging will take place for the foreseeable future; the exact same area the "Guillotine" could/would collapse into. The width of the floor area here varies from a metre to 1.6metres, the length some five metres: should the rock fall there is nowhere or time to avoid an impact. Delighted the RSJ project is all but complete CC remained below to dig while PC scampered back up to surface. Installation of the RSJ only took a little over an hour: hooray for prefabrication and planning. CC lowered the floor against the shoring and also removed some of the floor beneath the RSJ to make passing beneath it a little easier. The immediate dig design is to lower further the floor against the shoring to the level of the "Plank"; only a metre or so below the present floor, then progress southward in doing so the digger will be able work away beneath the RSJ without it being in the way. A small amount of the awful grey clay was removed from the shoring area; hopefully this is the last to be seen in the area; until next time. Of sixteen kibbles three were the awful clay mixture. Each of the three nets contained multiple boulders; the alarming creaking from the capstan was due to a wet section of hauling line, concerning nonetheless: CC took photos: to the Roadside for well earned pints.

Hours 6 (1880), Southend (830), 16 Kibbles, (2697), 3 Nets, (551) Total 3248

Among the last period errors of numbers have occurred. Kibbles corrected sum

23rd March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cool: Light breeze: Light 'til 19:20: Ground sodden: Small stream: Chance of a Northern Lights show. The Plan: dig. CC digging, PC winching unloading and barrowing. Pursuant to the plan, CC lowered the floor from up against the shoring one metre south to just below the level, (14.7m), of the "Plank". The remaining shoring is now free standing, held in place vertically by the two longitudinal securing wires. Spoil was thrown over to the northern party wall to continue the rock pile southward, making use of every available piece of storage area near to, but not too close, to the shaft. Of the twenty five kibbles six were gravels; the four nets contained several large rocks. Matt's generator is back to normal, starting again on the first pull. Digging from this depth takes 1.5 minutes for a lift to arrive at surface; another 2.5 to dump spoil and return the kibble, or net to bottom. As depth increases another operator would be invaluable: hurry back TB. Required tasks (1) Replace the lifeline with one more manageable; a highline is now available from a passing helicopter which should prove excellent. (2) Configure the open and closing lines to the "receiver". (3) Remove/recover redundant shoring to surface. (4) Repair recent damaged roof to generator shed. (5) Fabricate and secure lateral stemples for the "Guillotine" before lowering the south floor further. (6) Descend the northern, dug, shaft to -26m; recover all digging debris including the rebar steps. (7) Survey the north shaft from -26m up to "Plank" level. (8) Once south floor level with "Plank", (14.7m), conduct a plan survey across both shafts to image this depth. (9) Recover short ladder to surface. (10) Install fixings below for new comms system. (11) Install comms wiring to bottom and to top of shaft. (12) Relocate shelf for comms central control in winch shed. (13) Conduct inspection of the working platform integrity. (14) Replace extant thirty metre hauling rope with 50m to accommodate 2:1 hauling. (15) secure winchman's seat; Ooo err. (16) Ideally Monday for maintenance. To the Roadside for some fine drink, and five star abuse Hours 5 (1885), Southend (835), 25 Kibbles, 4 Nets, (552) Total 3277

25th March Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Warm: Sunny: Ground remains wet: Small stream. The plan: maintenance. A fifty metre hauling rope replaced the existing thirty odd metre line; this will accommodate the need for the occasional 2:1 lift. Experimentation was conducted with the shaft opening and closing lines; to be completed, it needs a pulley. Winch shed emptied, cleaned and all pieces of accumulated clutch sorted, some crap brought back to the truck to dump or recycle. CC significantly renovated the generator shed weather canopy. Existing lifeline was replaced with 9mm line now controlled by the Late Martin Bishop's descender via a pulley; an improvement on the previous system; nice one MB. Comms control shelf relocated to west side of winch shed. PC dismantled and recovered the now redundant shoring, associated metalwork, and cables; all winched to surface; these eight pieces of shoring and the previous seven were stored for possible future use. A 14mm hole was drilled to the north side of the RSJ to mount the new comms system. This means that shaft bottom will be able to communicate with Shaft top and also to the Winchman. All step pins are missing from the bottom of the lowest fixed ladder down to the "Plank". However, the short timber ladder fits into this gap well. Three rebar steps were found but at least another two are required. Measurements for manufacturing laterally supports for the "Guillotine" were taken. The large comms system battery was recovered to recharge; quite the task considering its enormous weight. The old lifeline was recovered for a wash

and the addition of a little conditioner: to be placed in storage. Installation of seventy pieces of horizontal shoring to such a depth, and its subsequent removal, must rank among the most singular events in cave prospecting and excavation. Upon conclusion, when the fixed ladder is removed, this beautiful scalloped, sculpted rift will assume its true majesty. No Roadside! PC hurrying to Shannon to fly to a pissup on Commodore Day's vessel; moored off the rugged coast of Cambridge: Ahoy chaps?

Hours 8 (1893), Southend (843), o Kibbles, o Nets, (552) Total 3277

25th March Archaeological trip, Isle of Ely, UK

Roger Day, Dig Hastilow

The Plan: investigate a submerged, possible, archaeological item in the Great Rive Ouse near Littleport. RD picked up PC from Stansted, (22:45); an hour later arrived at the boat in Ely; DH arrived around 01:00 and a planning meeting similar to those held at the very beginning of each Panamánian expedition took place. This lasted some hours, as the beer bottles appeared to become increasingly awkward to open?

26th March Archaeological trip, Isle of Ely, UK

Roger Day, Dig Hastilow

Up late, fueled vessel sped off to the site; RD had suggested this time of the year as river traffic was at a minimum. Completed several passes up and down river to establish its width; this produced inconclusive results; it appears of narrow width. So the team spent the next couple of hours close quarter manoeuvring above the site. Holding station made a little difficult by the vessel shape catching the light breeze. The feature, discovered by RD, was repeatedly traversed using sonar to achieve shape/imagery, with GPS and stop watch to estimate its actual size/length. Gradually a length of some seven metres was established; its width was difficult ascertain as it appears parallel with the river, actually some thirty metres wide. The item is very likely a small boat; the question is, of what age? Although the waterway has been improved/straightened/widened at some stage in the past it's believed to have always been a water course, unlike some of the water courses which were purposely dug to facilitate transport of goods to settlements throughout this marshy area that borders the Fens: retired to a Bar for lunch, where the afternoon session became a delightful affair caused by the excellent drink. Moving on to the next riverside bar, found it suffered from seasonal closed days, good grief; now dark, launched vessel traveling back to where the afternoon session took place. Cautiously served by the barmaids "you were here earlier"; food and drink were taken until late. The team found themselves the last present, whereupon were approached by a barmaid who thrust the nights tab forward requesting "*We really would like to cash up now, please!*"; so, waddled back to the boat for more beer, sloe gin and a superb, topical dose reflecting Brexit from the DVD "Yes Minister".

27th March Archaeological trip, Isle of Ely, UK

Roger Day, Dig Hastilow

After a fine breakfast returned to the site to continue the survey; once again trying to maintain RD's vessel above the site proved a little challenging in the light breeze. During this session DH lowered his waterproof camera several times to -4m to video the feature; alas this proved unsuccessful for several reasons not least the poor visibility and that it filled with water after the fifth pass. Having conducted the survey to the extent of the equipment available headed to the nearest bar for the evening session. RD expelled DH and PC from the galley. Both instructed to meanwhile, go and scull pints in the adjacent "***Five Mile From Anywhere, No Hurry Inn***"; RD then prepared a superb curry,

encouraged by the others waving from the bar's conservatory some forty metres distant: another rather fine, late session.

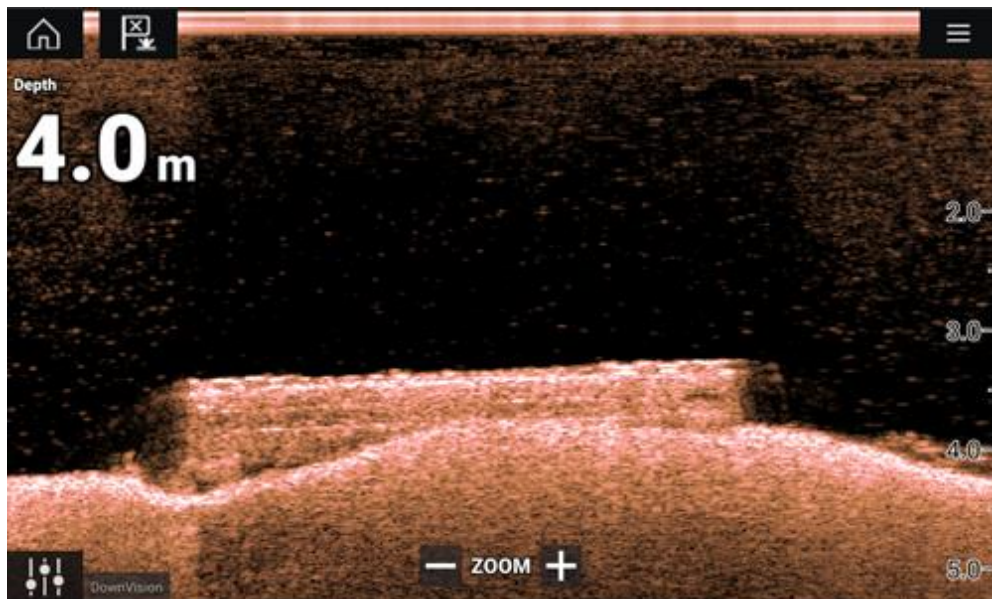
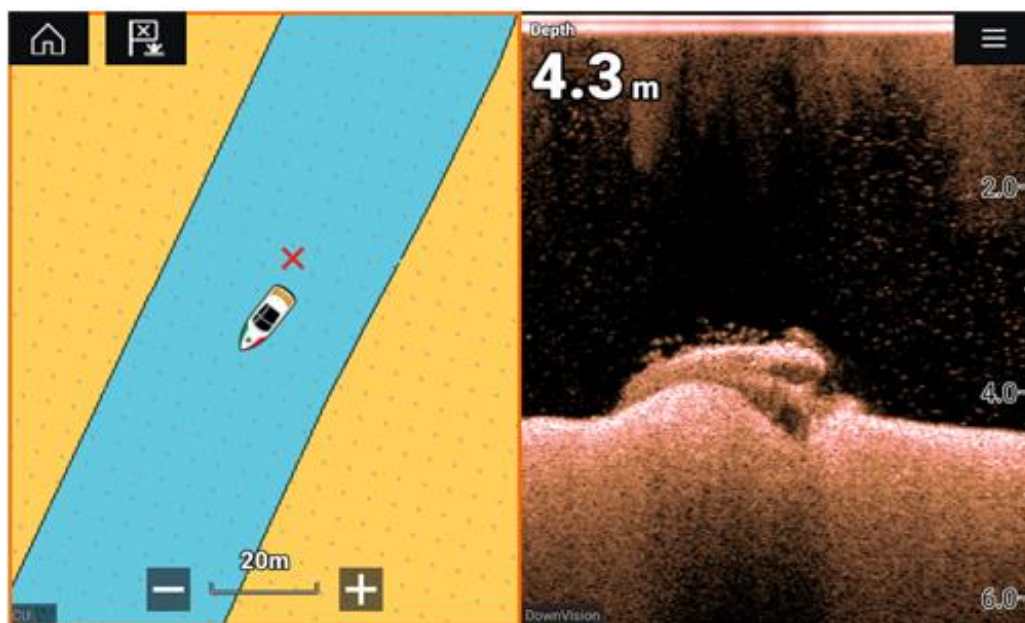


Image from vertical sonar; not side scan, no scale

28th March Archaeological trip, Isle of Ely, UK

Roger Day, Dig Hastilow

Departure day; up early; returned vessel to port: said goodbyes. The archaeological data will be assessed-interpreted, later; RD is presently reviewing the purchase/deployment of an ROV, and in time will produce an explanation of the surrounding landscape in context with this curious sunken feature. This area is just north of Ely, and south of the Wash; an ancient area where items from as early as the Bronze Age have been recovered.



Split screen GPS/sonar; no length scale.



Photo Roger Day

Dig Hastilow playing a “Chinaman” & Pat Cronin above submerged feature.

29th March Cahir, County Tipperary
Solo

Since the Cahir bypass has been opened a significant karst feature has been regularly noted; it is of considerable interest, warranting a much closer look, set in farmland close to the bypass. Limestone is known in the area.



1:50000 scale OS map

30th March Entrance curiosities, Co. Tipperary
Solo

Returning from a coast guard assessment, in Tramore, Waterford, PC took this route to avoid the extensive roadworks in the middle of Tipperary Town. Located some six miles south of Cashel, on the R688, is a significant feature close to the west side of the road, (ITM 609890 x 636904). County Tipperary is known for limestone; cattle reared hereabouts considered as healthy and valuable as those raised among the Burren. Depth of the feature was estimated from the roadside as $\geq 5\text{m}$. However, research indicates it a quarry certainly active during the early 1800s; the area does need visiting. Another, curious, feature was noted driving between the settlements Drumminacroahy and Annacarty; estimated location ITM 593330 x 645852. Set in the side of a short section of vertical grass covered hillside is a dressed stone portal. The vertical face is no more than perhaps four metres high, above the slope softens as it rises to an upper field. In the brief period the feature was visible through the hedgerow it is estimated as some two metres high and maybe one metre wide; most notable it is in the form of a pointed, Gothic arch?, the stonework large and seemingly well laid, the joints prominent. There is no recorded site in the national archaeological database of the immediate area. Owing to the volume of farm traffic along the narrow lane a precise location was impossible to record; the given ITM was best guessed using memory, feel and the websites Myplan.ie and Archaeology.ie.

Clocks spring forward,

1st April Considine's Cave, (South End)
Cheg Chester

Chill: Overcast: Ground drying: Minor trickle. The Plan: dig. CC digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. CC dug the area of the hauling way maintaining the level of the "Plank", (-14.7m), working south clearing up to both east and west walls creating a working face some one metre high sloping up to the south end reaching around two metres. Of the thirty lifts twenty three were kibbles, of which seven were large gravels. Each of the seven nets was well over fifty kilos. The 9mm lifeline, which passes through The Late Martin Bishop's descender, performs well; however for ease of lifelining upward it requires a hand jammer to better pull the line. Last week CC completed replacement of the generator weatherproofing. The walk back to the trucks in twilight, hooray for the extra hour: to the Roadside, where the conversation following chance introductions by Peter Curtin, lead to what may possibly be a new cave, or, at the very least, a new dig site in Ballynahown. Fascinated, the landowner enthusiastically invited the team to visit at anytime. Quote from Mr. Walsh *"there is a tree sticking out this hole, and after rain the sound of a very large stream, much louder than normal"*.

Hours 5 (1898), Southend (848), 23 Kibbles, 7 Nets, (559) Total 3307

4th April Considine's Cave, (South End)
Cheg Chester

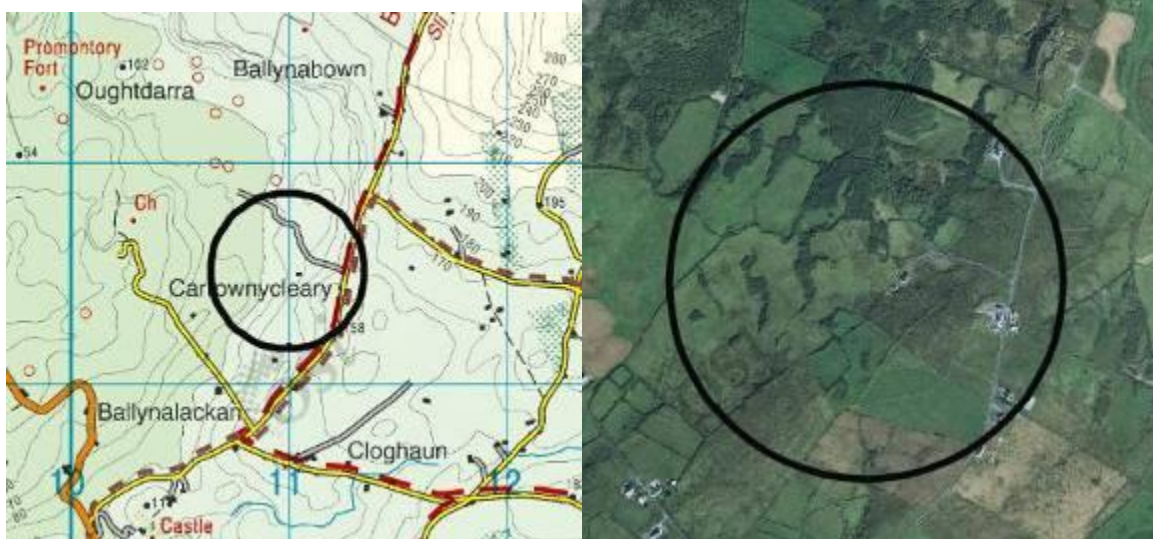
Cold: Bright: Ground drying: Connemara and the Islands clearly visible: Twilight around 20:45: Small stream. The plan: dig. CC digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Initially CC had lowered part of the vertical support brace for the RSJ, to offer into place and assess its length, during which PC installed a hand jammer bequeathed by the Late Martin Bishop, to assist with taking in the 9mm lifeline; it works superbly. The lines that open and close the receiver/shaft lid were separated to pass through individual steel karabiners, removing friction, will sort some pulleys, though this works well enough. Of the twenty five kibbles four were coarse gravels; two of the five nets weighed in excess of eighty kilos. Elongated rocks, (0.45m x 0.2m x 0.2m) remain commonplace. Progressing southward CC noted gaps appearing in the floor of depths $\geq 1\text{m}$; also, the south end

appears to be reducing in width, the main rift width remains a maximum at around 1.7m. Standing at the far south end, during winching, CC clearly experienced the draught from the northern shaft; outside temperature being somewhere around +5°C. The replacement hauling line works well, though creaks a bit when under load; it coils well into the rope drum during hauling; two turns are required on the capstan when lifting a net. From this depth the total time required to haul a lift to surface and return to the bottom takes an average of four minutes; this includes loading the barrow with two kibbles worth of spoil: not too great a weight to trundle. The speed of the winch is quite sufficient allowing for operations to be conducted safely; from bottom to top takes around seventy eight seconds; at surface is where the time is consumed, unloading the kibble into the barrow, barrowing to disposal locations and final deposition, and to return the kibble, or net to shaft bottom. The boulder pile ever increases; thought need be applied to future alternative, accessible locations. To the Roadside; found packed with 53 Italians: thought turned to visiting the possible unrecorded cave or dig site in Ballynahown; if Michael can be contacted PC will arrange for tomorrow early PM.

Hours 5 (1898), Southend (848), 25 Kibbles, (2770) 5 Nets, (567) Total 3337

5th April Walsh's Cave
 ITM 511055 x 701561
 Townland Carrowycleary
 Parish Killilagh
 County Clare
 Elevation 120 metres
 Cheg Chester

Bright: Cool: The Plan: A chance introduction in the Roadside Bar, (1st April), led to Mr. Walsh inviting the Team to visit a site adjacent his house located on the west side of the bóithrín, (green road), leading up from Ballynalacken Castle to Ballynahown townland. Mr. Walsh recounted how a stream may be heard from a hole out of which also grows a tree. PC rang Mr. Walsh, (5th April), at 10:00 requesting a visit, which was mutually agreed for 14:00. The site, a depression, is close to the cottage driveway; actually situated in their front garden. It is a steep sided depression some three metres deep by eight metres diameter.



General location of Walsh's Cave description, 1st April

Whilst PC spoke to Michael and Kate Walsh CC made a brief inspection of the depression; whilst no obvious opening was found the site is interesting being at the edge of the shale covered hillside, descending to the west, and in alignment with a wide, shallow valley heading off to the southwest. Explanations followed with MW and KW demonstrating an interest in all matters of the surrounding countryside; they also own an adjacent field which contains a ringfort. Curious of the team's accounts describing the addition of digging KW accompanied CC and PC to Considine's Cave to see the practical commitment. Fascinated by Considine's site; the dry stone walling enclosing the boulder large piles and the overall neatness of the site, I believe The Pegasus will be granted permission to dig the site.

6th April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Poor visibly: Cool side of mild: Haze: Ground drying: Small stream. The Plan: dig. CC digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. PC arrived early and prepared for the session among the tasks replace the winchman's seat, (Beer Keg), with a chair; at 18:00 went back to assist CC carry down the large comms battery. CC had finished fabricating the RSJ vertical support, which was lowered and successfully positioned; this only requires securing to the west rift wall. The two horizontal stemples required to hold the "Guillotine" upright against the west wall are the next job. Leveling the floor southward from the "Plank" is all but beneath the RSJ which is fixed in the narrow part of the rift. Minor delays were again experienced during hauling whilst the digger retired to a safe location from working directly beneath the hauling way; up top delays were compounded by the continued presence of a torn calf muscle hampering scampering about disposing of spoil. Even so thirty lifts were brought to surface. Of the twenty three kibbles five were coarse gravels; the seven very heavy nets contained large boulders, one well in excess of eighty kilos many around thirty kilos. The lower west end of the boulder pile approaches the top of the northern field wall. To the Roadside for well earned pints; talk included the recent visit to "*Walsh's Cave*". Opinion regarding its potential differs, slightly; so, the plan is to hit it hard on a single day then, with accurate data, decide how best to proceed with the site. TB likely returns this week. Consider, if a kibble has an average weight of twenty five kilos and a net is a conservative fifty kilos, the total raised from the South End approaches 100 tonnes.

Hours 5 (1903), Southend (853), 23 Kibbles, (2793) 7 Nets, (574) Total 3367

11th April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Bright: Light breeze: Ground drying: Small stream: The Plan: Maintenance. CC in support above, in between raising the level of the retaining dry stone wall perimeter of the boulder pile. PC descended to complete installation of the RSJ brace, drilling a 16mm hole to take a 16mm galvanized steel pin securing the south end of the bar which is bolted to the top edge of the RSJ; hopefully preventing said RSJ from tipping from its vertical position should weight become applied. Further 16mm holes were drilled, just above and inline with the axis of the RSJ, between the lower part of the "Guillotine" and the east wall, into these were fitted more 16mm pins to locate each end of the horizontal brace, hopefully preventing the "Guillotine" from any movement along the RSJ, should it try to take place. All this took place standing on spoil which regularly slid away beneath the digger's feet. The builder's ladder was then balanced on the collapsing fill to drill at some three metres above the floor level, two more holes between the "Guillotine" and the east wall to locate an upper brace, again to prevent the "Guillotine" from toppling out from its present position. With the pilot holes drilled the battery ran dry so this task

requires completion. Forthcoming photographs will help explain these ramblings. On completion of this support there will be two horizontal braces, top and bottom, of the “Guillotine” to the east wall holding it in its present position, and a third brace from the wall to hold the RSJ vertical. Wedges are required for either end of the RSJ and the walls. To the Roadside, for pints

Hours 5 (1908), Southend (858), 0 Kibbles, (2793) 0 Nets, (574) Total 3367

13th April Considine’s Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cold: Rain: Overcast: Wind S/SE F6 gusting 8: Approaching storm: Small stream. The plan: install the upper stemple and new signalling system, and possibly dig. PC arrived early, at 17:00, hoping to finish the upper stemple holding the “Guillotine” before CC arrived; maybe a third stemple is required? CC arrived having carted down the entire comms system boxes and cables using a WWII pack frame; both comms boxes were fitted and the cable ran along a new route, down the north side of the fixed ladder. As storm strength increased digging began. To make best use of time the scatter of boulders that collapsed from the face, (as PC danced about on it fitting the “Guillotine” supports), were cleared and sent up in nine large nets; two boulders ≥ 70 kg. During operations the new, mandatory signalling protocol was successfully trialed and implemented, utilizing the good old S.U.D. system, (1 buzz stop, 2 up, 3 down); this will ensure the shaft cover may only be opened when the man at the shaft bottom permits; he/she will have total control. The exchanging signals were clearly audible, thus removing the winchman’s previous desperate screams down the shaft to “repeat message”; made all the more difficult tonight as the easterly storm conspired with the generator noise making verbal comms impossible; nice one Cheg. Outstanding is installation of the telephone cable and handsets. This will allow shaft bottom, shaft top and winch positions the ability to speak clearly to each other; this is of particularly importance when only two are digging. To the Roadside for a fine pint: TB arrived back from the UK earlier in the day, as did Basher, Martell, Rowena, Nicky and Martin.

Hours 6 (1914), Southend (864), 0 Kibbles, (2793) 9 Nets, (583) Total 3376

15th April Considine’s Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Martell Baines, (BPC), Martin Grass, (BEC)

Wind SSE, F6 gusting 8: Some rain: Chill: Small stream: The plan: Dig. TB and MG digging: CC winching: PC unloading: MB barrowing. PC arrived early to set up the session, replacing The Late Martin Bishops descender with a Petzl “Rig”, which works as a single eccentric cam, significantly reducing rope friction when lifelining upward. The new - improved signalling and comms system was also easily and swiftly assembled. Welcome visitors from the Bradford P.C. and Bristol E.C. ignored the turbulent weather to assist the team; duties specified digging commenced. The new hauling procedure was quickly understood and became a regular process of sending up spoil, ably disposed of by MB. Of the forty lifts thirty three were kibbles and seven nets; very little gravels among the spoil. The planned telephone at shaft bottom will help future communications enormously. It is considered, for the immediate future to perhaps relocate the signalling system at the “Plank” until becoming impracticable: to the Roadside to meet the others.

Hours 12 (1926), Southend (876), 33 Kibbles, (2826) 7 Nets, (590) Total 3416

19th April

Lost Bob Scammell, dam

18th April Considine's Cave (South End) From the PCN Log

CC, TB, Basher & Martel Baines (BPC)

Trip to video & photograph the dig. Too windy for the drone BB & CC on surface, TB & MB down shaft. 12 kibbles & 1 net lifted, 2 very large boulders exposed, will put to one side for a future 2:1 To the Roadside for pints before a determined evening session.

Hours 4 (1930), Southend (880), 12 Kibbles, (2838) 1 Net, (591) Total 3429. Tony Boycott

20th April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Warm: Bright: 20% cloud cover: Light breeze: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Though hampered somewhat by injury TB beavered away clearing the spoil extending the floor from the "Plank" toward the south end of the rift. Another session will produce a near level floor, at -14.7m, which will be surveyed to produce a cross sectional image illustrating the contrasting development between the north and south ends. Thirty three kibbles were brought to surface of which five were gravels in addition were seven heavy nets. The new safety protocol works well, the shaft "lid" not opened until the digger below signals permission to do so over the loud speakers. To a busy Roadside for fine drink and music: its Easter tide.

Hours 8 (1938), Southend (888), 33 Kibbles, (2871) 7 Net, (598) Total 3469

Review: the "Plank" was installed just above where the northern shaft dimensions narrow significantly, below there exists just enough room for the digger to invert to remove the spoil he stands upon. Installing the shoring from the surface down to this level, (14.7m), occasionally offered glimpses through the hanging debris pile of a possible widening of both east and west walls of the south half of the rift, occasionally suggesting that the south side may be the more mature development of the site. At -26m, where the passage became too small to follow, the Team paused and considered its options pursuing the stream; tunneling beneath the south end to intercept the stream was one, though dismissed on the grounds of extensive effort required shoring the loose ground and the fact that one day the shoring would rot away leading to possible collapse. The decision was swiftly reached to relocate the entire surface infrastructure to make best use of the winch built by CC and remove the entire fill of the south side utilizing its natural walls, which would require no shoring at all just muscle power; later found to be a little, inaccurately optimistic hence the recent installation of the RSJ. Removing the spoil, and stripping out the shoring, the process has produced a curious feeling, that of reworking an area already known. Clearing the south end down to the level of the Plank could, to some extent, have been considered boring, but what's been uncovered could not be further from reality; the southern development producing near vertical, parallel walls which widened to almost two metres, continuing below into the unknown. The volume of the south end down to the Plank is conservatively estimated at seventy five cubic metres. The top section consisted of compacted clay, the lower strata boulders with gaps. It may be that the final weight removed to -14.7m could be in the order of 120 tonnes.

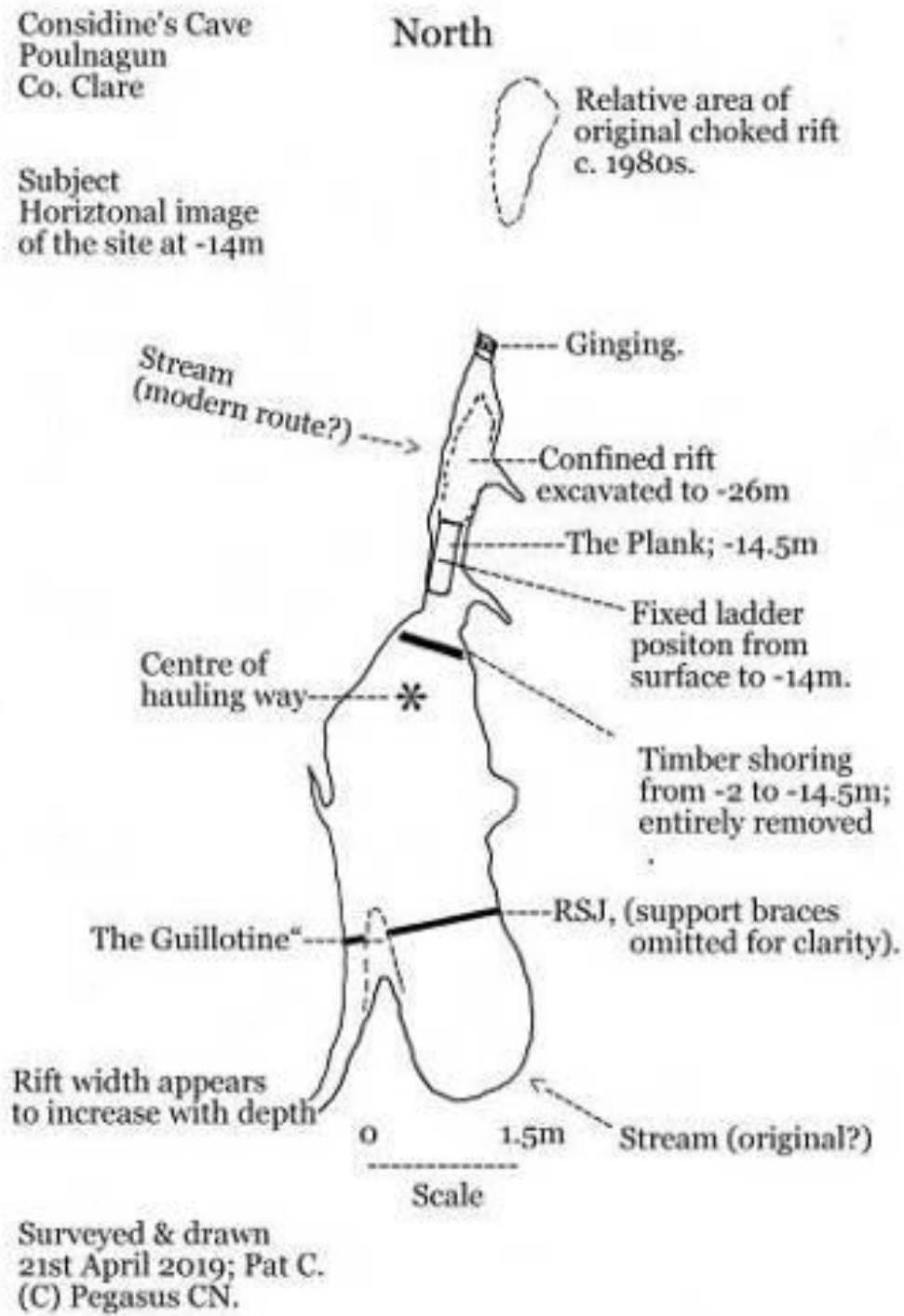
21st April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Solo

Warm: 100% cloud cover, (13:00): Ground quite dry: Stream a trickle: The Plan: produce a survey image of the rift at -14m. To avoid surveying during the next session, decided to survey today. Set up the laser level and lightweight tripod directly below the hauling way creating a horizontal base line; off this measurements were taken to each rift wall along a tape measure which was secured to each end of the rift. Difficulties were experienced taking measurements in the constricted northern end as the surveyor obscured the

projected laser beam; complicated acrobatics solved this issue above the northern shaft.
 TB is correct in his assessment of the pear shaped boulder; it will certainly require a 2:1.
 Hours 3 (1941), Southend (891), o Kibbles, (2871) o Net, (598) Total 3469

Plan survey of Considine's Cave at -14 metres, 21st April 2019



22nd April Souterrain, CL004-062002

Solo

Sunny: Wind southerly F4: The Plan: investigate this site. Left the Hilux near the church in Oughtdarra to walk up onto the next limestone terrace; bumped into Noel Thynne. Cut northeast across his land and up through the hazel thicket beneath the right hand limestone bluff. Using the archaeological database ITM reference, and a six inch map image, PC followed the karst landscape to the edge of the hazel and blackthorn thicket; encountered stone wall remnants an early field system, possibly circa 400–1200AD. Working through the dense thicket located a small clearing, further thrashing about found what is likely the remains of the ringfort rampart; the souterrain located within.



The souterrain is in Ballynahown, the Sink is in Oughtdarra townland.

...Moving south/ish found a hole behind a blackthorn bush, some three metres beyond, still within blackthorn was an area which suggests roof collapse into the souterrain passage. Some four metres further south still, adjacent what may be the ringfort perimeter wall, is another opening, all three within unyielding thicket. ITM's taken on all three openings, (North 510547x702416), (Middle 510548 x 702413), (South 510549 x 702408); elevation 104m. Ingress will only be achieved by first cutting away the thicket to access the obvious entrances; loppers required. Returning, stumbled across a very interesting sink; photos taken; ITM 510267 x702355; elevation 88m: possible commonage, will ask. Thousands of orchids in bloom, and around three dozen Gentians



Sink; view west/ish



Sink; view south/ish



Sink

22nd April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Sunny: Warm: Light easterly breeze: Stream, barely a trickle: The Plan: Maintenance. The Team set about various improvements and repairs. TB installed pipework for the section of surface stream close to the boulder pile to prepare the area for further spoil deposition. CC secured the generator with metal strapping to the floor of its shed; a three pin plug was fitted to the power supply cable, also lengthening the underground lamp wire to improve illumination of the working area; unfortunately the wire supplied by PC proved useless so requires an alternate cable. PC trimmed foliage around the gravel heap, increasing spoil deposition area then fitted a line, via a pulley to enable the sliding lid that closes off the lower part of the shaft collar, to be remotely operated from the platform above, removing the need to dangle over the gapping maw below to operate it; the main lifting pulley assembly was also stripped and oiled as were it's associated karabiners and adjustment brackets. To a quieter Roadside: the Easter crowds all but gone. Hours 7 (1948), Southend (898), o Kibbles, (2871) o Net, (598) Total 3469

25th April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Increasing overcast: Impending Storm Hanna: Ground dry: Stream a trickle: Islands clearly visible: The Plan: Dig. Delayed starting whilst the wiring of the underground light was completed and installed, meanwhile TB began filling kibbles. TB below: PC unloading and barrowing: CC winching. With TB levelling the South End floor area hauling was swift the entire session. The new signalling protocol system worked really well; though this didn't stop a large cobble appearing next to TB from somewhere above as the shaft lid was closed after hauling; whence it originated requires investigation though it is possible that during the lamp installation the lump was disturbed; a bit like TB when it landed next to him. Forty lifts brought to surface, thirty three kibbles of

which six were gravels, and seven nets. The 21st April 2019 survey of the north and south areas clearly illustrate their contrasting floor surfaces and volume of spoil to be removed; though to what depth? PC believes the rift shape and size could yet exceed 30m of depth. TB assembled several large boulders which will require a 2:1 to bring to surface; the 50m hauling rope will accomplish the extra length required. Under a lowering sky scampered off to the Roadside for well deserved pints.

Hours 8 (1956), Southend (906), 33 Kibbles, (2904) 7 Net/s, (605) Total 3509

27th April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Storm Hannah, (Hurricane force), passed: Blustery: 50% cloud cover: Small stream: Cold. The Plan: Dig. TB below: PC unloading and barrowing: CC winching. An initial slow start contended with six very heavy nets using a 2:1 mechanical advantage; these contained the largest boulders lifted to date, a conservative total of 500kgs. Of the forty lifts thirty one were kibbles of which five were gravels, with nine nets in all. If a kibble weighs a conservative 20kg that's an estimated total of 620kg; the other three nets weighed a collective 70kgs; so tonight the Team lifted around 1190kgs, no wonder they were shagged out. The hauling shaft was recorded at -14.4m, from the platform to the present dig floor. A fine session: to the Roadside, bumped into Eugene Lambe, (Piper).

Hours 8 (1964), Southend (914), 31 Kibbles, (2935) 9 Net/s, (614) Total 3549

29th April Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

60% cloud cover: Mild: Sunny: Stream a trickle: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. TB has dug/created a 20° slope downward from the "Plank" to where the floor presently levels off to the south end; it is now possible, (for normal people), to walk beneath the RSJ. The rebar steps at the bottom of the fixed ladder need to be inserted as the two metre ladder used to reach said fixed ladder will soon be relocated to ascend from the lowering dig floor up to the "Plank" level. Suspicions the hauling speed has increased are well founded; previously twelve lifts per hour were raised from between the depths of -12m to -14m; this session recorded a surprising twenty per hour, (40 in 112 minutes); the Team delighted. Of the forty five lifts thirty five were kibbles of which five were gravels; among the ten nets were three boulders ≥80kgs. To improve lift capacity further the kibbles require redesign and replacement. To the Roadside, for tasty pints

Hours 7 (1971), Southend (921), 35 Kibbles, (2970) 10 Net/s, (624) Total 3594

2nd May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Bright: Warm: Good visibility: Barely a trickle: Fuel TB: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The first four nets were lifted by 2:1 mechanical advantage; three were boulders ≥ 90kgs. TB gradually progressed northwards removing part of the slope, the level-ish floor some 0.5m below the "Plank", this approaches -15m. Of the forty lifts eight were nets with thirty two kibbles, of which five were gravels some used as foundation levelling material for the forthcoming retaining wall adjacent the western spoil area. The 30mm pulley previously used in the lifelining system was replaced with a 50mm; the difference in reduced friction significant; the extant Petzl "Rig", which recently replaced the Late Martin Bishops Petzl "Stop" also has a similar sized diameter bobbin to the pulley, contributing further to overall improvements when deploying the system. Maintenance needed, main boulder pile retaining wall requires attention: rock fall from shaft collar area needs investigation: relocate underground

signalling system box: lock on shaft cover requires attention: generator oil needs checking: assess top of north rift for installation of concrete lintels: voice comms to shaft bottom: improve fixing to generator shed weather cover. To the Roadside; where there was no Red, and no Gold, just misery.

Hours 7 (1978), Southend (928), 32 Kibbles, (3005) 8 Net/s, (632) Total 3637

*4th May Considine's Cave, (South End) From PCN Log
CC, TB*

Maintenance session, CC checked oil in generator & carried on wall building around north side. TB below filling 12 kibbles & 1 net from under the hauling way then extended the pipe in the stream to enlarge dumping area.

Hours 6 (1984), Southend (934), 0 Kibbles, (3005) 0 Nets, (632) Total 3634

4th May Souterrain, CL004-062002

Solo

ITM 510547 x 702416

Elevation ≈108m

Length 8m, (Estimated)

15:00. Warm: Bright: Clear: Visibility ≥ 15 miles. The Plan: cut away foliage to assess if ingress is practicable. Parked the Hilux on Noel Thynnes ground, adjacent the corral. Approached the site from the southeast; traversing an area previously uninvestigated. Many of the thousands of Orchids beginning to fade with the onset of May; small groups of Gentians observed; perhaps two dozen blooms in total; Cuckoo seen circling the eastern limestone bluff. Mistook the precise location of the hidden site, being too far west by some fifty metres having referenced the wrong glacial erratic among the scrub. Pacing between two accessible points of the ringfort rampart, its diameter is estimated at 27m; consistent with the average ringfort of that era. Foliage obscuring the souterrain opening was not as dense as first feared, a dozen snips swiftly removed the blackthorn. The heavily foliated, uneven ground obscures clear visual evidence of buildings. The floor approaching the entrance was covered with vegetative material, once cleared it uncovered two low parallel walls each in line with part of the souterrains interior construction. Here is evidence of collapse but no roof flagstones are present; likely robbed for window or door lintels. At the end of this short section of unroofed passage the actual point of entry to the souterrain remains 0.66m wide; the original height here unclear due to tumble covering the floor. Inside the passage its width increases to 1.1m, the height to 0.83m: two metres further a surface collapse prevents further progress; here sunlight enters. Attention now focused on the far opening; cutting away a small area beneath extensive Blackthorn a curvilinear, overhanging arched area of dry walling became visible, some two metres southward was other area of stonework, suggesting this was once a mural chamber. Squeezing north beneath the unstable stonework a small opening offered a clear view along the small approach passage, (0.4m wide x 0.45m high x 3m long), coming from, or heading back, to the central area of collapse, (sunlight also enters); the same area which blocks the entrance passage. Interior measurements were taken using a Bosch GLM 50C hand laser; the next trip will conduct an accurate survey.

Brief summary: academic opinion has long differed over reason and use for the souterrain; much depends on evidence encountered, in this particular case the confined nature of both two passages exclude its use as a convenient storage facility, unless children were used to retrieve produce stored within. The confining dimensions of entrance and intermediate passage have been so designed as to specifically hamper an intruder pursuing a fleeing individual. To pursue and capture said refugee the intruder is required to wriggle along the narrow passage meaning upon emerging into the wider

area he is defenseless against an attack even from possible noncombatants armed with rocks or pointy sticks. Seriously injured, possibly immobile, the casualty becomes a salutary message to others in pursuit. This souterrain was built within a stone ringfort, a Cashel; such a construction is often associated with wealthy farming family/groups of the Early Medieval Period, (E.M.P. 400-1200AD); a period of population growth following significant agricultural innovation. The uneven, foliated landscape obscures much relevant evidence; the walls likely once an average of some three metres high and some three metres thick stand now, perhaps, only one metre high. Since their abandonment many buildings and sites, such as Cashel ringforts, became a convenient source of building material.

It is possible that the circumferential uneven grass covered ground obscures tumble from the rampart, the end result of robbing out the wall by persons unknown. During such practice the mural chamber, in this case would become exposed. Alternatively if the ringfort and its defenders were overwhelmed, fleeing survivors may have sought refuge within the souterrain chamber; its exposure may have been the result of the attackers demolishing the rampart to reach the refugees.

6th May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

90% Cloud cover: Mild: Small stream: Excellent visibility: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Prior to starting the phone/speaker system was installed and secured adjacent the signalling position. Forty two lifts were made of which thirty six were kibbles, including three gravels, and six nets. TB believes another session will level the present floor to some 0.5m below the "Plank". Spoil was deposited extending the present pile ridge parallel with the northern boundary wall; previously reaching an acceptable, maximum, height it can now extended westward. Of note is the increase in assorted sized pieces of water worn limestone among the spoil each covered in sharp fluting generally 4mm wide. Loss of stream flow through the makeshift dam has become problematic; this arrangement has evolved as an important part of digging as the stream supplies, via an 1/2 inch pipe, two cisterns, one to wash the surface kit, the other supplying a hose pipe to the shaft bottom to wash down the hauling equipment. To the Roadside where the return of the "Gold" cheered the Team up no end.

Hours 7 (1991), Southend (941), 36Kibbles, (3041) 6 Nets, (638) Total 3679

7th May Cloghaun, Townland

Seamus Walsh

Meeting with a representative of Met Éireann, (National Irish Weather Office), talk turned to rain volume, streams, water, etc. To illustrate a question PC accessed an aerial view of the Coolagh River Cave surface channel displayed on the display screen at the I.R.C.G. Station. Three sites were indicated by SW adjacent his holiday home; two were suspected, and latterly proved recorded. The third is much further west and has no ascribed reference; work continues.

North



Image from Archaeology.ie

This possible new site is located;
340 metres from Poulmageh, 425 metres from Considine's, 880 metres from Pollclabber
480 metres from Poulmagun, (Poulnaspa): Elevation \approx 135m

8th May Souterrain, CL004-062002

Solo

ITM 510547 x 702416

Elevation 108m

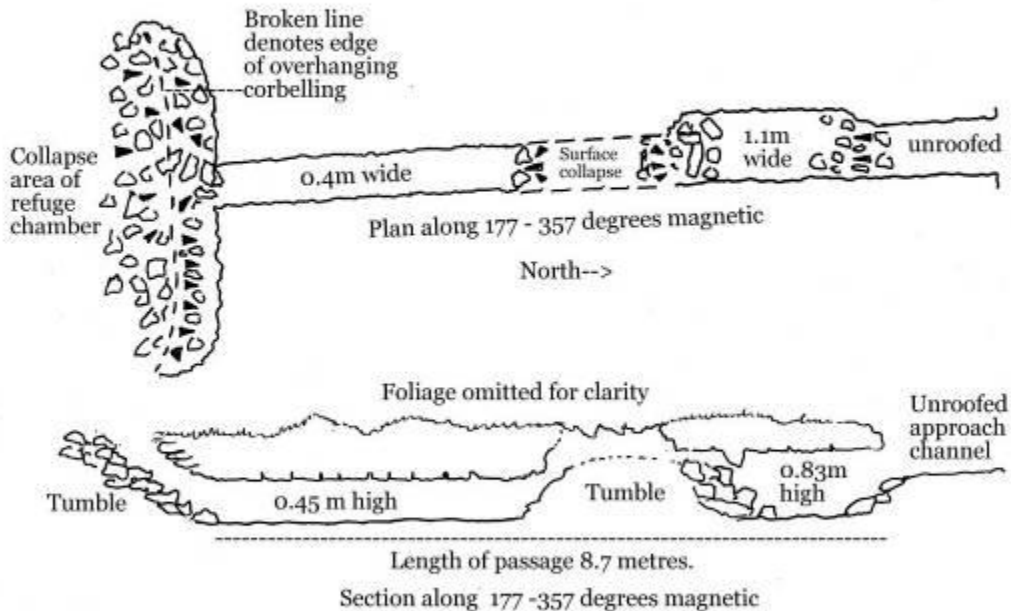
Length 8.7 metres

Depth 1.2 metres, (max)

16:00. Cold: NW wind, F4: 80% cloud cover: Soft showers. The plan: complete survey. Walked through Noel Thynnes land; ascending the cliff to the east of the bluff. A few Gentians remain; many of the orchids have gone. Fixed markers in the Blackthorn bushes directly above either souterrain opening to obtain an accurate compass bearing; a direct view totally obscured. Set up an auto laser level on a mini tripod to project its cross lines into the low souterrain entrance onto the collapse tumble. Closer observation of the interior, (this time with a light), noted the precarious state of the roof; almost each flagstone is dislodged, barely resting upon the edge of collapsing walls; the likely reason for this, and perhaps for the entire collapse is the presence of grazing cattle disturbing the flagstone roof situated barely beneath the surface; though large diameter Blackthorn roots penetrating the souterrain may also have contributed. Due to the dodgy nature of the roof, and its upper walls only salient points were recorded specifically those where passage dimensions altered. Scrutinizing this collapse noted the west wall narrowing, reducing the overall passage width corresponding with the passage dimensions viewed from the collapsed chamber, some six metres to the south. Swiftly exiting the grim area began to record the collapsed chamber. Again, only primary measurements were surveyed due to the loose, unsupported stonework above the recorder. Chamber length and its surviving overhanging corbelled wall were recorded, as was an estimation made of the original width of the chamber; taking into account the adjacent tumble which obscures much. Eager to accurately plot the souterrain opening within the ringfort garth a datum was set inline (amongst the many bushes), with two gaps in the dense perimeter foliage obscuring the rampart, (aligned almost due east/west), took measurements and

compass bearings from the centre of the collapsed rampart tumble, and the souterrain entrance to the temporary central datum: delighted to exit, returned home, drew survey.

CL004-062002
Souterrain
ITM 510547 x 702416
Ballynahown
County Clare



Surveyed 5th/8th May 2019; Pat C.
Drawn 9th May 2019; Pat C.
Scale 1:50
(C) Pegasus CN.

9th May Considine's Cave, (South End)
Cheg Chester

18:00. Cool: Bright: 20% cloud cover: Ground quite dry: Small stream: Fuel PC. The plan: dig. PC winching, unloading and barrowing: CC digging. CC began removing much of the coarse gravels covering the floor surface; in doing so lowered part of the area approaching the "Plank". The floor surface is now around one metre below the "Plank" and 2.4m below the bottom of the RSJ. Excavation will next remove the boulder, and its packing upon which the "Plank" is secured. Removal of this material will expose the confined area and assist planning installation of the next section of fixed ladder; possible options being, continue the existing ladder straight down, or, the more likely, create a staging from which the next section of ladder could be offset to compensate for the shape of the rift walls. Options will become clearer as fill is removed, though the immediate plan is to utilize the three metre builder's ladder as the shaft is sunk to around eighteen metres. Thirty lifts were achieved, nine being gravels, one very heavy net, and twenty kibbles; containing the usual cobbles and boulders. During the first hour of hauling fifteen lifts were brought to surface; this included delays whilst the spoil was barrowed

away and dumped, and other minor operational demands at surface: the new system is without doubt much swifter drawing up from depth. Two well shagged out diggers made for the comfort of the Roadside, and pure Gold.

Hours 5 (1996), Southend (946), 29 Kibbles, (3070) 1 Nets, (639) Total 3709

11th May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

18:00: Fabulous evening: Warm: 5% cloud cover: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$: Ground drying: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. A decision was made to pause hauling whilst TB filled kibbles from the exposed position at the very bottom of the hauling way, clearing fill from around the narrow location where the "Plank" was inserted; a slow, difficult task. This method of pausing so the digger can fill a dozen kibbles at a time was repeated with the surface crew making use of the pauses to extend the retaining wall, prepare and extend a new route for the water supply to the washing cisterns, and enjoy the beautiful sunny evening. Both "pauses" accounted for forty minutes "down time", even so digging below continued uninterrupted, and in short was an easier method for the digger below. Of the thirty eight lifts, thirty five were kibbles, of which six were gravels, and three heavy nets. Comm.'s completed with the installation of the handset at the winch position. When the 6 inch rift at the "Plank" is completed cleared out only then can a design be finalized for the staging which will allow access to remain to the northern shaft and offer respite to a digger climbing from the south end. To a "happening" Roadside; nice music... man.

Hours 7 (2003), Southend (953), 35 Kibbles, (3105) 3 Nets, (642) Total 3747

12th May

Lost Michal Marek, bugger

13th May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

18:00. Fabulous evening: Small stream: Visibility $\leq 15\text{Nm}$: 20% cloud: The Plan. Dig. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. TB continued to dig at the very base of the hauling way so whilst he filled all the kibbles PC began to install the water pipe, sent over by CC, from the existing reservoir position to a new, higher location further up the ditch in JN's field. Hauling began at a good pace; thirty one kibbles raised, of which seven were gravels; only one net. Four loads of gravel were deposited behind the new section of walling to stabilize it during further work. Fuel added to generator; gauge indicating $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Setting up comm.'s presented a minor delay as PC searched among the switches to turn on the underground circuit. Thoughts considered removing the "Plank" entirely to allow greater flexibility when choosing the precise location of the proposed "Staging". When unloading two kibbles of spoil were deposited in the barrow to reduce time sending the kibbles back down and running off to the tips. Whether containing gravels or boulders the barrow was dam heavy; the idea occurred the estimate of a kibble weighing around 25Kgs should be reconsidered. Less than six weeks to the turn of the year. To the Roadside for very fines pint of Gold.

Hours 5 (2008), Southend (958), 31 Kibbles, (3136) 1 Nets, (643) Total 3779

15th May Souterrain, CL004-062002 & Ringfort CL004-062000

Tony Boycott

Bright: Dry: Superb visibility: Wind SE F3/4. The Plan: photograph the souterrain features, and where possible, record the ringfort rampart perimeter. Called TB; come

out to play. During the walk over noted few gentians remain, and fewer orchids. In an attempt to illustrate/record the perimeter of the ringfort, (Cashel), and to fix the souterrain opening in its context, set two temporary datums to improve accuracy. From these two datums several points around the perimeter were accessed, the distances and bearings recorded, (survey note book 4). Each distance was measured to a point close to central among the broad, confused tumble area as could be practicably established. The dry stone rampart appears almost levelled in places, though caution need be exercised as the surrounding area is quite uneven, masking the true outline of the rampart remains. This extensive unevenness of ground surface masks the presence of any remaining house features within the ringfort garth. Adjacent the mural chamber collapse, situated in the south of the ringfort a section of vertical dry stone wall rampart was found among the blackthorn of an estimated height of one metre above the outside ground surface. The proximity of the vertical exterior face of the rampart wall suggests the mural chamber as being no more than two metres in width. A section of the northern rampart is estimated as one and a half metres above the ringfort garth level; the foliage obscures much. Beyond the northern rampart the ground drops swiftly away among a sequence of low dry stone walls into a hollow wherein are numerous moss covered boulders and bed rock surfaces. This area may be the remains of a quarry used to construct the ringfort; it is now a pleasant shady area of hazel bedecked with bluebells. There are seven other stone forts within a four hundred metre diameter of this particular site; suggesting, if all contemporary, it was a fertile area. A Fulacht Fia is recorded as two hundred metres northwest, whilst it may have been built in the Bronze Age, (2200 – 500 BCE); such sites may have been used also for ablutions, and when enclosed, as steam, or sweat cabins. Robbers Den Cave, an archeological site, is recorded in the national database as being two hundred and fifty metres to the northeast; this distance may be incorrect. As TB believes it may be further east along the cliff face. Thanks to TB for his invaluable assistance recording the ringfort rampart



Souterrain, (ringfort garth), entrance 15th May 2019; ranging rods in 0.1 metre sections

17th May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

Bright: 30% cloud cover: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$: Small stream: Fuel TB: The plan; Dig. CC still absent. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Hauling began at 18:15 and continued apace, resulting in a satisfactory session of forty kibbles lifted by 20:25, of which six were gravels. Cobbles and boulders were thrown three metres up and over onto the spoil ridgeline running parallel to the north boundary wall, gravels deposited behind the recent section of dry stone wall as both filling and support. Voice communications received at the winch were unintelligible; either PC is going deaf or TB was drunk.....? Generator tank registers half full. Shaft bottom signal station needs relocating and the "Plank" area needs attention; perhaps remove it entirely whilst the staging's design and installation are pending. To the Roadside for Golden pints: a near perfect session.

Hours 5 (2013), Southend (963), 40 Kibbles, (3176) 0 Nets, (643) Total 3819

18th May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

100% cloud cover clearly swiftly: Spots of rain: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$: Stunning sunset: Mild: Small stream: Ground dry: Both cisterns full. The Plan: Dig. CC still absent. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Yesterday TB had accumulated several "Dam Big Boulders", these were lifted using a 2:1 mechanical advantage, most $\geq 100\text{kgs}$, the largest $\approx 120/130\text{kgs}$: we're going to need a bigger wheelbarrow! Processing these five loads consumed $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Leaving the area at the "Plank" until next Monday, TB worked away southward extending the hollow created at the base of the hauling way adjacent the "Plank". Thirty three lifts were raised to surface; five nets and twenty eight kibbles, of which six were gravels. Generator gauge registers over quarter full. Justifiably knackered the pair staggered back up hill and swiftly to the Roadside. Sat inside the bar it felt like being at Bastogne; surrounded by German's who shot glances at the shite encrusted drinking diggers.

Hours 5 (2018), Southend (968), 28 Kibbles, (3204) 5 Nets, (648) Total 3852

19th May CL033-130002, Souterrain, Ennis

Solo

ITM 533865 x 678374

Returning from the bus station visited this site located within Ennis town, just off the Gort Road, (R458), adjacent a housing estate. The access route, Fern Hill road, leads up and toward an elevated area; the ringfort is recorded on this gentle slope. When originally surveyed a ringfort, (CL033-130001); a hut, (CL033-130003), and souterrain were recorded; nothing is now presently visible. The national database records all three structures at map reference ITM 533865 x 678374.

20th May Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

Fabulous day: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$: Mild: Ground dry: Small stream: The Plan: Digging & Maintenance. CC still absent; both descended the shaft where a weary PC perched in the north rift dismantling the "Plank" whilst TB relocated the signal system; there is slack available in both phone and signal wires, this is coiled in the rift at the fixed ladder. The floodlight was lowered almost level with the RSJ, which is now almost three metres above the floor of the hauling way. The staging need be secured on two scaffold stemples, set level with the existing stemple in the north rift to maintain level access between the two. Natural channels/features in the east wall require the staging to project some 0.9m from the fixed ladder into the south rift. This is no issue as the next vertical ladder will be

free hanging; a bonus in fact when fitting the next below it. Hauling began during which much of the debris from the “Plank” area and the hauling way was cleared, which is now at around -16m. The generator was topped up to $\frac{3}{4}$ full. PC halted the session early overcome with fatigue creating severe loss of concentration during winching. No bar, just bed. Hours 4 (2022), Southend (972), 8 Kibbles, (3212) 5 Nets, (653) Total 3865 Gazing up at the RSJ some two metres above him PC was amazed at the volume of spoil removed since its installation. TB has moved much, if not all the spoil single handed. In recognition of this singular achievement PC recommends TB be awarded an honorific.



“Popeye” Boycott

*“That between 21st April - 20th May 2019; despite injuries, Tony Boycott wrested spoil from the earth, placing into 105 nets and 531 kibbles, the conservative weight of 20 metric tonnes in 25 sessions; for this outstanding achievement he is recommended the honorable title of **“Popeye”**.”*

23rd May Considine’s Cave, (South End)
Tony Boycott

18:00: Bright: 100% cloud cover, (thin): Visibility 20-25Nm: Ground dry: Small stream: Fuel PC. The Plan: Dig. CC absent; TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Before starting the 2.5m timber ladder was brought to surface and exchanged with the 3 metre aluminum builder’s ladder; this one just reaches the base of the fixed ladder from the bottom of the hauling way. “Popeye” continued to clear the area from the “Plank” to almost directly beneath the RSJ. Though the external temperature was around 16°C the significant updraught noticed on the 20th May still emerged from the north side of the rift; CC theorizes this volume of air cannot pass wholly through the small gap at -26.5m, where the stream sinks, but also issues through the gaps among the boulder fill. Of the thirty two kibbles raised ten were gravels mixed with lumps of the awful blue/grey clay and a reappearance of the horrific brown clay. Though CC recently extended the boulder heap retaining wall the void is swiftly filling, attention need turn to preparing alternate areas, whilst consideration of sensitive issues, not least a sensible, aesthetic height for the elongated boulder pile bordering the neighbours field, (obscured in part by bushes). Pessimistically the present capacity could be filled within the next thirty sessions. Generator shows half full. To the Roadside for very fine pints and some cracking music; concertina, fiddle and flute.

Hours 5 (2027), Southend (977), 32 Kibbles, (3244) 0 Nets, (653) Total 3897

26th May Ballinwillin House, Mitchelstown
Pauline Cronin

Engaged the owner, Pat Mulcahy, in conversation during the stay at the property; there occur, irregularly, subsidence in his fields, which consists of two hundred acres, made up of four separate farms. Pat took PC's mobile number to inform of the next collapse. Mitchelstown Cave and Desmond Cave are some ten kilometres NNE of Ballinwillin House, Mitchelstown; a significant area of limestone.

27th May Considine's Cave, (South End)
Tony Boycott

60% cloud cover: Cool: Light shower: Small stream: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$ The Plan: Dig: CC absent: TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Popeye continued clearing and preparing the area for the forthcoming installation of the staging; a normal, steady session producing four heavy nets and twenty eight kibbles; six of which were gravels. Generator shows quarter full. Whilst setting up the equipment the arse end of a hairy mammal scampered away from near the water tanks: of black/light brown fur and a big bushy tail; either a Pine marten, or perhaps a short Yeti: to the Roadside for pints.

Hours 5 (2032), Southend (982), 28 Kibbles, (3272) 4 Nets, (657) Total 3929

30th May Considine's Cave, (South End)
Tony Boycott

Heavy showers, easing later: Visibility $\leq 2\text{Nm}$: Small stream: The Plan: dig. CC absent: TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. TB sent up kibbles filled at the last session during which he began to excavate a trench east/west across the shaft, almost in line with the RSJ above. The inward slope of the southern end has crept back out again. The floor area directly beneath the east rift, which faced out some five metres above, appears less compacted; holes between the boulders seem larger. To the sound of Popeye's merry whistling and the crashing echoes of the sledgehammer hauling proceeded uninterrupted. Of the thirty seven lifts, thirty four were kibbles, (four gravels) and three heavy nets. At end of play the generator was $\frac{1}{4}$ full, now $\frac{3}{4}$ with the addition of five litres. To the Roadside for fine music and tasty pints

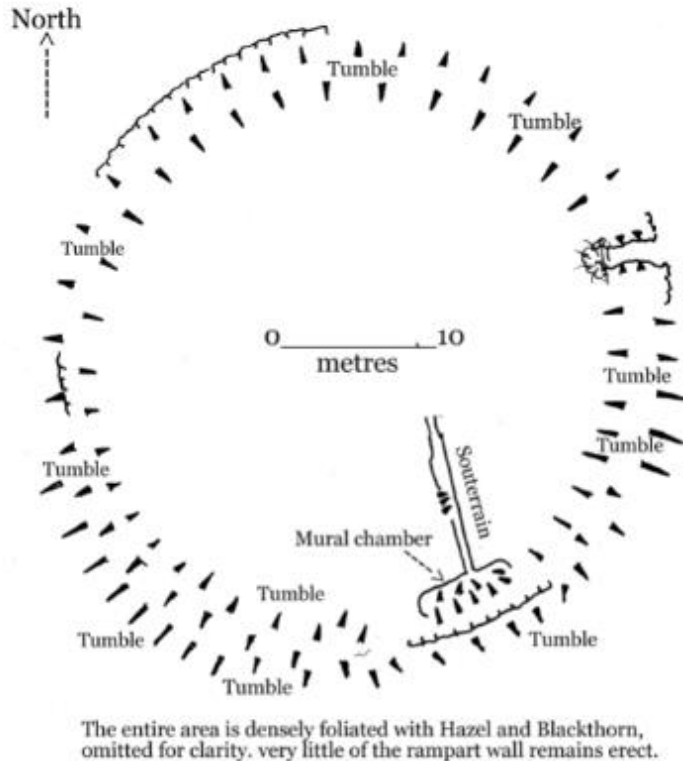
Hours 5 (2037), Southend (987), 34 Kibbles, (3306) 3 Nets, (660) Total 3966

31st May Barry Sudell called, diagnosed with cancer; bugger, bugger, bugger.

1st June Souterrain, CL004-062002 & Ringfort CL004-062000
Tony Boycott

Increasing overcast: Possible rain: Visibility decreasing: Humid: The plan: attempt to record the obscured perimeter of the ringfort/cashel. Previously measurements and bearings were taken around the rampart by forcing a route through the undergrowth. When drawn it made little sense; the data producing an unrealistic image. With no access to commercial GPSR systems, the decision was made to thrash about the undergrowth as close to the centre line of the ruined rampart as could be identified among the extensive tumble using a hand held GPSR to mark off the positions; allowing the GPS to stabilize before recording the reading. As this method was to be conducted in difficult conditions, TB kindly responded to act as recorder for the data related from the thicket. With the plots set out on graph paper to an appropriate scale, (1:200); concentric circles were drawn reconciling as many of the plots as was practicable, which turned out to be quite a high number. As expected a small number of plots from the more awful areas of thicket did not fit with the majority; clearly visible as anomalies. Drawing the survey it appears that the experiment was of reasonably successful; not only does the

diameter average twenty nine metres, (original estimate twenty seven), but what did emerge from the page is the likely location of the original entrance into the Ringfort/Cashel. To the Roadside for a Black and Gold, decided to drink beer rather than dig tonight; gasp.



CL004-062000 Ringfort/Cashel
CL004-062002 Souterrain
Ballynahown
Co. Clare.

The rampart surveyed with the kind assistance of Dr. A Boycott
1st June 2019
Drawn/interpreted Pat Cronin 1st June 2019.

1st June

Lost Harry Hesketh

2nd June Cullaun II
Tony Boycott

Overcast: Wind F6 gusting 8: As one of his many projects TB wanted to locate the stainless steel studs fitted by a UBSS member during the 1950s as an experiment to measure limestone erosion/dissolution in the streamway. The area was recently cleared of coniferous forest; the landscape now appears devastated, until the next planting grows. However, here is a great opportunity to locate unrecorded sites.

In Cullaun II the studs on the run off slope, below the cascades, were quickly relocated however heavy rain last night produced high water conditions obscuring stream channel invert; feeling for the submerged studs was unsuccessful; need look in low water flow. The next part of TB's project was to locate similar studs installed in upper Cullaun I, this area too appears next in line for clearance. As rain arrived, ran to the Roadside for pints.

3rd June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

Midges: Rain showers: Midges: Small stream: Midges: Visibility $\leq 15\text{Nm}$: Midges. The Plan: Dig and avoid midges. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing; and eaten by Midges. CC arrived a little later to conduct Laurence Hurt on an inspection visit. Plenty of evidence of a flood after the night of rain, 1st June, (≈ 2.5 inches), the area very clean, a lot of finer gravels washed down among the boulders. Popeye reduced the floor level from pretty much beneath the R.S.J to the south end leaving the north end elevated off which PC can reach and install the proposed staging. Of the thirty four lifts, nine were very heavy nets and twenty five kibbles, of which six were coarse gravels. The final low section of the northern wall has been filled; the boulder pile ridge line now extends from behind the winch shed into the end of the hedge row. Popeye departs Wednesday. To the Roadside, met Michael Considine his first words, *how deep are you yet?* The bar had Gardai sat there enjoying the music waiting for Trump; 2000 deployed for his visit!

Hours 5 (2042), Southend (992), 25 Kibbles, (3331) o Nets, 9 (669) Total **4000**

4th June John P Holland Centre, Liscannor

Rodger Day

A superb display of JP Holland's innovative developments of today's true submarine; let in free; PC was recognized as involved rescuing a member of the receptionist's family.

5th June CL004-062002 Ringfort, (Cashel), Oughtdarra

Roger Day

Bright spells: Cool NW wind: The plan: to take photographs of the Cashel to illustrate the dense foliage obscuring the site. Began walk at Poulsallagh showing RD a Bronze Age cooking place, (Fulacht Fia), and an adjacent burial cist, also very likely of Bronze Age, (2200-500 BCE). Made a route up on to the next limestone terrace and turned east. Ascended several other minor terraces to where a large ravine slowed progress, turned south to a point of crossing it. Just beyond ascent of a thirty metre cliff required negotiating a narrow track. At the top continued on passing out the promontory fort, possible Iron Age, (500BCE-500CE); stopped and brewed up. Further on encountered the pastoral area where CC and PC previously recorded seven dig sites; from the top of the adjacent terrace a possible eighth may exist. Arrived at the Ringfort, (Cashel), in good sunshine; PC took photos of the entrance and a section of rampart wall while RD took photos of everything, particularly the foliage. Quote from RD, *This is a fantastic area it's full of flowers, plants and all sorts of other shit*. The superb meandering walk was repeated on the return: a cracking day. To the Roadside for serious re-hydration



Photo Roger Day

View south from Oughtdarra; needs prospecting.

6th June Souterrain CL004-016040

Roger Day

70% cloud cover: Wind NW cool: Threat of showers: The plan; to commence surveying the souterrain noted as open on the 18th May 2018. Drove up past Caherbullog farm and parked where the track turns sharp west, (elevation 920ft). Loading the kit and walked northeast about a mile to the Ringfort, (Cashel). This site is situated among an extensive ancient field system covering tens of acres. Located on the eastern, lee, slope of the mountain the valley falls away gently to the south. Found a sheltered spot near the cashel and brewed up, whilst taking in the view. Began survey; of particular significance is the height of the main passage. Set up a base line from the small garth entrance to midway, (5m), at the subtle, (28°), bend to terminate beneath the large open collapse among what appears a house. Max dimensions of the main passage are two metres high by two wide; very large by Burren standards; many are often one metre high by one wide. Some interior features suggest its construction as originally defensive, though the interior dimensions are open to discussion, further work required. Thanks to Roger for the many photographs taken both above and below ground; as a reward went to the Roadside.



CL004-016040/36RD; 6th June 2019: Photo Roger Day

View south into entrance passage from centre of Ringfort.

7th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Roger Day, Cheg Chester

Bright: Light breeze: Mild: Small stream: The plan: begin installation of the staging platform. RD to the bottom of the shaft; PC lowered the tools etc. Using a laser level established precise positioning for the holes. Completed the two east wall holes using the 24v Bosch drill; on using the Hilti the deteriorating health of its 36v battery finally failed; bugger. CC arrived, so decided to have RD clear all the waiting kibbles filled by Popeye. CC winching PC unloading and barrowing, RD digging. Of the ten lifts there was one net and nine kibbles of boulders. The depth from the RSJ to the floor beneath it is just over three metres. The aluminium builder's ladder now barely reaches the bottom of the fixed ladder. The floor areas of the shaft are therefore estimated as approaching seventeen metres at the far south end and sixteen metres in the area below the fixed ladder. Need replace the Hilti battery; RD took lots of photos; these will add to the photo album being prepared for the landowner: to the Roadside for a cracking pint.

Hours 6(2048), Southend (998), Kibbles, 9 (3340) Nets, 1 (670) Total 4010



View of south side shaft

Photo Roger Day



Installing staging stemple anchors at -14.6m:

Photo Roger Day

8th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Solo

Bright: Warm: Light breeze: Visibility $\leq 30\text{Nm}$: Small stream. The Plan: Continue with installing the staging. Used a spare rope to lower the tools, materials and drill; installed another as a static lifeline on the fixed ladder for use with a Petzl A.S.A.P, (self lifeliner for either direction). Finished drilling the 4 x 16mm holes, and temporarily installed both scaffold stemples; each end has a gap of 45mm between it and the wall for the washer, nut and ability to hold the screw thread for tightening the assembly into its final position. With both stemples in position, parallel at 360mm centres, the provision for heavy angle iron of 760mm length was established; this will receive the timber floor. Maximum width to the outside of the angle iron position is 390mm. This width will allow the staging to extend into the area to almost beneath the fixed ladder. The screw ends for securing the stemples need be 150mm in length. When viewed the staging is off centre, closer to the east wall; the precise position is marked with scratches and insulating tape. Generator shows almost $\frac{1}{2}$ full: measured depth at shaft collar, -15.6m, requires double checking.

Hours 2 (2050), Southend (1000), Kibbles, 0 (3340) Nets, 0 (670) Total 4010

13th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Solo

Overcast: Cool NW breeze: Small stream: The Plan; re locate rebar steps from ladder to Plank. Lowered drill and tools using a spare rope; descent swift achieved by using the self lifelining system previously installed. Though awkward drilled 14mm holes directly in line with the fixed ladder to the level of the Plank, which will be the level of the staging between pitches. Utilizing rebar steps between ladder end and staging means their removal provides easy access into the northern half of the rift through the narrow section. Filled the eleven kibbles, stacking them in the hauling way; the area worked being the cleft, now over three metres below the R.S.J. Popeye is accurate describing the infinite gaps among the boulder floor. Moving boulders the next bedding joint was observed, stepping back a brief distance under the west wall. Washing the area uncovered the skull of what may be a dog and several small bones; left in situ as it is in the east rift adjacent the ladder. Generator is $\frac{1}{3}$ rd full. Earlier in the day obtained the names of council engineers who may be able to assist with large diameter plastic pipe. Talking nicely to a council employee was introduced to one of said surveyors; after mixed, confused emotions flitted across the nice mans face he took PC's number intending to speak to another on our behalf, it was a positive encounter. Also obtained a pile of bolts and other ironmongery from Noel the Pole, these bolts are widely used throughout the dig infrastructure; ordered 20 foot of rebar to build the next fixed ladder, delivery due next week.

Hours 2 (2052), Southend (1002), Kibbles, 0 (3340) Nets, 0 (670) Total 4010

17th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Bright: 40% cloud cover: Light breeze: Small stream: The Plan: begin installing the staging framework. From measurements taken by PC CC prefabricated the framework comprizing two scaffold poles and two pieces of angle iron, between which pieces of timber flooring will next be inserted and secured, creating a secure platform at the junction of access to the northern rift and the next pitch of fixed ladder, presently under construction. The scaffold poles are secured to the rift wall using 4 x 150mm x 16mm galvanized steel bolts projecting from the ends of the scaffold poles into 4 x 16mm holes, drilled to a depth of 65mm to compensate for the angle of the rift wall. On completion the inner scaffold pole of the stage platform was found to be precisely beneath the centre

line of a descending individual on the existing fixed ladder. Outstanding are the pieces of flooring timber to be cut and fitted, and installation of the replacement "Plank", to access the northern shaft. PC ascended while CC took photos: the eleven previously filled kibbles were raised. To the Roadside where a female wearing a very low cut red dress clearly reminded rain conscious cavers there are alternative, well developed fronts other than those associated with approaching weather systems.

Hours 4(2056), Southend (1006), Kibbles, 11 (3351) Nets, 0 (670) Total 4021

19th June Pouldubh

Elora Kuhn, Hannah Dunaway, Nikki Wilcox

19:00. Heavy showers: Wind SW F4: Darkening overcast: Following an enquiry about caving, PC obliged and picked up the women from the Hydro Hotel, Lisdoonvarna; parking as heavy showers approached. The normal pleasant walk through the lichen hung forest. In Pouldubh through the middle entrance: stream level low. A delightful trip unfolded with PC at the back encouraging them to take turns leading the way, to offer each the best possible sensation of caving; this being their first ever caving trip.

Observing the many superb cave features the rambling explanations were listened to with polite interest. By 21:00 had descended the climb and gone down the main drain a short distance. Decided to turn the trip here suspecting a similar amount of questions on the way out; during this section of the trip several Bullion Stones were found as was a very nice piece of fossilized tree, (250mm long x 90mm wide x 15mm thick). More questions and explanations were exchanged until emerging from the South entrance into a hail of midges energizing the group to swiftly head for the truck; took the coast road to Lisdoonvarna. Have never experienced such enquiring new cavers: to the Roadside for pints and fun: they want to go again.

20th June Workshop, Doolin

Solo

Completed the next fixed ladder; 2.3m long: 250mm max width: 204mm centres of side bars: 150mm rungs: 250mm rung spacing's.

22nd June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Overcast: Mild: Small stream: Good visibility: The Plan: continue installing the staging. PC descended and set in place the next 2.3 metre long, (10 inch centred rungs), ladder assembled the previous Thursday evening. CC had suggested a safety hand bracket to facilitate mounting and dismounting the ladder from the staging. When the ladder was rested up against the stage the idea occurred that rather than secure a safety hand hold bracket to the wall, actually extend the ladder position vertically above the staging to a height of perhaps three rungs, (0.9m), so both hands could be used; this height would also act as a safety barrier between both fixed ladders yet leaving enough room around each side of the protruding ladder. If this plan is pursued it also means that the lower stemple support can also be installed at this time. As the floor is excavated the three metre builder ladder can be secured to the fixed ladder and lowered as required. From the staging, looking south, it was noticed how much the NW wall section has swept in between the stage and the floor level some 0.150m over a vertical distance of some 1.5m; the southern wall has decided to return to the vertical. The other wall areas each appear to continue on down vertically. The shaft appears to be assuming a "squarer" form; another plan need be drawn of this area, being some two metres below the previous planned level. The narrow cleft between the north and south shafts reduces and continues on down at a width of around five inches, (0.125m); the north face of the fill in

this cleft has been ginged by CC as he dug down past it, this entire fill will be easily removed removing potential missiles falling upon those below. The hauling line centre was noted as being 1.5m, from the front edge of the staging. Generator shows ¼ full. Studying the floor, shape and walls of the shaft they offer the impression of continuing on down for quite some distance. To the Roadside

Hours 2 (2058), Southend (1008), Kibbles, 0(3351) Nets, 0 (670) Total 4021

24th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cloud cover 40%: Bright: Visibility $\geq 35\text{Nm}$: No wind: Midges: Small stream: Fuel CC & PC. The Plan: continue installing the staging. Laden with drills, and other kit both descended and began securing the fixed ladder and fitting timber floor sections of the staging platform. The stemple to secure the lower end of the ladder was positioned and its two 16mm holes drilled. A scaffold pole of 900mm is required to make the stemple. The ladder was finally installed so that it extends above the staging platform some 0.9m (3 feet) creating an excellent safety barrier, this height will also allow a climber to ascend almost level with the staging before stepping on to it. For the moment the aluminium ladder should be used. The replacement "Plank" was fitted onto the support bracket in the northern shaft requiring securing. CC had previously filled most of the kibbles, these were lifted to complete the session among a hail of midges; of the ten six were a mixture of mud and gravel. Future deployment of a digger on a lifeline said line will pass over the top rung of this new ladder, and will rub over the rough rebar rung, so an upper "Rung" with a smooth rotating cover will be set on the topmost part of this ladder, the descending climber will need ensure the line follows this route. The generator is ½ full; to the Roadside for pints.

Hours 4(2062), Southend (1012), Kibbles, 10 (3361) Nets, 0 (670) Total 4031

27th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Hot $\geq 27^{\circ}\text{C}$: 10% cloud cover: Very small stream: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$. The Plan: offer up and mark the stemple for final drilling, and dig. CC below: PC up top. CC marked off the holes to drill the stemple for securing to the fixed ladder. Digging began; of the twenty five lifts five were nets, the twenty kibbles included seven of assorted shite, all removed from the area approaching the fixed ladder position from below the R.S.J. The last hollow among the bushes on the north field wall is almost full. Generator still shows ½ full. Among the last kibbles CC discovered unusual features on three water worn boulders, all brought to surface; curious petrified "worm like" features are exposed, raised above the limestone rock surface; PC believes them Crinoids: where's Nigel or Popeye when you need them? One taken home by CC to photograph, the other two will later be recovered. The staging is all but complete; minor tasks remain. Earlier in the day unexpectedly met the owner's daughter, Niamh, offered her a visit; JN too was offered a look see and is likely to accept: to a busy Roadside.

Hours 5 (2067), Southend (1017), Kibbles, 20 (3381) Nets, 5 (675) Total 4056

29th June Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Midges: 60% cloud cover: Midges: Heavy showers: Midges: Small stream: Midges: Vis $\approx 20\text{Nm}$. Midges: Midges: Midges: The Plan: secure ladder and dig. CC below: PC up top, among Midges. As work commenced a Biblical shower arrived; Noah waved as he drifted past. The lower stemple was installed and the first ladder on the second pitch secured to with 10mm bolts. After which digging began. From the outset the rope increasingly

slipped on the capstan; brief investigation suggested the smooth surface of the drum may be the issue; however the loud, unsettling creaking suggests a damp rope. Either way each haul required three turns on the drum, (not a good idea), the noise lifting the heavy nets demanding a fourth be applied. CC suggests turn the rope around to deploy the as yet unused length in the base of the rope container, prior to its ultimate removal for washing. Of the sixteen lifts, four were very heavy nets; of the twelve kibbles four were of crap, and gravels. Minor issue arose with signal and voice comm.; maintenance was last conducted 5th May, before that 25th March; suggest 1st July, to include rope exchange, tidy place, check generator and complete staging. To the Roadside

Hours 5 (2072), Southend (1022), Kibbles, 12 (3393) Nets, 4 (679) Total 4072

1st July Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Bright: 40% cloud: Small stream: Midges: The Plan: Maintenance. The platform and shaft collar areas were swept clean cleared of accumulating pieces of gravel, mud dust and pebbles. The free hanging underground floodlight was lowered a metre to just below the R.S.J. The minor issue with the signal and phone system was found to be battery contact corrosion; repaired. Generator oil was checked and found very low; previously checked 4th May; suggest every 12th session or thirty run hours; fueled to $\frac{3}{4}$ full. CC descended to complete the staging floor and secure the "Plank" through to the northern shaft; photos taken by CC. Depths measured to Staging from Platform level at -14.25m, and to an almost level shaft floor at -16m. The existing rope exchanged for elimination purposes, and cleaning, its replacement tested lifting a heavy net; result exactly as previously experienced. Conclusion, the drum has become polished since its introduction on 7th October 2017. CC suggests securing low profile "ribs" to the drum circumference replicating raised areas often seen on conventional capstan winches. These "ribs" should allow the return to normal winching using only one or, at most two turns on the capstan without introducing excessive wear to the hauling rope. A number of other tasks remain outstanding, but drink became priority: to a busy Roadside for a very nice pint.

Hours 5 (2077), Southend (1027), Kibbles, 0 (3395) Nets, 3 (682) Total 4075

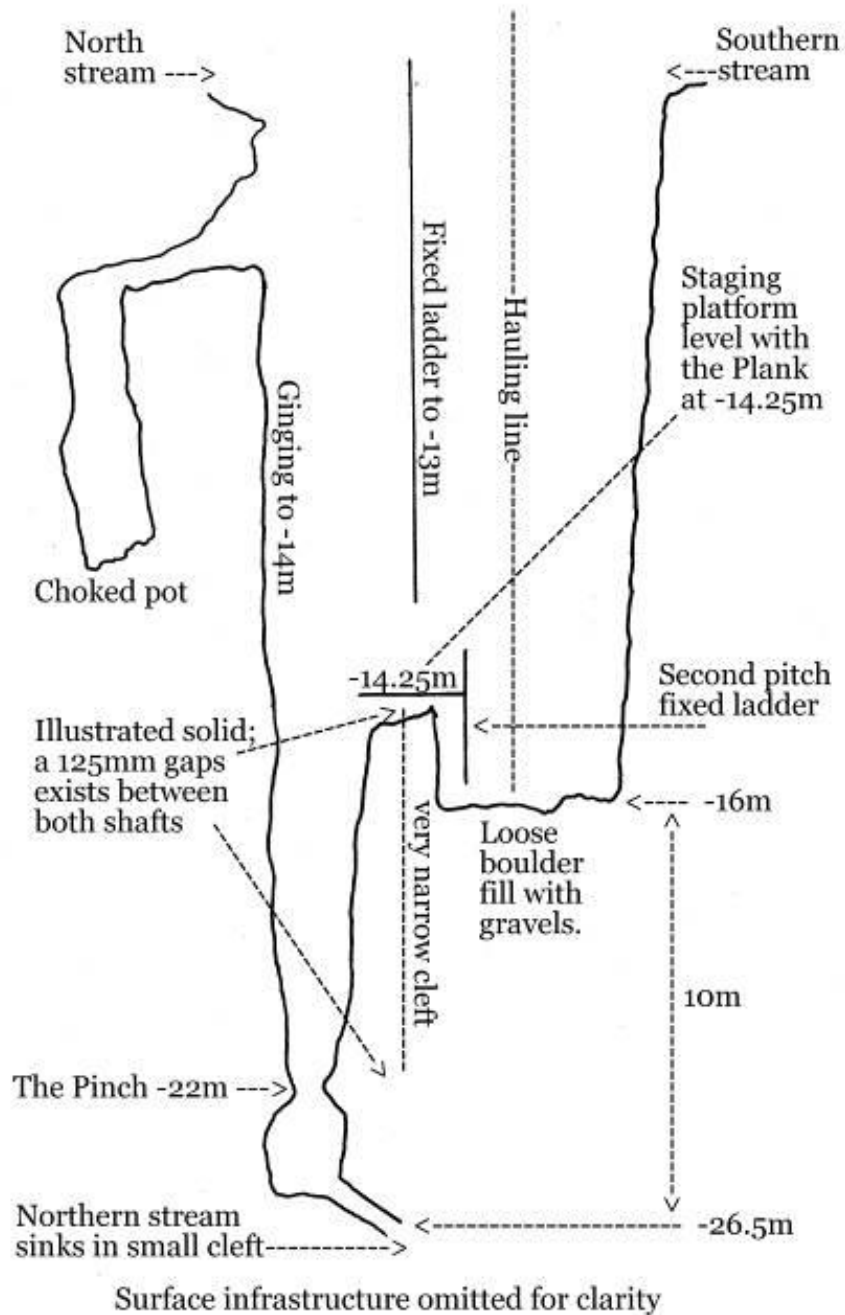
4th July Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

Bright: 60% cloud: small stream: Visibility ≥ 35 Nm: The Plan: investigate rope slippage on the capstan. CC considered several approaches; the highly polished surface indicative of increasing rope slippage. Noted as reduced were the raised areas surrounding the spot welding; further examination suggested reinstating such regular blunted, high points by centre punching the circumference; a process which may perhaps require regular attention? To fill the remaining session PC disappeared up hill into the tall grass to install a small cistern into the field ditch to improve the water supply to the cleaning cistern on the working platform; needs completing. The pair then attended to the boulder pile, CC climbing into the north field to reinstate, and elevate the short section of the low, elderly wall; while the summit of the pile was rearranged, preparing the area to receive even more spoil without looking too untidy: to the Roadside.

Hours 4 (2081), Southend (1031), Kibbles, 0 (3395) Nets, 0 (682) Total 4075

Considine's Cave 1st July 2019



6th July Considine's Cave, (South End)

Cheg Chester

100% cloud: Midge: Barely a breath of air: Very small stream: Visibility $\leq 17\text{Nm}$: The Plan: Dig. Discussions considered available options regarding the extensive rope slippage. One, that CC centre punch the capstan circumference to mimic its original surface condition; such rope slippage means digging stops until the issue is addressed.

CC digging: PC winching; unloading and barrowing. CC began working from the hauling way north toward, and beneath the fixed ladder clearing away accumulated, compacted gravels. Deep joy experienced as hauling commenced the rope slippage absent; quite the relief: plans afoot to redesign the capstan surface. Of the twenty one loads raised two were heavy nets. Of the nineteen kibbles, nine were clay and gravels; said clays and gravels were laid between the dry stone bulwark and the winch shed preparing a barrow way accessing the next spoil area northeast of the winch shed. Generator registers 1/2 full. To the Roadside for celebratory pints: Happy Birthday Cheg.

Hours 4(2085), Southend (1035), Kibbles, 19 (3412) Nets, 2 (684) Total 4096

8th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

15% cloud cover: Warm: Very small stream: Visibility $\geq 35\text{Nm}$: The Plan: Dig. A weary team arrived having earlier worked the day heaving rocks about at separate events. CC digging: PC winching; unloading and barrowing. Initial euphoria evaporated as hauling experienced issues regarding the amount of pressure required to tension the rope; whilst no slip occurred this was due to applying a lot of pull on the hauling line; resumed using a third turn on the capstan, (never a good idea), to maintain production for the session. Far below CC worked away extracting large boulders and removing compacted gravel deposits; hence the reduced number of loads lifted. Of the twenty two lifts seven were huge nets, of the fifteen kibbles six were gravels. Knackered headed for the comfort of the Roadside and pints: Bliss.

Hours 4(2089), Southend (1039), Kibbles, 15 (3427) Nets, 7 (691) Total 4118

11th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cloud base 450 feet: Visibility only 100 metres, and that down slope: Very small stream: The Plan: address rope slippage on the capstan and maybe dig. Since the 8th July session CC had considered the options, deciding upon drilling the capstan circumference to insert eight low profile cross head bolts, (gutter bolts), as raised friction surfaces. Meanwhile PC continued work on the water supply from the new supply tank location to the existing water pipework; requires a fitting. CC digging, PC up top; the south end was lowered with the aim of working north and clearing out the western rift. The following hauling trials proved more than satisfactory; the effort of drawing the rope from the capstan much reduced, actually approaching the original hauling conditions. Depths of up to half a metre are present among the gaps in the boulder floor. In what remained of the session eleven loads were raised; three very large, heavy nets and eight kibbles, of which two were gravels: to the Roadside. The infrastructure complete, the site is ready for the return of Popeye; The Lung arrives soon after.

Hours 5 (2094), Southend (1044), Kibbles 8 (3435), Nets 3 (694), Total 4129.

12th July Clooncoose Cave

Mason, Angie, Josephine, Garrett

The above students, attending the Galway University archaeological summer school wanted to visit a souterrain, as time was pressing PC took them to see Clooncoose, an example of a cave altered to an early medieval refuge; the party delighted.

13th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Stunning evening: Cloudless: Warm: Trickle: Visibility $\geq 35\text{Nm}$. The Plan: Dig. CC digging: PC winching, loading and barrowing. Deep joy, the first decent digging session

in almost a month; of the twenty eight loads six were large nets containing big boulders, of the twenty two kibbles four were gravels and one of shite. Hauling was delightful; almost all twists out of rope and very little pressure required to secure the rope around the capstan; superb. All spoil removed progressing north from the south end to almost level with the large western rift. Generator $\leq \frac{1}{4}$ full; outstanding preparations are extend the tripod weather covering and lower roof of the winch shed. To the Roadside for pints; thoughts concerning the apparent reduced effects of the draught in the northern rift were discussed. Hours 5 (2099), Southend (1049), Kibbles 22 (3457), Nets 6 (700), Total 4157.

15th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Midges: Visibility ≥ 35 Nm. Midges: 80% cloud cover: Midges: Trickle: Fuel PC: The Plan: maintenance. Various tasks were undertaken; improved weather sheet to roof of winch shed, extended weather canopy to protect the shaft top timber work from rainfall. Generator now half full. Oiled wheels of the Receiver, (rolling shaft cover), managed a little dry stone walling before being chewed to pieces; ran off swiftly to the Roadside. Popeye returns this Wednesday; James Cobbett arrives Friday night. JW kindly delivered the refurbished Hilti battery.

Hours 3 (2102), Southend (1052), Kibbles 0 (3457), Nets 0 (700), Total 4157.

16th July Clooncoose Cave

Katie, Lydia, Róisín, Josephine

Another request, from other students at Caherconnell to visit this interesting cave adapted to include souterrain features.

18th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester Tony Boycott

Midges: Visibility ≥ 35 Nm. Midges: Small trickle: 60% cloud cover: Light breeze: The Plan: Dig. Popeye digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The session started with securing the weather canopy extensions. Popeye continued CC's progress, working northward. Of the twenty two kibbles raised two were gravels. The final lift was a huge boulder estimated ≥ 150 kgs; a 2:1 mechanical advantage was successfully applied. At surface the monster was manhandled into the barrow and wheeled away with effort. One of the drive belts on the winch requires adjustment, it appears to be the source of the occasional "growling": to the Roadside for pints.

Hours 7 (2109), Southend (1059), Kibbles 22 (3477), Nets 1 (701), Total 4178.

19th July Doolin

James Cobbett arrives via pick up from Shannon.

20th July Moon: 50th anniversary of the first lunar landing

20th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, James Cobbett

Overcast: Small trickle: Visibility ≥ 35 Nm. Mild: The Plan: adjust drive belt/s on winch and Dig. Whilst TB and JC trimmed the pathway of encroaching foliage, CC and PC stripped the winch and adjusted 1 x belt tension, in doing so noticed a pulley had a minor scuff mark; likely the source of the curious, occasional growling, after minor adjustment all well; unit reassembled, digging began. TB and JC digging CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Of the twenty eight lifts four were seriously heavy nets; of the twenty four kibbles two were gravels. JN presented the team with timber and heavy duty scaffold

planks. JC impressed with the Considine Cave project: to the Roadside for pints: Happy Birthday Barry Sudell.

Hours 10 (2119), Southend (1069), Kibbles 24 (3501), Nets 4 (705), Total 4206.



Photo Ciaran O'Halloran

Cronin, Chester, Boycott and Cobbett; taking drink, Roadside Bar: 20th July 2019;

22nd July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Overcast: Mild: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$: Small stream: Fuel TB: The Plan: Dig. CC winching:

TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. Set up was swift, with digging by 18:20.

Yesterdays two inches of rain was evident; the new water line working well producing a good flow to each cistern. Popeye and JC had left several kibbles filled and ready to lift, such a head start proves useful. "Growling" emanated from the winch once more but disappeared; further work required to maintain the pulley 2mm distant from the chassis. CC brought along some scales to confirm the long estimated, average weight of each form of lift: A net = 68kgs, a kibble of stone = 30kgs a kibble of gravels, (Chatter) = 38 kgs. Of the forty three lifts three were nets, of the forty kibbles five were gravels. A lot of large boulders are dumped in the southern spoil area and require turning into a wall as soon as possible to clear the route. Using the assessed weights of each form of lift this session produced 1.5 tonnes; a superb session; a weary Team headed for a busy Roadside.

Hours 8 (2127), Southend (1077), Kibbles 40 (3541), Nets 3 (708), Total 4249.

25th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

60% cloud cover: Bright spells: Visibility \approx 25Nm: Wind Southeasterly, F3 gusting 5: Showers: Small stream: The Plan; Dig. PC arrived early to exchange the hauling rope with the previous one taken for washing. Meanwhile CC filled the gear box on the winch with grease as Popeye descended to fill kibbles dug directly beneath the hauling way. Amongst this the large boulders left in the west spoil area were used to extend the retaining wall for future spoil. Hauling commenced 19:00; a steady pace produce thirty kibbles of which nine were gravels; almost a tonne. There is now a gap of some three feet between the bottom of the fixed ladder and the floor. Another 0.6m of depth and the signal box will require lowering; the hose pipe too will need lengthening: to the Roadside for pints. Hours 7 (2134), Southend (1084), Kibbles 30 (3571), Nets 0 (708), Total 4279.

27th July Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

80% cloud cover: Light breeze: Visibility \geq 35Nm. Small stream: Fuel CC: The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. Digging took place from the hauling way through the narrow cleft into the northern shaft; within this confined area a small eastern crevice was cleared out of debris to avoid leaving possible future missiles which might harm diggers working below. Excavation, though awkward produced one net and thirty six kibbles, of which eight were gravels, (\approx 1.1 tonnes); the various piles of spoil increase. The signal box will soon require lowering. The ladder is now a metre off the floor, the aluminium ladder need be secured to it so Popeye can climb out. As a very large boulder was wheeled away in the barrow, significant sagging was noted of the pallet surface timbers; a length of timber has been placed to add support: to a busy Roadside.

Hours 7 (2141), Southend (1091), Kibbles 36 (3607), Nets 1 (709), Total 4316.

1st August Considine's Cave (South End)

Tony Boycott

20% cloud cover Visibility excellent \geq 40Nm: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. The previous hauling rope, now cleaned, coils, and handles very well. TB worked around the Southern End toward the western rift. Depth measurements were taken; the hollow created in the floor directly beneath the RSJ is -17m, directly below the hauling way it is -16.5m; from this depth it takes 100 seconds to bring a load to surface. Of the thirty two lifts three were nets, of the twenty nine kibbles four were gravels. Generator registers $\frac{1}{4}$ full. To the Roadside for the unexpected return of a tasty Black, and a very nice Gold.

Hours 5 (2146), Southend (1096), Kibbles 29 (3636), Nets 3 (712), Total 4348.

3rd August Considine's Cave (South End)

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

Overcast: Showers: Midges: Small stream: Visibility \leq 20Nm. The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. Popeye continued to work at the southern end lowering it to some 0.75m below the floor below the fixed ladder; this approaches -18m. A large flagstone, 0.9m x 0.7m x 0.1m, was pulled out the west rift causing the winch assembly to move; fortunately it emerged before the effort was considered too much for the machinery to safely handle; it requires breaking up prior to lifting. The occurrence of small water worn, fluted pieces of limestone have lessened of late, whilst stream rounded cobbles have increased; or rather become more evident, their ratio being about one fist sized cobble every two kibbles of spoil. The western end of the main boulder pile has reached a height of seven feet-ish above the path this pile needs

facing/securing with walling; the hollow area between this peak and the eastern end can now be filled; the overall height of the ridge between will be slightly increased above the present, this will consume another, estimated, twenty odd sessions of spoil. Following the rain midges emerged to make life truly grim. The three metre aluminium ladder was secured to the fixed ladder so Popeye can climb back to the surface. Of the forty three lifts three were nets, of the forty kibbles four were gravels; making a conservative weight raised this session of 1.4 tonnes; nice one Popeye. To a packed Roadside: strong drink, & midges. Hours 5 (2154), Southend (1104), Kibbles 40 (3676), Nets 3 (715), Total 4391.

5th August Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Torrential rain: Cloud base 900ft: Wind SW, F4 gusting 6: Large streams entering from north and south ends: Fuel PC. The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading - barrowing. Within seconds of arriving at the bottom Popeye was drenched; overflow from the piped southern stream covered the entire rift end with a thin layer of water, much falling from the top of the rift onto the poor sod below. Noise of the rainfall on the canopy, the water running in the pipework and that cascading down the shaft made communications problematic. During operations CC and PC would often gaze down the shaft admiring Popeye's ability to breathe in such conditions; from a safe stance, some fifty foot above him. Rain continued without interruption, so barrowing was also a wet task, as muddy spoil was deposited it was washing clean within minutes, such was the deluge. Of the thirty two lifts, two were nets; of the thirty kibbles six were gravels, (about a tonne raised): generator shows around 1/2 full; to the Roadside for a really excellent pint. PC received a reply from the landowner cheerfully inviting him to visit this week to discuss the reopening of Pollclabber; closed some fifty odd years ago. This choked entrance would be a useful exit from Coolagh River Cave when all others are inundated.

Hours 5 (2159), Southend (1109), Kibbles 30 (3706), Nets 2 (717), Total 4423.

7th August Pollclabber

Solo

This site has been closed by the owner some forty odd years ago following his belief that cavers responsible for the collapse of the retaining wall which supports the western end of the depression from erosion. July 1978 Charlie Self, (UBSS), asked the owner of the possibility of reopening; the answer was the same as stated eighteen months previous, no. Following a chance meeting the current owner responded positively to PC enquiring of the possibility of re opening the cave. An appointment is arranged to visit his place tomorrow; 17:00.

8th August Pollclabber - Considine's Cave

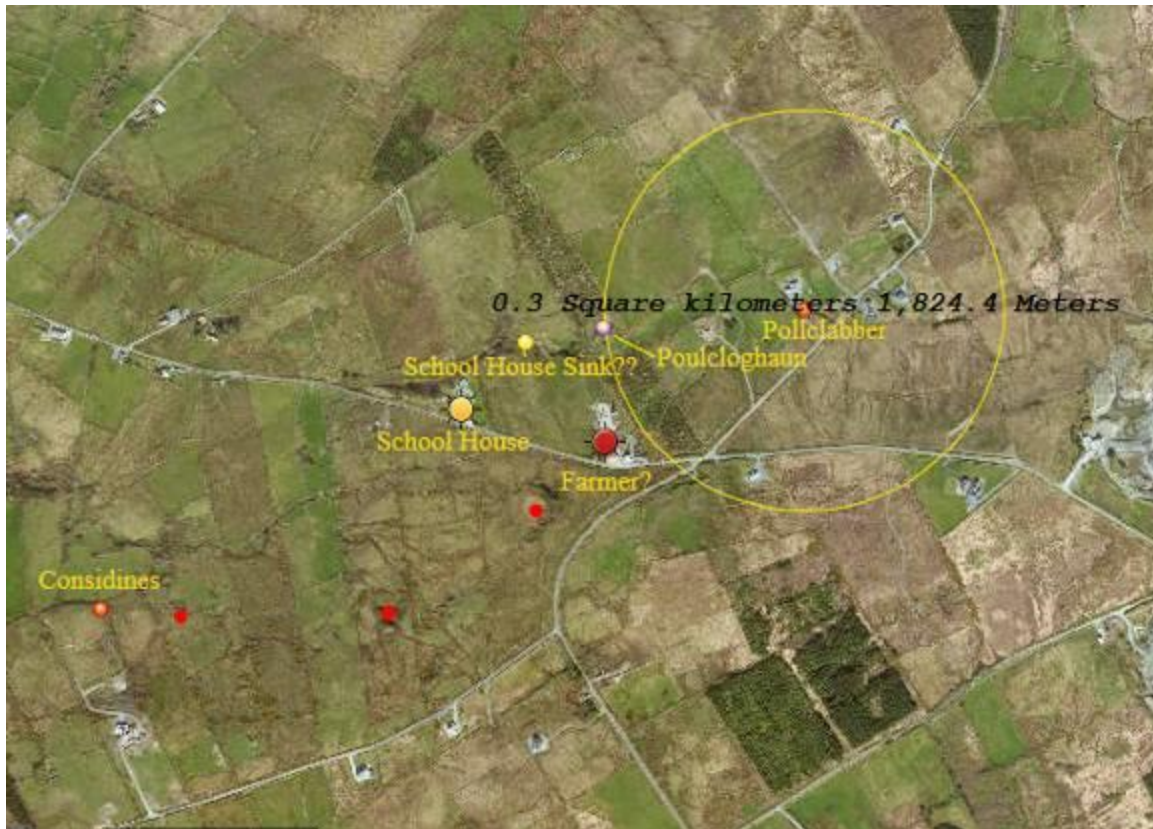
Solo

Pollclabber: 17:00. Met with current owners; explained all the implications of reopening the site; it is in their front garden, metres from their house. They raised one important issue, and will need careful consideration on their part; the place is also used by their family, with very young children. However, if this entrance isn't permitted there is an adjacent depression which may access the stream sink into the downstream; they also own this field, though a farmer grazes it. Cavers and cavers alone will benefit from the reopening of this site.

Considine's Cave: 18:07. 100% cloud cover: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$: Small stream. Wind SW F4, increasing: The Plan: Maintenance. Checked oil in generator; ok. Cut the 4x2 timber in half to carry it back to the workshop to construct the next 90 inch fixed ladder.

Descended to relocate signal box, released unit and cables; found drill battery flat; (who

didn't check it; twat!). Washed out potential missiles from the minor west cleft using; water pressure around 1.7bar. Depth of the South End is now about 1.5 metres below the bottom of the second fixed ladder, so around -17.5m; so about 8 metres above where the north stream turns south down the joint, in the north shaft. Drove back in deteriorating weather conditions to charge battery and prepare timber; no Roadside, gasp. Hours 2 (2161), Southend (1111), Kibbles 0 (3706), Nets 0 (717), Total 4423.



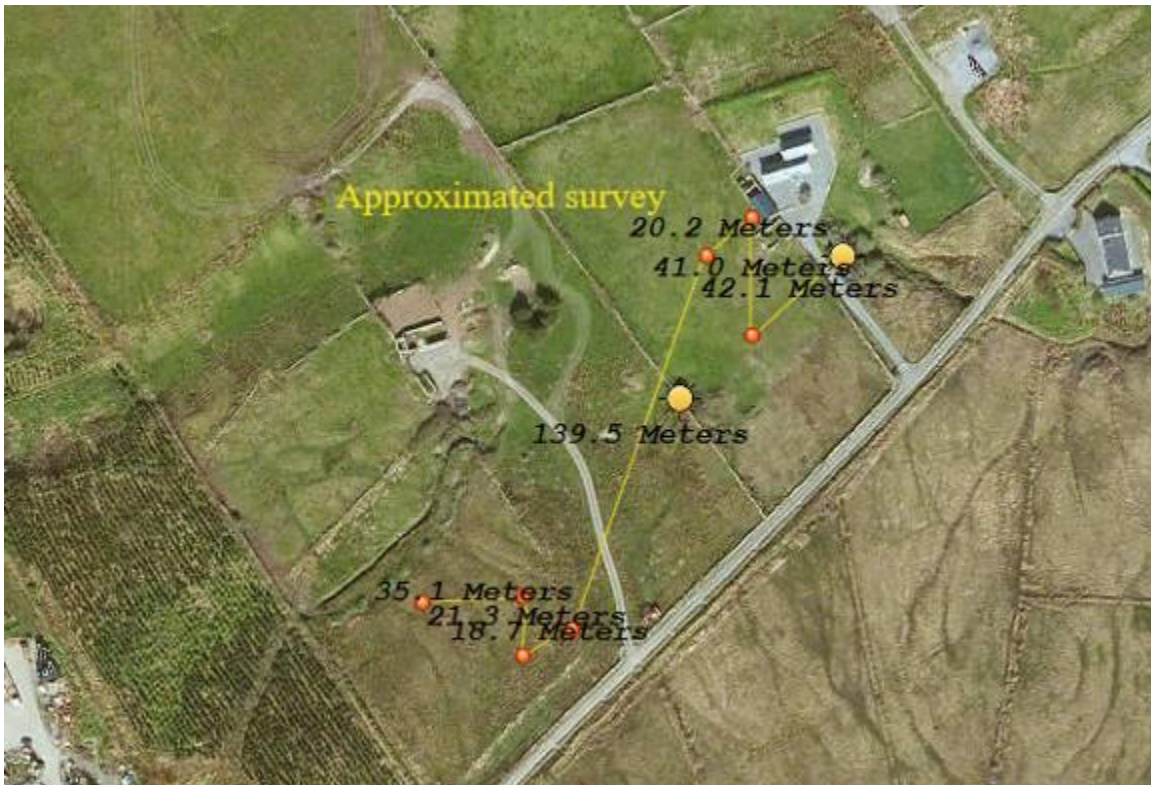
Measurements, taken from the survey in Caves of Clare, show School house sink and Pollcloghaun outside the area of PC's Coast Guard colleague; however Pollclabber is not, it is in the garden of a renovated cottage owned by Seamus Walsh, also a pal of PC. The original owners who closed the site were Cullinan; pronounced Quinlann.

10th August Considines Cave, (South End)

Tony Boycott

100% cloud cover: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$: Large stream: Heavy showers: Field waterlogged: Fuel TB. The far wall of the southern rift was drenched with the overflow from its point of capture above. The Plan: Dig. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. The battery drill, now charged, was lowered to TB who secured the signal box in its new, deeper, reachable location. Digging began. The depth of -17.5m, in the far south end, was continued toward the north; once levelled another survey plan of the shaft will be recorded as its shape has subtly changed; the protruding shape of the "Guillotine" has gradually disappeared into the rift walls. The huge sandstone flagstone broken up by Popeye was swiftly cleared beneath which was a very nice, elongated piece of sculpted limestone; which he covets. Throughout the cycle of showers, midges visited; repellant applied migrated from hand to rope creating an awful creak of the rope during hauling; it

is fortunately fading. Of the twenty eight lifts, three were nets, of the twenty five kibbles six were gravels; around 900kgs: to the Roadside for a very nice pint and cracking music.
Hours 5 (2166), Southend (1116), Kibbles 25 (3731), Nets 3 (720), Total 4451.



The image replicates, approximately, the U.B.S.S. survey to assess the practicalities of excavating another entrance. The yellow dots show both Pollclabber entrance, by the cottage, and the depression noted in the adjacent field; the possible alternate site. The line of the canyon passage described is some ten metres from the field depression.

12th August Considine's Cave (South End)

Tony Boycott

80% cloud: Visibility $\geq 35\text{Nm}$: Light showers: Good sized stream: Field waterlogged. The Plan: Dig. TB digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Popeye continued to level the floor northward at -17.5m, up to the second fixed ladder. In this area, between both shafts the deposit is an amalgam of different clays. Directly within the kill zone of the hauling way progress was cautious and meticulous. Among the thirty one lifts was one net; unsurprising, twelve of the thirty kibbles were assorted clays and gravels. Generator just over 1/2 full: 1 x can of fuel present. Hose needs lowering, the wall line finishing. The ridgeline between the two spoil piles is almost completed: to the Roadside for pints.

Hours 5 (2171), Southend (1121), Kibbles 30 (3761), Nets 1 (721), Total 4482.

15th August Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

100% cloud: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$: Ground wet: Small stream: The Plan: Dig/Maintenance. PC arrived early to set up. Whilst CC worked on the retaining walls of the boulder pile; the others took up positions. Popeye estimates three more sessions will level the floor to beneath the fixed ladder; this depth was confirmed as -17.5m. Work continued within the

Kill Zone, the base of hauling way has become more clay than boulder; depth unknown. Part of this clay area was beneath the large flagstone recently removed; did this covering offer protection from the wash effect of the southern stream? Of the twenty four kibbles, sixteen were clays; the green - grey muck making its dread reappearance. CC raised part of the northern field wall to a respectable, vertical height which cattle shouldn't be able to vault; doing so many boulders were repositioned, sorted and the area then levelled allowing a significant increase in previous spoil deposition estimates. Generator 1/2 full: 1 x fuel present. Thought need be directed to covering the northern shaft. To the Roadside to enjoy pints, fine singing and some cracking concertina.

Hours 7 (2178), Southend (1128), Kibbles 24 (3785), Nets 0 (721), Total 4506.



Souterrains and other features in the unrecorded enclosure

17th August Enclosure Lisnanroum, Townland
Solo

80% cloud: Sunny spells: Wind, W F4 gusting F6. The plan: continue survey of the site visited 31st August 2018, with Pete Eckford and Ken James. The large enclosure appears in fact two; separated by a party wall, curiously, the 25 inch map shows the walls as field boundaries. Neither enclosure is listed as archaeological. The smaller northern enclosure contains one souterrain in a state of collapse; the other souterrain is situated within the north/south party wall, its passage heading southward. The eventual unavailability of a promised total station meant other means sought to press on with the survey already a year behind. Recently a Garmin Gpsmap 64s was used to record the obscured perimeter of the Ballynahown ringfort, CL004- 062000; the result encouraging, the same device was used today in concert with a Garmin Oregon 300. As readings were observed the gpsmap 64s regularly showed a further north location between 2 to 3 metres; as it has an aerial this was thought the more accurate reading and therefore that recorded. The shape of the enclosures on the 25 inch map shows two enclosed areas, the northern one that of a conventional square ringfort, contemporary with its circular contemporaries; the south enclosure is the anomaly. It is the southern enclosure however where short sections of the original walls are present; hidden among dense Hazel and Briar, averaging some 1.2 metres in width. When plotted on the archaeological site software the Oregon 300 appears the more accurate, as on both GPRS models easting readings were exactly on the mark of the original map. The majority of the recordings coincide with the original drawn walls; there is however a subtle differences of the walls between the 25 inch map image and the digital imagery, which possibly increases the errors. Several features were noted, and recorded; a possible form of animal pen located in the far four corners, and at least one small hut circle. Other remains suggest another small hut, but are unconfirmed. Both souterrains were traced along the surface; the underground survey is next. Survey data emailed to the landowner.

17th August Considine's Cave (South End)
Tony Boycott

70% cloud: Humid: Wind SW F6 gusting 8: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. Popeye below: PC above. Hauling started 18:04, the digging still progressing across the base of the hauling way toward the cleft between north and south ends. With two present, from start of a lift to its return to the base of shaft takes an average of four minutes. This session demanded extra effort emptying the compacted mixture of clays and gravels from the kibbles. The floor is now level from the South End to beneath the fixed ladder, the bottom of which is some 1.4 metres above the floor. Of the thirty four kibbles raised, eighteen were full of the dreaded clays. Popeye cautiously observes the clay deposit may possibly be finished. Generator $\frac{3}{4}$ full: no spare fuel present. Hose pipe needs lowering. Error in typed total lifts on 15th Aug, 4508 should be 4506. To the Roadside for a much needed pint: two weeks to the six weeks of Matchmaking Festival.

Hours 5 (2183), Southend (1133), Kibbles 34 (3819), Nets 0 (721), Total 4540.

19th August *Considines Cave South End From PCN Log.*
TB & CC

Slow working as digging in the danger zone, TB lowered the floor in the Narrows towards the north, until the floor collapsed by a foot just before the narrowing; now so narrow it is making life difficult to clear to the northern shaft as only one hand can be used at a time. Will need Cheg's Cheating sticks to fully clear the narrowing rift under the old Plank stacking area. Mud persists between E & W walls north of the comms box, but appears to be coming to an end! Of the 23 lifts, 12 were assorted shite. Petrol needed. Sharp showers, autumn has come. TB (Verbal totals from TB 4hours 23 kibbles) Kibbles 3842

22nd August Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Cloud base 500ft: Mild: Visibility $\geq 7\text{Nm}$: Ground waterlogged: Large stream: The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing; no midges, delighted.

Popeye has all but levelled the bottom, at -17.5m, from the south end into the 125mm cleft into the northern shaft. The dig floor has some clay remaining; optimistically this should end soon as it has within the cleft. Forty lifts were raised of which four were heavy nets, (max 95kgs); of the thirty six kibbles, ten were gravels and clays, (total 1.5 tonnes). Yesterday, 2 inches of rain was recorded by CC as heavy rain swept from the SW across much of the western coastline; explaining the well washed base of the dig floor and waiting kibbles. The end of the ladder, (second pitch), is now some 1.7m above the floor; the next is under construction. Lowered hose to its full length, (20m). Generator a little below $\frac{1}{2}$: Dark at 21:30. Intend to produce another survey plan of the shaft to record its subtle changing shape. Popeye departs next week: to the Roadside for a refreshing pint.

Hours 7 (2194), Southend (1144), Kibbles 36 (3878), Nets 4 (725), Total 4603.

24th August Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

100% cloud cover: Cloud base 1000ft: Mild: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$: Large stream: Ground less waterlogged. Medium stream: Fuel CC: The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. Popeye began a trench across the narrows adjacent the signal box, below the RSJ, which is now some five metres above the floor. Of the forty lifts eight were nets and another eight were gravels and clays. Generator at $\frac{1}{4}$ full: To the Roadside, where the Doolin Harley Fest was repeating its successful annual fund raising extravaganza for the local Cancer Charity; 1st prize 1 x Harley Davidson Motorbike.

Hours 7 (2201), Southend (1151), Kibbles 32 (3910), Nets 8 (733), Total 4643.

25th August Souterrain CL009-022007

Solo

40% cloud: Sunny afternoon: Light SW breeze: Began the underground part of the survey, the present entrance is located within the party wall of the two enclosures: neither enclosure is recorded in the national archaeological database. Carefully trimmed a gap between the briar growth in the eastern opening, also westward, within the line of the party wall, is another opening, its exposed, level dry stone walling would have supported roof flagstone lintels; a continuation of those remaining. Absence of lintels suggests their removal for building material. Little disturbance of this area of dry stone wall edging has taken place, suggesting this was a branch passage, or small chamber, not an entry from the surface, the eastern opening is therefore the most likely, original, point of entry. Among adjacent bushes in the eastern opening a linear hollow channel continues eastward, still in the line of the party wall, this suggests the passage continued for at least a further two metres; here may have been its original entrance. At the base of the present entrance slope, (east-west), is a large fallen lintel, (400kg) supporting the short tumble slope. On the left, (south), a low opening enters a chamber; this doorway is partly walled with dry stonework reducing it to some $\frac{2}{3}$ rds its original size. The souterrain is constructed in the form of a letter "T", the vertical axis being the chamber, some 7m long x 1.5m wide x 1.5m high. This chamber is in very good condition; nine flagstone lintels of widths between 0.28m and 1.06m, comprise the roof. At the southern end of this chamber is another small opening, from which a passage led southward; collapsed, the hollow created since backfilled; indicated by the haphazard deposition of its present stone content. The original passage route beyond this collapse may be traced on the surface via several breaches of its roof noted curving gently to the

east. The ground level of both enclosures has weathered significantly, the roof covering of the souterrain now clearly visible, prominent above present soil surface.

26th August Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

100% cloud: Mild: Light shower: Visibility <7Nm: Medium stream: Ground drying: The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. The trench was deepened around 0.3m and widened toward the north end. Of the thirty kibbles fourteen were gravels, which included a couple of clay. The southern section of the retaining wall is presently around 1.25m high, this will increase; throwing boulders over to the present ridgeline is awkward, so intend creating a broader summit area onto which debris can be thrown to ultimately become a neat field boundary wall, which when viewed from the northern field side will be around five feet high. The gap below the second ladder and the floor is around 2m. Generator is $\frac{3}{4}$ full: Popeye departs for five weeks: To the Roadside.

Hours 7 (2208), Southend (1150), Kibbles 30 (3940), Nets 0 (733), Total 4673.

29th August Considine's Cave (South End)

Pegasus Productions Present

A Night of Shite

Cast: Cheg Chester and Pat Cronin

Prologue Two adventurers search for a route into the underworld to look upon the magnificent treasures held therein; to gaze in wonder across the broad subterranean Coolagh River.

Unknown to them the Gods are angered at this invasion of their domain; in effort to dissuade interlopers trials are presented each demanding patience and effort. Tonight a Ball was arranged for their delight; an enormous Ball of Shite...

Of the twenty four kibbles raised twenty were an amalgam of clays and gravels, shite, a sticky amalgam which reluctantly left the kibble for the barrow.

Act Two.

The Roadside: the shagged out adventurers discuss their options; more drink??

Hours 5 (2213), Southend (1163), Kibbles 24 (3964), Nets 0 (733), Total 4697.

31st August

Jarratt's 11th anniversary

31st August Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Towering unstable air masses: Showers: Cloud 60%: Wind F4: Ground awash: Large stream: Four inches of rain recorded yesterday. The Plan: Dig. CC digging PC winching, unloading and barrowing. The floor is pretty much level at around -17.7m, which extends through the narrow "Cleft" into the northern shaft. When secured the next fixed ladder is likely to become an obstacle when excavating this area. Prior to securing this ladder the plan is to deepen the floor a further metre in the "Cleft" area to reduce the effort working around said ladder. This will create a north facing step which can then be dug southward this also means the bottom of the ladder will be a metre or so above that floor level.

Digging in the "Cleft" meant a slow but steady pace; among twenty two lifts were one large net and twenty one kibbles, of which sixteen were clays and gravels. Yesterday CC

visited the dig following the protracted rain event; video recorded. The signal box was removed for maintenance as it appears affected by moisture: second fixed ladder almost completed: generator around 1/2 full. Tonight is the first Saturday of the Matchmaking; search lights raking the sky announcing the annual frenzy; so, to the Kilshanny House.

Hours 5 (2218), Southend (1168), Kibbles 21 (3985), Nets 1 (734), Total 4719.

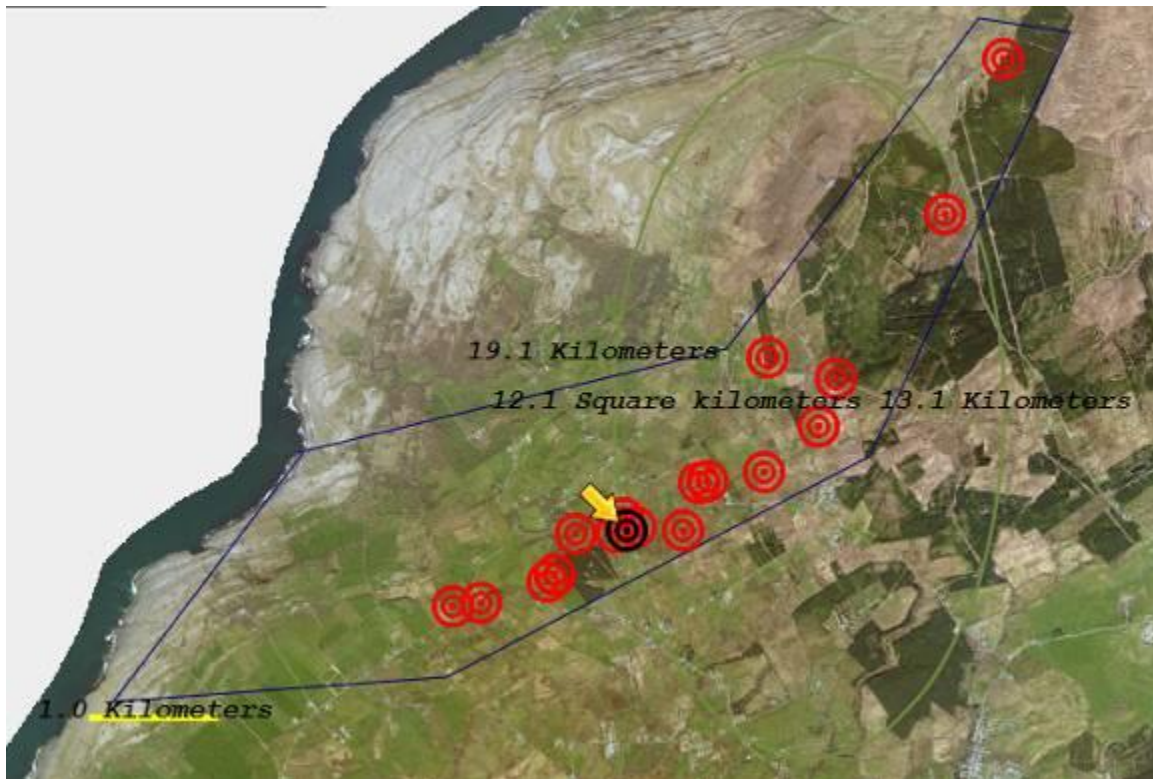
2nd September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

90% cloud: Large stream: Visibility <20Nm: Heavy showers: Ground remains awash.

The Plan: Dig. CC digging PC winching, unloading and barrowing. While CC reconnected the serviced signal box to the shaft wiring, PC rotated the lifeline making use of the other end, prior to its washing. Once the signal box was secured below digging began. CC continued to work the face created below the fixed ladder heading south. Excavating the clay based deposit ensured a slow but steady pace. Among the eighteen lifts were seventeen kibbles of clays and gravels, the remainder were boulders, and one heavy net. Generator 1/8th full: Lifeline which passes through the platform floor needs re-routing to reduce friction: Next fixed ladder delivered to site: Dusk began to settle around 20:45: into a much quieter Roadside with very nice music.

NB. When CC opened the plastic box, which contains the signal loud speaker, a lot of water poured out. In the Bar discussion explored the source of this inundation; the equipment is mounted within a cut away 25 litre plastic container; similar in shape to the weather canopy of public telephones, and is presently nine metres above the very bottom of the dig where the stream sinks; (northern shaft limit -26.5m).



Historical; the flood of August 1950, (*Caves of County Clare*, 1981, p28)), saw much of Coolagh River Cave awash, trapped members of the U,B,S,S downstream of the tight, low bedding that was then the Polldonough South entrance.

During the flood of August 1967 water was observed to “fountain” from depressions along the normal dry river valley flooding the area adjacent to Ballynalacken Castle. August 2013, Fraggie Rock experienced flooding between 30th July and the 1st, (photos). The above examples suggest it is quite possible that Considines flooded from below as the farther sections of the Coolagh River could not pass the volume; *(roughly calculated, could possibly be around 12sq kilometres; this is worth measuring precisely)*. By the 29th August some fourteen inches of rain had been recorded by CC. The rainfall over the 30th August recorded 4 inches, (100mm), which fell onto an already waterlogged landscape; so it simply, and very swiftly ran off: August could easily appear flood prone. Hours 5 (2223), Southend (1173), Kibbles 17 (4002), Nets 1 (735), Total 4737.

5th September Considine’s Cave (South End)
Cheg Chester

90% cloud: Visibility <20Nm: Ground still very wet: Big stream: Fuel PC: The Plan: Dig. CC digging PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Minor adjustment to rope that closes off the lower shaft collar. This session would be a slow affair as CC would be digging across the base of the shaft; “Kill Zone”. As the third kibble was being winched up PC lost focus, the result was the laden kibble was pulled into the pulley mechanism in the very top of the Tripod, fearing the kibble could part with the rope he immediately opened the safety lock and backed off the tensioned rope still wrapped around the capstan. At this moment the forty kilogram kibble plummeted through the open shaft collar heading for Australia, stopping off briefly at Cheg. Realizing this unforgivable mistake the passing rope was successfully grabbed with the left hand whilst the right dropped the other end of the rope to activate the safety lock, (no-go-backo-scope); the kibble stopped abruptly at around -4m, having fallen six metres; CC was unaware of events above. The resultant rope burn appeared fortunately minor; the pain kept at bay by regular immersion in the washing barrel; normal surface activities became untenable by 20:00 so closed down the session. Of the eleven lifts was one very heavy net and ten kibbles among which were three of rock: weight around 400Kgs. Generator at ½ full: no spare fuel. Depth recorded at -18.7m. This level is about three metres above that of the “Pinch” in the northern shaft, immediately below this is a choked rift, not too wide but might be excavated to connect with the south end. To the Roadside for pints good music and caress a half pint of ice
Hours 4 (2227), Southend (1177), Kibbles 10 (4012), Nets 1 (736), Total 4748.

7th September Souterrain CLO09-022007
Solo

60% cloud, clearing: No wind: Warm. Somewhere around the junction of the entrance passage and chamber opening have managed to cock up the survey; satisfied the chamber survey is accurate; it’s the orientation of the entrance passage that feels wrong. When illustrated the passage angle seems to be trending too far toward northeast by some 15°. To improve the view of the surface positioned datum, (western survey pole), from the underground datum cut a narrow, (0.3m), gap through the hazel choking the western opening, and reinstated the eastern survey pole. Resurveyed both short passages off the western datum using tape and laser line, through to the eastern datum tying in the chamber survey; pleased thus far. The result should now show an accurate depiction of the souterrain. Also recorded the roof lintels above the junction area; the others, all except the one fallen in the entrance area are absent from site, likely utilized as building materials, (excellent for spanning doorways and windows). The lintels comprizing the chamber roof are mostly close together, only at one joint are stones used to fill a gap.



View west of entrance to Souterrain CLO09-022007; 7th September

View west souterrain roof outline visible as surrounding ground surface has eroded
One metre ranging rod in 0.1m sections

7th September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00: 5% cloud cover: Ground drying: Medium stream: Visibility >35Nm: The Plan: Dig CC digging PC winching, unloading and barrowing. CC resumed the slow process of digging across the "Kill Zone" gradually removing the amalgam. Of the twenty two lifts were three very heavy nets; among the nineteen kibbles were nine of the awful clay mess. Generator shows ½ full: no spare full. Approaching Lisdoonvarna surprized at the volume of cars heading into town: so to Kilshanny House for the best Guinness around.

Hours 5 (2232), Southend (1182), Kibbles 19 (4031), Nets 3 (739), Total 4770.

NB. on the 22nd July 2019 the average weights of nets, and kibble types of either gravels, clays or rocks were recorded; 1 x net = 68kgs, 1 x kibble of stone = 30kgs, 1 x kibble of gravels, (Chatter) = 38 kgs. When applying a weight of 30kgs to every single lift, (4770), including all nets, the total lifted from the South End is a very conservative 140 tonnes. If 68kg is used for the 739 nets then that totals 50 tonnes; 4031 kibbles, at 30kgs, a piece equates to 120 tonnes. Therefore, to date, some 170 metric tonnes have been dug, brought to surface and transported from the South End shaft alone.

12th September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Remnants of Storm Gabriel have passed: 10% cloud cover: Visibility >35Nm Mild: Large stream: Fuel CC. The Plan: Dig. CC digging PC winching, unloading and barrowing. PC arrived early, walking like a duck, nursing a groin injury, to re-position the lifeline system avoiding constricting the climber whilst getting on and off the top of the ladder. CC progressed the metre high working face south across the "Killing Zone"; now almost halfway to the south end. Of the twenty one lifts two were nets, nineteen were kibbles; five being rock the others amalgam and assorted awful clays; all brim full. These clays were deposited around the boundary walls of the western spoil area; the idea to raise this by a half metre then expand across to cover the area toward the stile avoiding too steep a barrow way. The rocks were placed at the west end of the boulder heap creating a steep face down to the present retaining wall height. The floor, at -18.7m, is some three metres below the bottom of the fixed ladder; the elderly aluminium ladder, with its collection of moving, screeching and groaning parts makes for interesting physical and mental acrobatics attempting to access said fixed ladder. The next fixed ladder is on site for installation, likely Saturday: "Gonzo's" Hilti drill is now fully operational. Generator shows ¼ full; spare fuel on site. Estimated weight lifted 900kgs.

Hours 5 (2237), Southend (1187), Kibbles 19 (4050), Nets 2 (741), Total 4791.

NB. The recent, (€160), rebuild of Mark Lumley's 36v Hilti drill battery by Battery World in Limerick caused concern when their advice "give it a full charge before use; to get it started", appeared flawed. Initially charged for fourteen hours its use was planned for 8th August. Untested prior to this trip it was found flat: confusion. Charged a second time, (12 hours), left, then tested the following day the result was the same; flat as a dancer's chest: dismay. It received a third charge, (12 hours), and left for twenty four. When it successfully drilled 9 x 16mm holes 150mm deep in tough concrete without a noticeable deterioration of charge or performance. Left uncharged for five days it drilled another seven 16mm, 150mm deep holes. Drilling the eighth, drill speed was noted to subtly decrease: delight. The Team now has a fine drill; no need for Popeye to cart his Hilti back and forth. Sincere thanks to Mark for gifting PC the drill, and to Jim for arranging its journey to and from Limerick: result happiness, hooray.

14th September Souterrain CLO09-022007

Solo

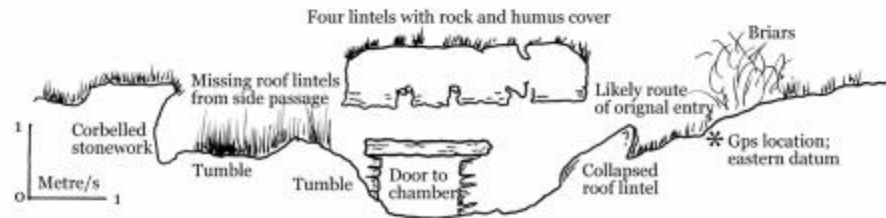
10:30. 70% cloud: Wind W, F2 gusting 4. The Plan: survey the surface above the souterrain to obtain an accurate depth of ground cover over the roof lintels. Laden with kit loudly greeted by passerby; Martin McMahon, who leases the farmland. Lengthy exchange of pleasantries brought forth locations of other holes, and farmers amenable to an interested individual; delight. Waddled off with the warning; "*Avoid the Bull as he can be a bit grumpy*". Set up tripods to establish a baseline along the same compass bearing as the underground survey. Its height differential obtained through a breach opening taken directly off the underground datum using a survey staff. Increasing wind strength became troublesome delaying measurement recording. The ground depth survey was then repeated along the east – west passage to confirm the depth of the floor surface of both openings. The landscape to the south of the souterrain chamber has a shallow sunken area beyond several breaches of the souterrain passage; the survey was extended to include this now inaccessible section.



Lisnanroum; 14th September 2019. View north; the right hand tripod is above the eastern opening of the enclosure party wall; this area is quite likely the original point of entry.

CL009-022007
Souterrain
Lisnansroum
County Clare

ITM 522200 x 687530
Accessible length 17m
Elevation 150 metres



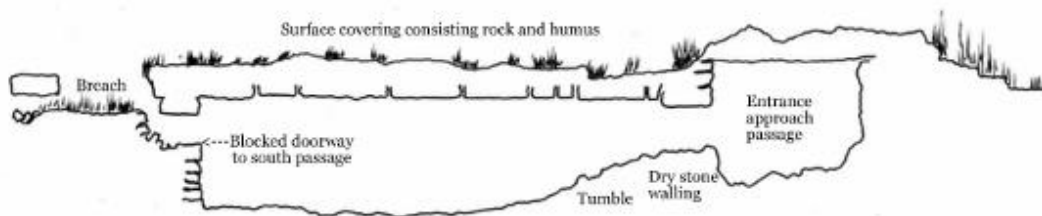
Section east/west passage located within the party wall between northern and southern enclosures.

Drawing CL009-022007/D5/15Sept2019
Surveyed & drawn; August-September 2019
Pat Cronin

CL009-022007
Souterrain
Lisnansroum
County Clare

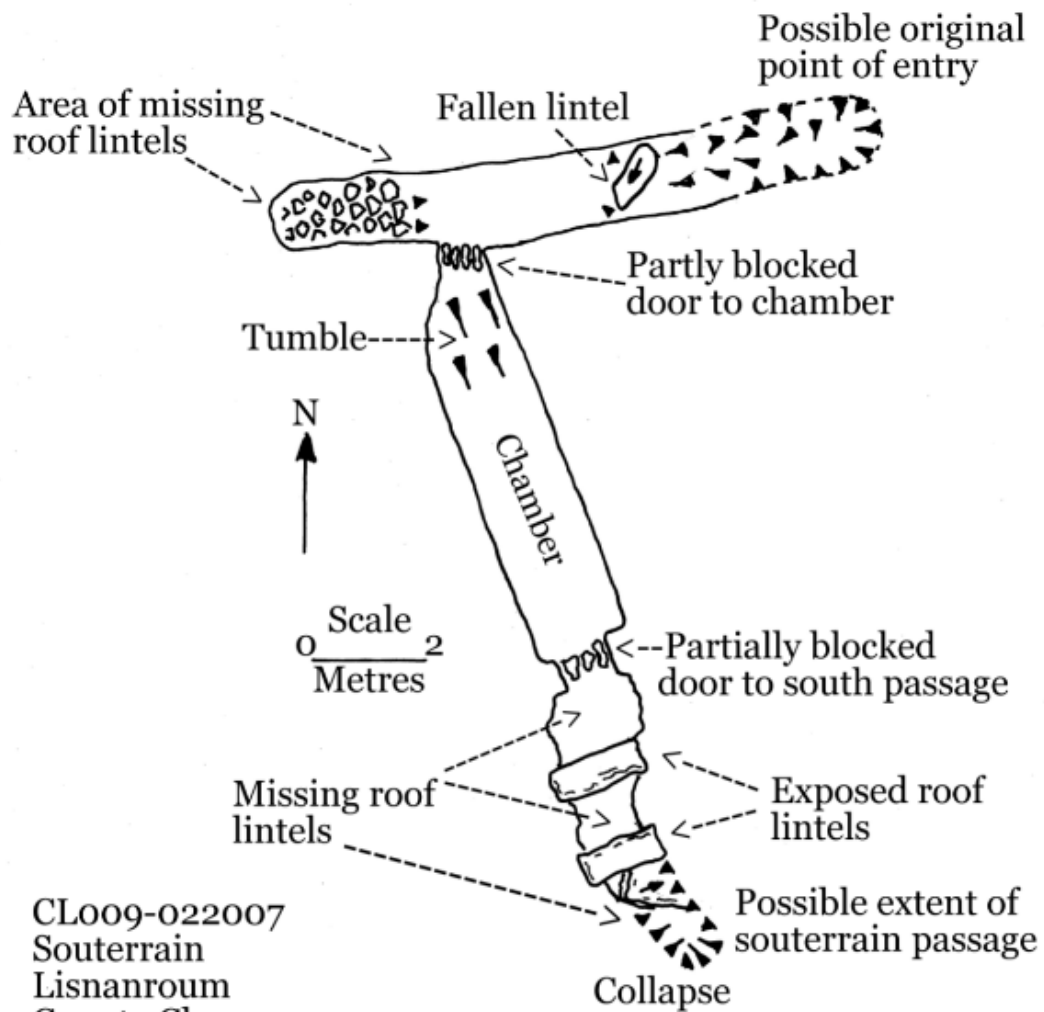
View west

ITM 522200 x 697930
Accessible length 17m
Elevation 150m



Section south - north of chamber and entrance passage area

Drawing CL009-022007/D6/15Sept2019
Surveyed and drawn; August-September 2019
Pat Cronin

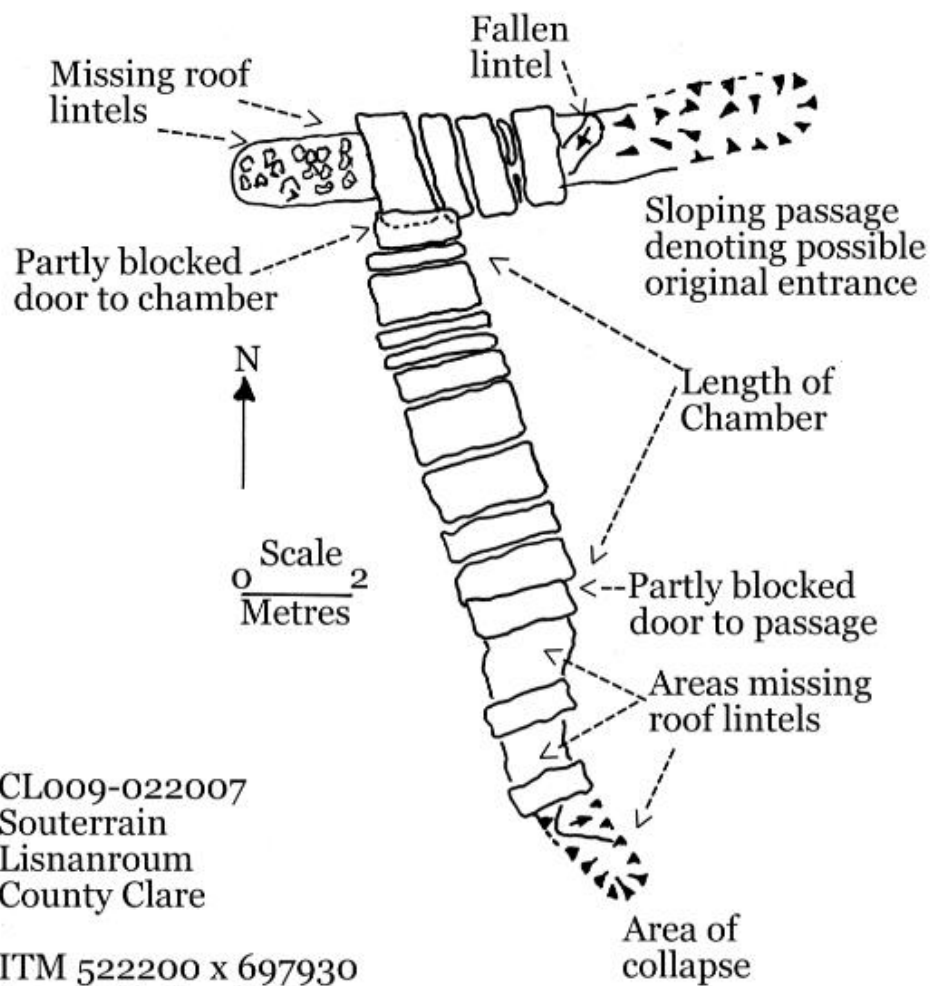


CLO09-022007
Souterrain
Lisnanroum
County Clare

ITM 522200 x 697930
Accessible length 17m
Elevation 150m

Drawing CLO09-022007/D7/15sept/2019
Surveyed and drawn August-September 2019
Pat Cronin

Extant roof lintels not illustrated for clarity



CL009-022007
Souterrain
Lisnanroum
County Clare

ITM 522200 x 697930
Accessible length 17m
Elevation 150m

Drawing CL009-022007/D8/15sept19
Surveyed and drawn August-September 2019
Pat Cronin

Drawing to illustrate remaining number, size and location
of roof lintels

14th September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Dark at 20:40: 100%: cloud: Cloud base 800ft: Visibility $\leq 10\text{Nm}$: Ground wet: The Plan: install the next fixed ladder. Each nursed dodgy limbs as they descended; the staging platform at -14m proving a practicable base from which to assist a suspended Cheg as he secured the next ladder; thoughts turned to the Hydraulic Shaft Dig in Smallclough as the aluminium ladder screeched with every minor movement. At the bottom of the shaft the pair took time to marvel at its shape, its size and depth achieved: it is without doubt a magnificent shaft. Measurements were taken for the stemple to complete securing the lower part of the ladder; installation Thursday. Holes were drilled in the east and west walls to accept the 16mm galvanized bolts securing the stemple. Two 14mm holes were drilled to accept the future descent of the signals box; CC suggests the signal system be moved into the opening of the south rift, being a reasonable distance from any potential missile. This is the third weekend of the Matchmaking. Long convoys of cars and buses sped to Lisdoonvarna for a piece of the action: to Kilshanny for a fine pint of Guinness.

Hours 4 (2241), Southend (1191), Kibbles 0 (4050), Nets 0 (741), Total 4791.

19th September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

An azure blue sky: Light breeze: Ground wet: Small stream: Crystal clear, visibility $>35\text{Nm}$: Dark around 20:30. The Plan: complete ladder installation. A later than normal start as CC had just returned from afar. CC below, PC up top; stemple pieces lowered to CC who swiftly assembled the prefabricated parts; minor difficulty when securing the bolts; the gap between the stemple and wall need be a minimum of 50mm, rather than the present 40mm, to allow insertion of grips to prevent the bolt stem turning as the nuts are tightened. Minor inconvenience experienced exiting as the first ladder rung is some 0.75m above the floor. Generator topped up, shows $\frac{1}{2}$ full; no fuel on site. Walking back the transition of colours across the firmament was stunning; black to deep orange, to red to cream. In such clarity the Islands, Connemara, Venus and the Moon were supremely visible. In Lisdoonvarna nowhere to park; dashed back to catch CC, en-route and divert; couldn't find him; returned to try find him in Lisdoonvarna during which endured a ball breaking twenty minutes trying to park/find CC/exit the town. This is the busiest year ever for the Matchmaking; the superb weather bringing the sex and dance starved from all over. Kilshanny next Saturday!

Hours 3 (2244), Southend (1194), Kibbles 0 (4050), Nets 0 (741), Total 4791.

20th September CLO02-068002 souterrain, Finavarra

Katrina Costello

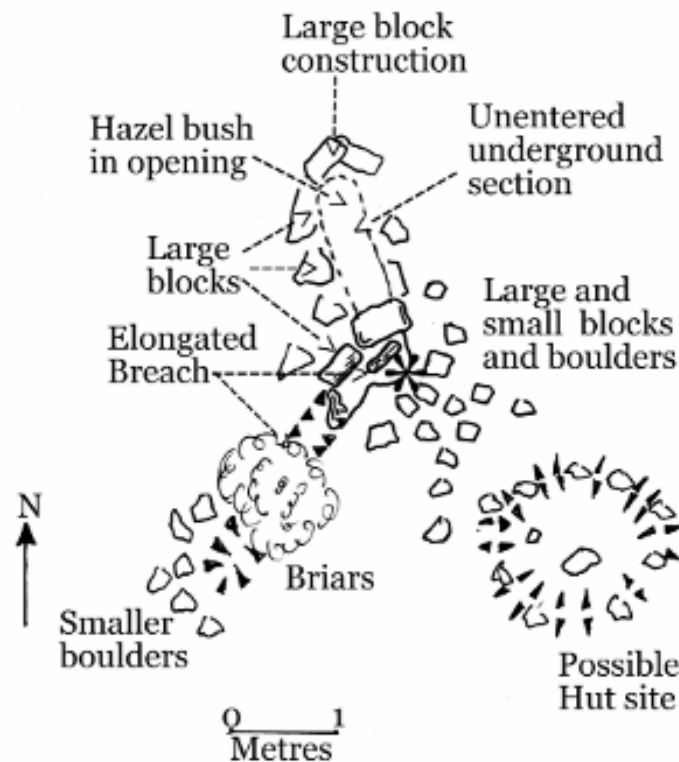
Fabulous day: Cloudless: Wind SE F4. Via Jim Warny and further to KC's enquiry visited the souterrain at Finavarra, having previously contacted the landowner the day before. Called in for a chat with Philomena and Batty; having not spoken in almost a year. Batty confirmed it's still OK to continue with the project. KC fascinated with all aspects of the site. KC enquired closely of souterrains and their place in Irish society. A Grand Day out.

21st September CLO09-022006 Souterrain

Solo

Over cast: Threatening rain: Wind SE, F4 gusting 5: The Plan: begin recording the northern souterrain. The souterrain is located centrally within the northern enclosure, whilst it's larger neighbour, (30 metres to the south), CLO09-022007, is partly constructed within the boundary - party wall separating the enclosures; both are semi-

subterranean in form built within artificial mounds, the northern mound summit is estimated at one metre above ground level surface.....



CL009-022006
Souterrain
Lisnansroum
County Clare
ITM 522208 x 697959

Preliminary sketch.
21st/22nd September 2019
Pat Cronin

The northern half of the mound is elevated some one metre above the adjacent enclosure ground surface; beneath a layer of humus is a substantial construction of coursed stone. The large blocks have been disturbed, several adjacent the breach.

* Indicates location of enlarged passage width, a possible passing place, or defensive position.

Con't,
Cattle graze the mound, evidenced by hoof marking and chewed plants. This mound is constructed of large, irregular limestone blocks; several lay strewn about the obvious breach of the souterrain roof; one has fallen into the breached passage. One accessible limestone block, set in the top most coursing, on the west side of the breach, was

conservatively measured at 3ft x 2ft x 1ft, (each measurement rounded down); at some 70kgs per cb/ft, it weighs an estimated 400kgs. The visible sections of walling, up to, and above the outside ground surface are built of well fitted, large, coursed limestone blocks; hazel and briar growth presently obscure an accurate assessment of the underground section, and the floor of the breached passage. Minimum trimming of foliage will allow for clearer access and recording. In the initial opening area of the underground passage smaller sized stones appear used in the passage walls; requires closer examination. Within the main breach area there is a slight increase of the passage width, an asymmetrical change suggests it once a small chamber, (1.2m x 2m), perhaps a passing place or a prepared, defensive position. Beyond the obstructing fallen block, some 3.5 metres further on briars obscure the possible passage terminus; a small sunken area surrounds this point. Four metres to the SSE is the outer perimeter of tumble, suggestive of a possible hut circle; some five metres in diameter. Eleven metres beyond this, also heading SSE, is another small, possible hut circle, this one being some six metres in diameter. Other features exist within both these enclosures, identification required: a preliminary sketch was made of the souterrain mound area.

21st September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

100% low cloud: Increasing rain: Wind SE, F2: Visibility <20Nm: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. CC below PC up top. CC continued working southward; now over halfway across the floor surface below. A steady pace produced twenty four lifts, of which three were heavy nets; twenty one kibbles consisted of equal numbers of boulders and gravels, among which were three of the dreaded amalgam; after extensive, exhaustive research CC has identified the scientific, Latin name of this deposit; *Shitus Shitus*. The fixed ladder now goes to -18m; the eastern bolt fixing of the stemple may be replaced; the small west rift has faded, morphing into the wall, which now appears to be spreading outward; Generator 1/2 full; no fuel on site: Pitch black at 20:30: To the Kilshanny House: Happy Birthday Jim Warny!

Hours 5 (2249), Southend (1199), Kibbles 21 (4071), Nets 3 (744), Total 4815.

22nd September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Overcast: Light showers: Visibility <20Nm: Small stream: The Plan: Dig. PC re-hung both ropes which the winch operator operates to remotely open and close the shaft cover; he also assessed covering over the northern rift to prevent beasts falling in once the project is concluded. PC above CC below: CC continued to remove the 0.7m high working face; reaching a point some 2/3rd across the floor now levelled at -18.7 m. Having such an area, (a deep Pit), at the base of the Hauling way created appeal, offering containment for a plummeting load to land within; possibly increasing safety, albeit slightly for the digger patiently waiting in the southwest rift during hauling. The rift will be the new location for the communication system. Of the twenty-one lifts three were very heavy nets, one contained a beautiful limestone pendant; of the eighteen kibbles four were of *Shitus Shitus*, of which one was *Shitus Shitus Maximus*; the others were boulders, rocks and gravels. The return to surface requires effort, likewise depositing the spoil; both fairly shagged out, headed for drink at the Roadside; the impending weekend is the last of the Matchmaking festival for the year.

Hours 5 (2254), Southend (1204), Kibbles 18 (4089), Nets 3 (747), Total 4836.

28th September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cloud base 1000ft: Visibility <2Nm: Ground awash: Large stream: Rain: Light breeze. Surface of work platform becoming like a skating rink: Rainfall, Friday recorded as 2.5 inches. The Plan: Dig. Normal service resumed. CC below: PC above. In fairly wet conditions CC creating a trench around the west side of the pile, sending up some very large boulders reducing this fill above -18.7m level significantly. Perhaps another two sessions may level the entire floor. PC wants to record a plan of the shaft at this depth. Of the twenty one lifts six were very heavy nets, including one boulder ≈90kgs. The fifteen kibbles consisted of seven rock, five gravels and two of the grim amalgam. Manhandling the big boulder PC felt a twang in his trouser region, him not wearing a belt suspected his back, later performing a series of limps and whimpers back to the truck. Maintenance required; the receiver wheels need lubricating. The slippery platform surface needs attention. Generator shows just below ¼ full; no fuel on site. Tonight is the final Saturday session of the Matchmaking: reportedly the most/best attended, ever. To the Kilshanny House, where CC showed PC the file created illustrating the 1997 audio recording of Jack Garahy, engine man at the Doolin Phosphate Mine.

Hours 5 (2259), Southend (1209), Kibbles 15 (4104), Nets 6 (753), Total 4857.

29th September **1973.**

Sulo's 46th Anniversary

30th September Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Overcast: Heavy rain easing to fine: 3.4 inches of rain in the last 24 hours: Big stream: Ground flooded: Stream noise in both pipes thunderous: Southern end covered with running water: Fuel PC and CC. The Plan: Dig. Normal positions assumed. Noise of cascading water in the northern shaft and from both sets of pipework made for difficult communications. Of the twenty two lifts six were very big nets, most in excess of 100kgs, the sixteen kibbles consisted of boulders, and one DRY clay deposit. The large boulders were placed in the centre of the far spoil area. Some 2 to 3 cubic metres of debris remain to completely level the floor at -18.7m. Generator received five litres; showing ½ full at end of session; five litres spare on site. To the Roadside for a nice pint of Gold

Hours 5 (2264), Southend (1214), Kibbles 16 (4120), Nets 6 (759), Total 4879.

2nd October Lisnanroum; unregistered enclosure & Souterrains

Dr. Michelle Comber, Dr. Noel McCarthy

PC arranged a field meet with ex-college tutors, inviting their interpretations of the site, of its many anonymous features. Consideration of these observations...

- 1) Location of the remaining lengths of thicker perimeter walls.
- 2) Location of souterrain, (CLO09-022007), as a part mural feature in the party wall.
- 3) Orientation and design of the souterrain chamber and passages.
- 4) Apparent, greater, number of possible house/s and possible farm stock features.
- 5) Discovery, (2nd Oct 2019), of the main gate into the southern enclosure, (facing south). indicates the southern enclosure is the earlier settlement of the two. Investigation of the ground surface beyond the present elongated collapse of souterrain, (CLO09-022007), suggests its passage may have extended further; presently this potential area is obscured by briars, the dense interior of this patch need be accessed to ascertain any

entrance, or features within. When scrutinized by Comber and McCarthy the raised mound (located in the northern enclosure), containing souterrain, CL009-022006, their impression is the souterrain has utilized an existing burial mound. Among Dr. Comber's research into sub-square ringforts, and the results following her excavation of a similar ringfort two kilometres north, suggests they may have been, or became official centres for tribal facilities, services or "tax" collecting; a place where a representative received a subjects tribute required of the local Chieftain.

4th October Lisnanroum; unregistered enclosure & souterrains

Solo

Storm Lorenzo abating. The Plan: to review the areas visited on 2nd October with Comber and McCarthy. Failed in the attempt to push back the briars; having earlier discovering the suppliers had no slash hooks in stock. A few minutes with one would make short work of the broad, dense briars. On the other side of this patch appear the rectangular foundations of a house, (Comber 2nd Oct); the passage of souterrain, (CL009-022007), appears heading toward its northern end. Several other flagstones were noticed among the briars a little further on from those recorded; that the southern enclosure is the earlier of the two begins to make sense when the souterrain and its passage design are scrutinized. If the souterrain did indeed originate from the area adjacent the house, to run beneath this briar area to the chamber, the initial entrance passage dimensions would have been built with a reduced cross section in order to impede hostile pursuers, contributing to the elusion of fleeing non-combatants. As rain increased fled to the Roadside, and a very nice Birthday pint

5th October Lisnanroum; unregistered enclosure & souterrains

Solo

Overcast: Humid: Thick mist: Lessening rain. Set about clearing the foliage obscuring the original ringfort entrance; exposed the feature for photography. Moved north and probed around the edge of the briars obscuring the potential entrance area to souterrain, CL009-022007. Lifted the thin layer of surface moss covering two parallel flagstones, these are in line with the approaching souterrain passage; slid machete blade vertically between joints, no gap beneath, felt only compacted fill: potential of an open passage beneath now much reduced. Need to investigate the adjacent bush to see if an entrance feature is present. Crossed into the northern enclosure, trimmed the briars obscuring the southern end of the collapse of souterrain, CL009-022006. This exposed a continuation of the unroofed passage, roof lintels absent; these walls too are built of large blocks of limestone similar to those exposed in the adjacent breach. The northern most opening too was trimmed of hazel and briar, exposing the very end of the passage; this section of passage too is built of large limestone blocks, at the end the passage the terminal radius has been formed of these blocks.

The ground level immediately surrounding this mound is lower than that closer to the perimeter walls. It has the appearance of being quarried; the relative difference, the "step height", between these two levels has a similar height as the blocks of limestone used to construct the mound feature. The interpretations proffered on the 2nd Oct by Comber and McCarthy that the mound, originally a burial barrow, had its passage utilized by the later inhabitants of the ringfort gains validity when the construction of the walls are studied. The uniform size of stonework employed is of an entirely different scale than normal stonework associated with souterrains visited so far. Souterrains at Caherbullog, (CL004-016040), and Rine, (CL002-068002), are both adjacent exposed areas of limestone, (whence their one – two tonnes lintels came), yet their walls are built without blocks approaching the dimensions of those used here, CL009-022006. Comber and

McCarthy's interpretation that it is a utilized burial mound, based on its context, location and erection being almost entirely above ground level, does explain much of this feature.

5th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Clearing from overcast: Visibility <20Nm: Showers: Light Breeze: Ground waterlogged: Large stream: PC delayed by Medivac: Minor evidence present from Storm Lorenzo: The Plan: Dig. CC Digging, PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Though a late start the steady pace raised twenty lifts of which five were very heavy nets, the largest ≈150kgs, and fifteen kibbles, four of clays and gravels. A week today the Pegasus Reunion, Nottingham: Generator ¼ full: battery to be retrieved for charging Monday: somewhat weary, headed for the Kilshanny House and very nice pints.

Hours 5 (2269), Southend (1219), Kibbles 15 (4135), Nets 5 (764), Total 4899.

7th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cloud cover 90%: Visibility ≤20Nm: Shower: Cool side of mild: Wind SW F2 gusting 4: Ground soaking: Large stream: The Plan: Dig. CC below PC up top. CC continued to level the floor at -18.7m; about a cubic metre of debris remains. Perhaps two further sessions will remove it completely. The southwest rift and the southern end of the shaft appear to be morphing together; the intended plan survey of the shaft at -18m may help illustrate this. First kibble arrived at surface at 18:10; the slightly earlier start achieving twenty five lifts, of which eight were very heavy nets averaging, conservatively 110kgs a piece, among the seventeen kibbles three were gravels and two of dry soil cleared from within the southwest rift. Total estimated spoil dug lifted and transported is 1.5 metric tonnes. Many of the large boulders were lifted up onto the retaining walls; smaller rocks were packed behind these to stabilize the new level of wall. The underground speaker and its line were removed for maintenance: generator topped up showing, after the session just over ½ full; no fuel on site: the system battery indicates 11vdc: the Receiver wheels need lubricating: shaft collar area needs cleaning: platform surface needs cleaning: the receiver operating ropes need minor adjustment: the 6mm rope to close the lower lid requires replacement and rerouting: the western spoil area increases in height, thought need be applied to expanding the area across to the stile: a fine session; to the Roadside for a very nice pint of Gold and talk of the Pegasus Reunion, 12th October.

Hours 5 (2274), Southend (1224), Kibbles 17 (4152), Nets 8 (772), Total 4924.

11th October Nottingham

Pauline Cronin, Roger and Rita Day

Picked up midday at East Midlands by RD; (having flown from Knock. Dumped kit at Nottingham Sherwood Hotel; (aka old Savoy), Mansfield Rd; and then straight to the Grovesnor bar opposite; choice beer, superb grub. After, found "The Gladstone", a jewel of a bar less than ten minutes walk away; cracking place and pints.

12th October Pegasus Reunion and AGM: The Plough, Radford; Nottingham

A host of members, past and present in attendance

A superb venue; the Landlady ably accommodated the thirsty; the drink excellent, the company a delight, the multiple projects discussed at length enthralling. After the Plough, had a Chinese finishing at the Grovesnor bar for more fine drink; a superb event.

13th October

Lost Bob Whitall, dam

16th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

10:00. Showers: Clearing overcast: Ground sodden: 6.5 inches of rain since 9th Oct: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$. The Plan: Maintenance and Dig. The change of session time is, in part, to accommodate maneuvering the barrow to and among the far spoil area. The planned time for further sessions, until spring, is 13:00 Mondays and Saturdays; Thursday remains 18:00 so any interested parties may take part after work. The refurbished microphone system was re-installed; the generator oil topped up; the wheel on the receiver lubricated. CC below PC up top. The comms were found to work with superb clarity. Late in starting twenty lifts were achieved, of these five were very heavy nets; of the fifteen kibbles four were gravels. "Popeye" arrives shortly so will clear the remaining pile and accomplish levelling the floor at -18.7m; next will be a plan of the shaft survey at -18m. The ridgeline of the boulder pile was extended, and increased in height toward the eastern end; the retaining wall will soon need its height increased as the boulders are deposited on the path side of the pile; a height presently averaging 1.3m. The huge boulders lifted were deposited toward the stile. The platform surface has algae growth turning the surface into a skating rink, perhaps apply some Jeyes fluid? Fifty six lifts to 5000. Changing in the sun observed a beautifully coloured fox walk across the field: To the Roadside for an excellent pint; supping away, Oisín called if we wanted a soup and sandwich. While scoffing the meal a loud voice from the other end of the bar enquired, where's my soups? Exchange of looks; the staff swiftly retreated into the kitchen collapsing in hysterics. Meanwhile the taste of the gifted soup and sandwiches improved with each mouthful. Generator $\frac{1}{2}$ full: no fuel on site.

Hours 6 (2280), Southend (1230), Kibbles 15 (4167), Nets 5 (777), Total 4944.

17th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Popeye returns: Overcast, clearing: Heavy showers: Ground totally sodden: Large stream: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$: Cold side of cool: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The effect of a third person was immediate, with one below, one the winch and another barrowing meant a significant increase in productivity manifest as a load lifted and disposed of between every three to four minutes. Resulting with thirty one lifted this session of these three were nets, four kibbles of gravels and twenty four of rock. Out beneath a clear starlit sky; to the Roadside for pints. Surveying and maintenance 09:30 Saturday morning: generator showing $\approx \frac{1}{4}$ full; no fuel on site.

Hours 7 (2287), Southend (1237), Kibbles 28 (4195), Nets 3 (780), Total 4975.

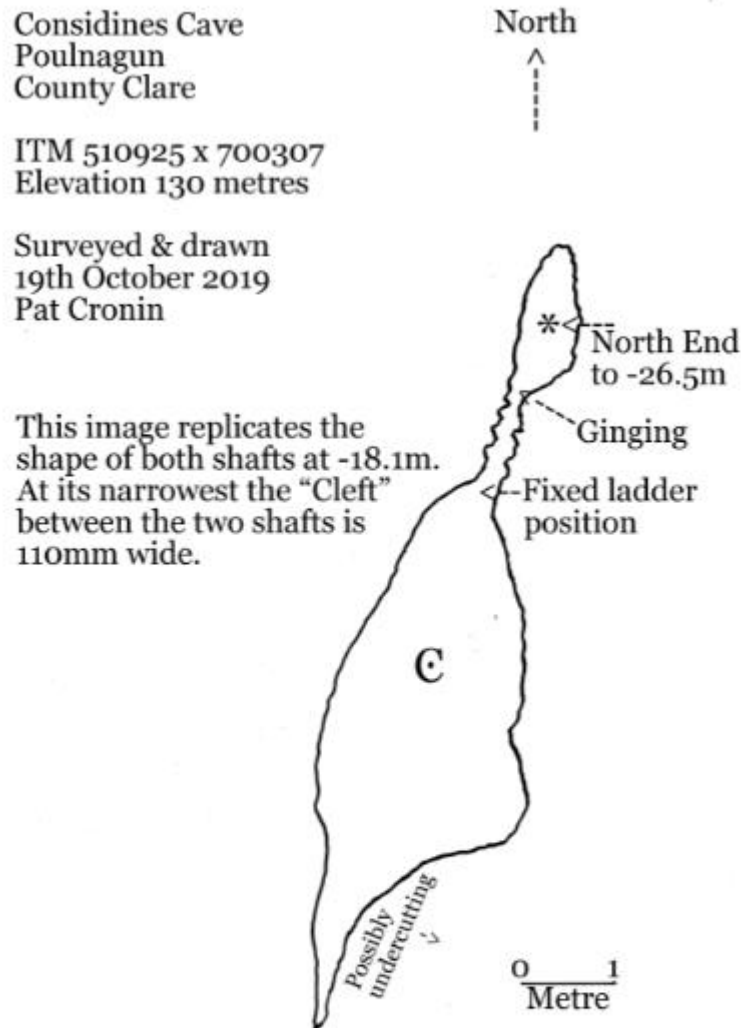
19th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

09:00. 60% cloud: Sunny spells: Cool: Large stream: Ground totally waterlogged: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$. TB Fuel: PC Fuel: The Plan: maintenance and surveying. PC arrived early to begin the survey of the shaft, establishing the drawing at -18.1m below the platform; the hauling centerline too was established for survey accuracy. Based on the hauling centerline the laser was aligned along the rift development, (018° magnetic); measurements were then taken east and west at intervals along this line. Meanwhile CC attended to tidying and raising the boulder pile and its perimeter wall, while "Popeye" serviced the slippery platform surface and feeding CC with materials to stabilize the wall construction. PC emerged and set about trimming the foliage adjacent the stile, as TB

and CC continued with the perimeter wall and platform cleaning. The perimeter wall is now 1.5 metres high along the path, as it turns into the gravel area it is presently 0.7m high, this will increase. The cleared foliage modestly extends the available area for depositing clay and gravel, which will cover the previously piped stream from the stile to the shaft area. Generator topped with five litres: TB's Fuel on site: Comms battery returned for charging: Microphone left on second scaffold below staging. To the Roadside for lunchtime pints

Hours 9 (2296), Southend (1246), Kibbles o (4195), Nets o (780), Total 4975.



C. Denotes centreline of hauling system.

With depth is clear evidence of development along a calcite vein; this has a bearing of 018 degrees Mag.

(C) Pegasus Club Nottingham

21st October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

09:30: Cloudless: Sunny: Cold: Ground Sodden: Large stream: Visibility ≈ forever: The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB Digging: PC unloading and barrowing. TB began to excavate the area just in front of the fixed ladder, directly below the hauling way, following the plan to create a pit at the base of the shaft wherein a plummeting load would land, the theory being any or most resultant shrapnel would be confined to the pit; whilst the digger waits in the south rift. During surveying, (19th Oct), the exposed development clearly follows a calcite joint/fault along 018° - 198° magnetic. The formation of this area, at -18.7m, also illustrates the upper southwest development, formed adjacent and west of the "Guillotine", has now become sou-sou-westerly. The lower area of the south end appears to be developing an undercut toward the SE, suggested by the southeast wall appearing to turn beneath it; a clear view of this is presently obscured by the floor fill; the west wall of the rift continues down, vertically. The western wall adjacent the fixed ladder has swept outward significantly reducing the overall width, however this is beginning to return to the vertical. This development could affect the next ladder installation should it continue, either another staging will be needed or perhaps just an offset of the ladder; as previously fitted around -8m. Of the twenty five lifts four were nets and twenty one were kibbles, of which four were clays and gravels. The 5000th load was lifted this session. A conservative estimate of 30kgs/lift equals a minimum weight of 150 tonnes dug and lifted. To the Roadside for Blacks and Gold's: Generator ½ full: fuel on site. The intermittent vibration from the winch has been traced to one of the drive belts CC to order replacement: Next session Thursday 18:30.

Hours 7 (2303), Southend (1253), Kibbles 21 (4216), Nets 4 (784), Total **5000**.

21st October Doolin

17:00. Met up with Tony Seddon; bought AV oversuit, heavy undersuit and Fenix lamp.

24th October Cullaun II

Tony Seddon, Cheg Chester

13:00. Cloud 40%: Cool: Earlier rain showers: High stream: For three days TS had been climbing avens above sumps I and II. PC had offered to carry out his dive kit; agreeing 14:00 at the pitch. Accompanied by CC, (carrying in tea), met TS above the pitch with kit already packed; took an hour to reach surface. En-route to the Roadside for a swift one before the digging session PC contrived to drive into a ditch. Sought assistance from Padraig Considine just as his Father Michael arrived, headed back to incident. Only managed to drag the Hilux a further four metres along the metre deep ditch; MC departed to pick up Mary, returning after 20 minutes with one of his tractors. Meanwhile TB arrived with shovels to replace the elderly affair scrounged by CC from a local. After much digging prepared a route; further attempt dragged the Hilux past the exit, shortening the tow MC successfully dragged out the Hilux along with half the vegetation in the area: swiftly to the Roadside for a refreshing pint: left cash behind bar to supply MC with pints. Deployed the kit bought from TS, the AV oversuit an excellent fit, no need to cut any length off the legs, (a nice change), the MTDE Interval undersuit performed superbly well; though thoroughly soaked remained toasty throughout the trip, the Fenix head torch (HM65R), performed really well; delighted with purchases.



En-route to bar, from Cullaun II

Photo Cheg Chester

24th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

18:00. Bright: Cloud 15%: Chill: Temperature slowly falling: Ground very wet: Medium stream: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Though weary from their earlier efforts a steady pace brought twenty five loads to surface, comprizing three nets and twenty two kibbles of which five were gravels. Popeye noted a decent draught issuing from holes in the boulder floor. The area below the ladder leading into the "Cleft" has been dropped, at its deepest, by 0.7m. To clear the contents of the "Cleft" requires a digger either side, one suspended on a line in the north shaft pushing the fill in the "Cleft" back into the south end. Generator shows a little below ½ full. Issues with a recently reconditioned Hilti battery were traced to a wonky charger; Nice Nick Geh will investigate and attempt repair. Walked back to the truck beneath a starlit sky: back into the Roadside for more drink. PC supplying 2 x 12s via TB, via Tony Seddon, (Starless River), attending the SUICRO conference in Leitrim, for delivery to Simon Halliday

Hours 7 (2310), Southend (1260), Kibbles 22 (4238), Nets 3 (787), Total 5025.

26th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cold: Chill N/NE wind: 60% cloud cover: Ground wet: Medium stream: Visibility ≥30Nm. The Plan: Dig. Prior to starting the loose sides and wandering rungs of the increasing elderly aluminum ladder were secured, this was then lowered to facilitate diggers reaching the floor below the suspended fixed ladder; now approaching two metres above the floor. CC below: PC up top: CC carried on lowering the area beneath the ladder begun by Popeye in preparation of clearing debris from the "Cleft". Popeye absent, carousing no doubt at the annual S.U.I.C.R.O event where the U.B.S.S new Irish cave guide book is being launched, "The Caves of Mid-West Ireland" as part of his clubs

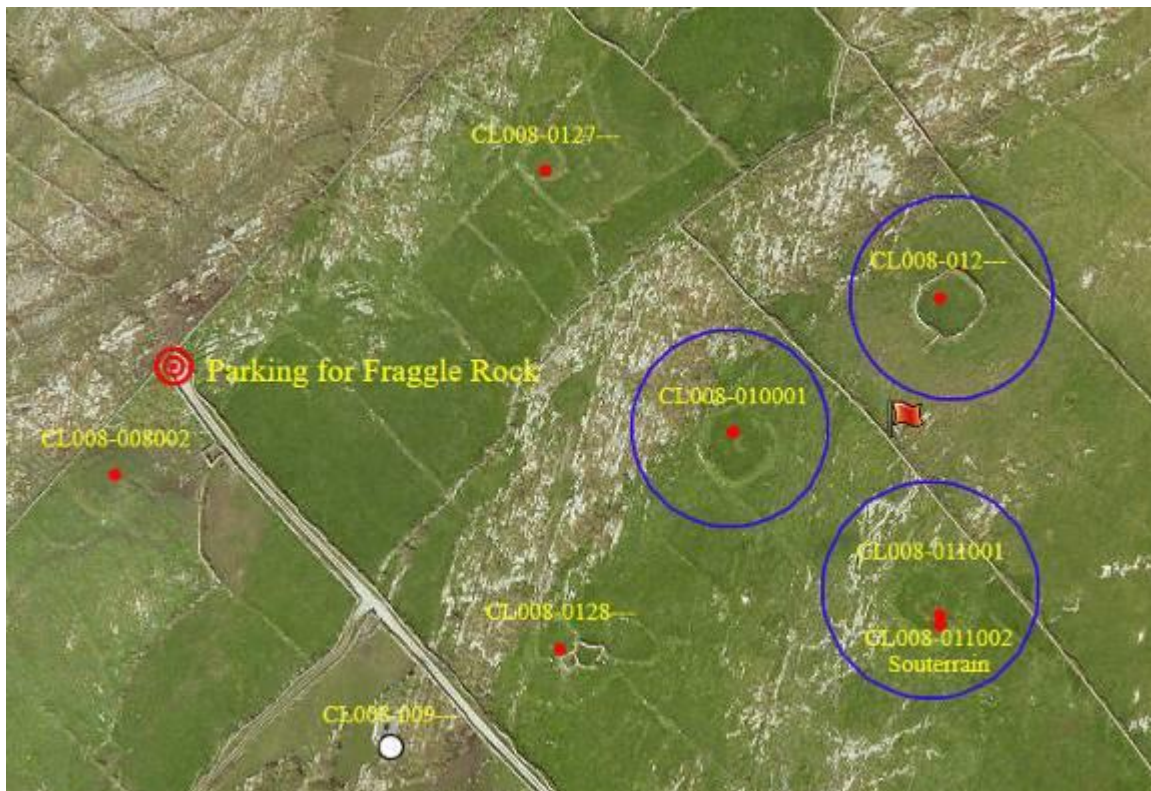
centenary celebrations. Several areas of wall around the shaft perimeter had thoroughly dried from the strong draught issuing from numerous gaps among the floor; meanwhile the northern shaft issued a howling gale. At the start of the session the depth was measured at -19.3m. CC continued down below the ladder to almost -20m, this pit will allow the higher level of “Cleft” debris to be dragged down slope directly into waiting kibbles beneath. This session produced twenty lifts, which included one net and nineteen kibbles of which eight were gravels and clays; *Shitus Shitus Maximus* made a brief reappearance. Generator shows almost $\frac{3}{4}$ full: no fuel on site. To a packed Roadside its Halloween weekend.

Hours 5 (2315), Southend (1265), Kibbles 19 (4257), Nets 1 (788), Total 5045.

27th October Sub Square Ringforts, souterrain CL008-013004

Cathal Mullane

NE breeze: Cold: 20% cloud: Bright: Ground wet: The Plan: deploy CM's drone over an area containing the outline of three sub-square ringforts. This location is in the field, on the north side of the bóithrín from the main road to Fraggie Rock. A chance remark by Michelle Comber at Lisnanroum, (2nd Oct 19), drew the observation that PC knew of a group of three such features. Sub square ringforts are believed not as numerous as, yet contemporaneous with, the more common form of circular ringfort settlement. CM deployed the drone the flight plan from fort 1 to two then fort three.

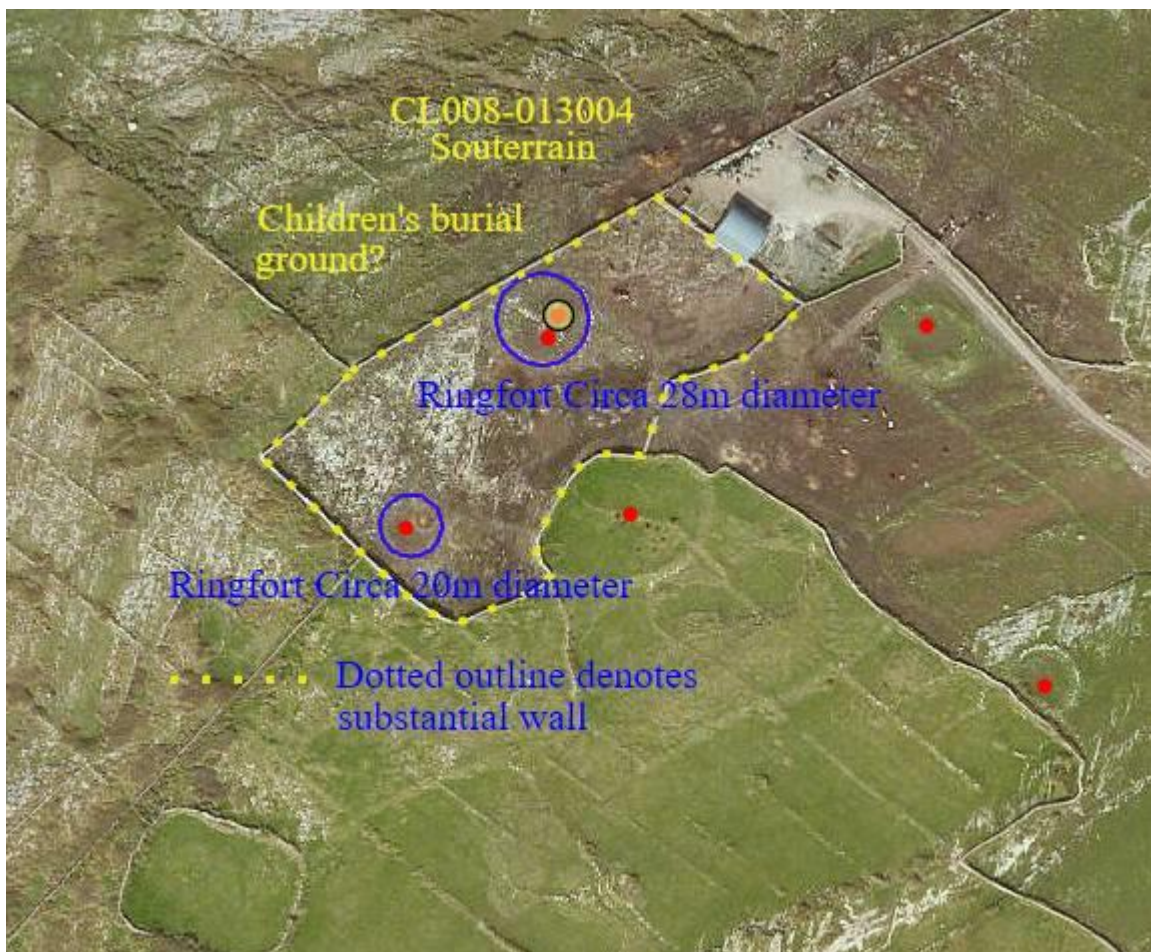


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Imagery of three sub-square ringforts, blue circles, one with an inaccessible souterrain

As this task was swiftly conducted the team took the opportunity to visit the field enclosing Souterrain CL008-013004, some four hundred metres to the north. This field is enclosed by a significant wall within which are recorded one ringfort, (CL008

013006), a children's burial ground, (CLO08-013005), and a souterrain, (CLO08-013004). The area recorded as a burial ground closely resembles a ringfort. This interpretation is based on its circular appearance and approximate 20m diameter and the presence of a collapsed souterrain over fifteen metres in length. Adjacent the eastern limit of the collapsed souterrain are two short linear features, erect flagstones set into grykes forming a passage some 0.6m wide, just south of this feature a much larger, erected flagstone completes the group. The field surface comprizes exposed limestone pavement among areas of grass; horses graze here. The likely hood of this being a burial ground is considered remote. It is considered an unregistered ringfort. CM again deployed his drone, (made by DGI), over the field from outside the high wall. However the noise of a tractor and the presence of the two horses meant caution was exercised so a high altitude image survey was conducted, rather than spook Farmer or Horses. The site is intriguing; will approach farmer for permission.



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Yellow dotted outline illustrates the substantial wall.

28th October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

09:30. Cold: Breeze NE: Bright: High cloud: Ground wet: Visibility $\geq 30\text{Nm}$: Small stream: Funereal duties hampered NG's attendance. The Plan: Dig. CC below: PC above. CC excavated debris from within the "Cleft" removing it to level with the floor of the pit, directly below the ladder at $\approx -20\text{m}$; CC has created steps to ascend from the pit, (-20m),

to the old floor level of -18.7m. The floor at the South End was also lowered by around 0.4m. The necessary cautious pace did produce twenty kibbles of which twelve were gravels, clays and some dreaded *Shitus Shitus Maximus*. Prior to installation the next fixed ladder may require an offset owing to encroachment of the west wall. Generator shows ½ full: no fuel on site. No Roadside, as real life commitments required attention.

Hours 5 (2320), Southend (1270), Kibbles 20 (4277), Nets 0 (788), Total 5065.

26th October Caves of Mid-West Ireland released by the U.B.S.S; received contributors copy; surprised my title suggestion was used.

30th October Cullaun I

Tony Boycott

17:00. Cold: Showers: Wind easterly: The Plan: to cave, and assist TB to locate stream erosion indicators. In the 1960s U.B.S.S members installed stainless steel studs in several caves, (Cullaun II); information as to their precise location is scarce, Charlie Self had conducted a survey of these studs sometime around 2003? Laddered the pot: just upstream from the entrance found a stud in situ within an eroded scallop; noticed another stud nearby, lying on its side also in a uniformly worn circular scallop some twenty five mm deep and some forty five mm diameter; no obvious indications this scallop is its original insertion site. Some five metres upstream is a small dam, continued along the narrowing and lowering stream passage through a duck to where, adjacent a small entrance, climbed up into a superbly decorated passage which meanders back and forth above the lower streamway; worth a photographic trip. Eventually, after passing several too tight surface openings reached a point where surface debris choked the narrow way on; possible to dig it out but not inclined to do so. Returned some twenty metres or so to a small skylight, managed to climb out. PC had the romantic idea to surface and walk back to the trucks through the forest, heading west. However, once away from any of the openings the forest became very dense, low branches intertwined just above the ground surface making progress difficult. Tried at two places to make a way west but decided otherwise; the walking conditions are soft to bottomless, any walking involves sinking up to the knees, or in TB's case ankles. Checked several openings to return via the cave, all too small, or no goes; couldn't find the small one exited. Options reducing, knowing the cave trended, generally, north-south checked several exposed, potential openings to ascertain jointing direction and headed away south-ish. After only ten minutes of thrashing through foliage encountered an open area, a further five minutes of struggle found the mote wall of the adjacent field where forest clearance had taken place, from here the bright lights of downtown Lisdoonvarna beckoned; into an almost empty Roadside for a very nice pint.

31st October Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

18:00. Mild: Rain: Wind SW, F2: Ground sodden: Small stream: Visibility deteriorating. The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Popeye levelled the floor surface northward from the 0.45mm deep hollow previously excavated at the south end, almost clearing up to the edge of the pit dug by CC; a minor amount remains. Thirty lifts achieved; one net and twenty nine kibbles of which fourteen were clays and gravels. Generator shows ½ full; no fuel on site. Rope which operates the lower lid requires replacement; washing tub needs cleaning out. Storage cistern and collecting tank need fettling. All headed to the Roadside, PC diverted due to callout.

Hours 7 (2327), Southend (1277), Kibbles 29 (4306), Nets 1 (789), Total 5095.

2nd November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

18:00. Cool: Low cloud: Wind NW F2 gusting 4: Ground sodden: Large stream: Visibility <5Nm: CC Fuel: The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Popeye removed the remaining debris baulk adjacent the hauling way pit, then returned to the south end to continue sinking that area a further 0.4m before progressing north once more. One net and thirty four kibbles were brought to surface of which nine were clays and gravels. The platform surface is returning to that of an ice rink. Generator shows ¼ full: fuel on site. To the Kilshanny House for the finest Guinness in the world!

Hours 7 (2334), Southend (1284), Kibbles 34 (4340), Nets 1 (790), Total 5130

4th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Cold: Wind N, F2: Cloud base 1200ft: Ground sodden: Large stream: Visibility ≥35Nm; The Plan: Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Work continued in the south end lowering the area; the south end wall is beginning to undercut but as to how far remains obscured at present. Thirty loads were raised of which two were nets and twenty-eight were kibbles, of which eleven were gravels and clays. The next ladder requires building. Depth of hauling way pit -19.9m, to bottom of fixed ladder -18m; sections of ladder are 2.3m in length. Generator shows ¾ full: to the Roadside.

Hours 7 (2341), Southend (1291), Kibbles 28 (4368), Nets 2 (792), Total 5160.

7th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00. Cold: Wind N, F2. Large stream: Ground sodden: Visibility 25Nm: The Plan: Dig. CC digging: PC winching, unloading and barrowing. PC arrived early to check generator; oil required and restrung the operating lines to the receiver: the Blue Finch reappeared. CC focused on removing the fill from the southwest rift. This produced twenty five kibbles, twelve of rock the remainder being a sticky soil, which held on fiercely to the barrow when attempting deposition into the hollow area adjacent the piped stream route. To an empty Roadside

Hours 5 (2346), Southend (1296), Kibbles 25 (4393), Nets 0 (792), Total 5185.

9th November Everyman Theatre, Cork

Pauline Cronin

Invited to attend the Irish premier "The Cave"; the film is primarily a documentary of the entire incident, though our own JW is very much in presence. Any such rescue movie can only offer glimpses of the event; even so all things considered it's a good watch. Go see it.

14th November Creevykeel Court Tomb, Cliffony, Sligo

Solo

Brief visit enroute from Donegal to home, reacquainting self with this excavated and well conserved site; an early form of burial in cells constructed within a long form of barrow.

16th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00. Dark: Cold: Wind NE, F2: Ground wet: Small stream: Visibility ≥35Nm. The Plan: Dig. CC digging, PC winching unloading and barrowing. CC continued to lower the floor area, partly clearing the southern end to expose the suspected undercut which appears to extend from the eastern wall of the southwest rift to beneath the south end wall. This undercut is some 0.3m deep; the adjacent area suggesting it may possibly become

deeper. The pace was steady, each lift from bottom to spoil dump and returned to shaft bottom took an average of five minutes. Winching is virtually continuous throughout a session; two minutes to the surface, best part of two minutes to empty barrow the rest consisting of running back and forth and sending down the kibble. Of the twenty lifts two were very heavy nets; seven kibbles were rock the remainder compacted soil from the southwest rift, and dreadful clays. Generator shows just below 1/2 full; no fuel on site. Generator requires oil. The closing rope on the lower shaft collar needs replacement. One of the drive belts on the winch is due for replacement. The static lifeline adjacent the fixed ladder is to be removed to avoid obstructing climbers. To a busy Kilshanny House
Hours 5 (2351), Southend (1301), Kibbles 18 (4411), Nets 2 (794), Total 5205.

18th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

09:30. Cold: Wind ENE, F2: Ground wet: Small stream: Visibility $\geq 35\text{Nm}$: The Plan: Maintenance. PC replaced, and re-routed, the rope operating the lower shaft cover in association with another pulley; operating effort is significantly reduced, also recovered the static lifeline and topped up the oil in the generator. Meanwhile CC replaced one of the drive belts; during which numerous other adjustments were also required. CC recommended PC descend and inspect; progress is excellent. The depth of the undercut of the south end is as CC estimated, some 0.3m. However applying the hose it's jet was directed down the easterly slope, below the south end, this washed away some mud and clay allowing a clear view of some three metres in length and some two metres in depth. A gap of around 0.2m is visible between the roof of the undercut and the boulder slope the depth of the undercut; the fill does not appear compacted. The eastern wall of the southwest rift is gradually morphing with the south end wall; this too is forming a radius in the shaft, similar to its opposite number formed in the west wall. The south, east and west walls of the shaft continue to gradually widen; the north wall is creeping into the shaft. The next plan survey in the shaft at -20m will be informative.

Supping in the Roadside with Peter, (the owner), a couple became engaged in the conversation. He related that a hole appeared on the family farm in Roscommon. Several of his family descended and saw passages lead away, but did not enter; the entire site was back filled. No idea of depth or distant. It is however located two field, about four hundred metres from the Shannon; there's an awful lot of limestone in Roscommon.

Hours 5 (2356), Southend (1306), Kibbles 0 (4411), Nets 0 (794), Total 5205.

21st November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

Cold: Dark: Rain passing: Wind E, F2 gusting 4: Ground sodden: Large stream: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$. Fuel PC: The Plan: Dig. CC below PC up top. Normal service resumed as CC continued reducing the central area, which consists of rock, mud and assorted forms of clay. Generator shows 1/4 full; fuel on site. Of the twenty lifts were one heavy net and nineteen kibbles, of these five were rock the remainder *Shitus Shitus*. Once Popeye returns the lifeline could do with washing. A weight or spring is needed for the winch peddle return. The next ladder needs building; once installed this one means that fixed ladders will reach to -20 metres, with a staging at -14 metres, offering access via "The Plank" through the "Cleft" to the northern rift/shaft: to a deserted Roadside.

Hours 5 (2361), Southend (1311), Kibbles 19 (4430), Nets 1 (795), Total 5225.

23rd November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00. Dark: Cool: Crystal clear sky: Medium stream: Ground sodden: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$. The Plan: Dig. CC digging; PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Following replacement of one of the drive belts a 1kg dive weight was suspended on the end of the actuating lever system to ensure the motor drive stops immediately the operators foot leaves the peddle. After four lifts this addition did not solve the matter; CC was called to the surface to investigate. A return spring was fitted, which appears to have solved the problematic issue of winch overrun. At -19m the central "hump" of deposit lessens each session; of the sixteen kibbles four were rock the remainder were the awful assortment of clay. The hollow area, adjacent the piped stream, is becoming heaped with the recent clay deposits; the volume of clays yet to come to surface means thought be applied when depositing them to avoid turning the place into a quagmire. Generator shows $\frac{1}{2}$ full; no fuel on site. Platform surface needs cleaning. To Kilshanny House for the finest Guinness anywhere: Hours 5 (2366), Southend (1316), Kibbles 16 (4446), Nets 0 (795), Total 5241.

25th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

09:30. Cloud base $\leq 300\text{ft}$: Mild: Showers: Visibility 0.5Nm : Medium stream: Ground sodden: The Plan: Dig. CC digging; PC winching, unloading and barrowing. CC continued to lower the -19.9m floor of the hauling way level south, up to the "Rib" of rock that protrudes from the west wall; though encroaching into the rift the "Rib" appears to have resumed a vertical plane. There remains a step up, a face, of some 0.6m between the hauling way floor and the upper southern end; from this higher floor a deposit of mud and cobbles extend from the "Rib" into the south rift. Shortly after starting, Peter Curtin, (owner of the Roadside), arrived to see what the Team "gets up to"; he expressed his surprise at the neatness of the spoil areas, and extent of the engineering. Twenty five lifts were achieved; three heavy nets, ten kibbles of rock and twelve of assorted cloying muds and clays; the clays etc. an absolute sod to remove from the barrow. To the Roadside for very welcome pints.

Hours 6 (2372), Southend (1322), Kibbles 22 (4468), Nets 3 (798), Total 5266.

28th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00. Dark: Cold: Wind E; F2: Cloud 80%: Medium stream: Ground soaked: The Plan: Dig. CC digging; PC winching, unloading and barrowing. The next section of fixed ladder, built by PC is on site ready for installation. CC commenced digging intended to remove the deposit left up against the west wall, between the south rift and the "Rib" level with the present, uneven floor. From this floor level there remains a step down of 0.6m into the hauling way "pit". As the session progressed PC had difficulty keeping up with the frenzied rate of digging below which produced, within the first hour, fourteen kibbles; swiftly followed by another sixteen; superb! Of the thirty finally raised twelve were rock the others large pieces of gravel within a mud matrix; this form of spoil requires much effort to successfully empty the barrow. The plan for Saturday is to prepare the "pit" area to accommodate the next section of fixed ladder. Generator shows $\frac{1}{4}$ full; no fuel on site. To a desolate Roadside for an excellent pint; where Peter's plan to reduce of the bar's carbon footprint means no more toasty open fires; bugger.

Hours 5 (2377), Southend (1327), Kibbles 30 (4498), Nets 0 (798), Total 5296.

30th November Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00: Dark: Cold: Cloud 80%: Wind NW, F4: Visibility $\leq 20\text{Nm}$: CC Fuel: Ground very wet: The Plan: Dig. CC swiftly descended and began extending the "Pit" for installation of the next section of fixed ladder; excavating the face southward until level with the "Rib" to create sufficient room in which to work: hauling began at 18:05. The session produced twenty five lifts of which were three very heavy nets and twenty two kibbles six of which were rock, the rest being clays, muddy gravels and dreaded *Shitus Shitus*. Fairly shagged out the Team made for the Kilshanny House and some very nice pints

NB. Writing up his log the author became puzzled believing the 5000th kibble imminent; checking the excel table realized the confusion; mistaking kibble 4498 for 4998.

Checked the 2019 excel file to date, comparing log entries against excel input, errors of input found in several places: a slip of the keyboard, or more likely concentration?

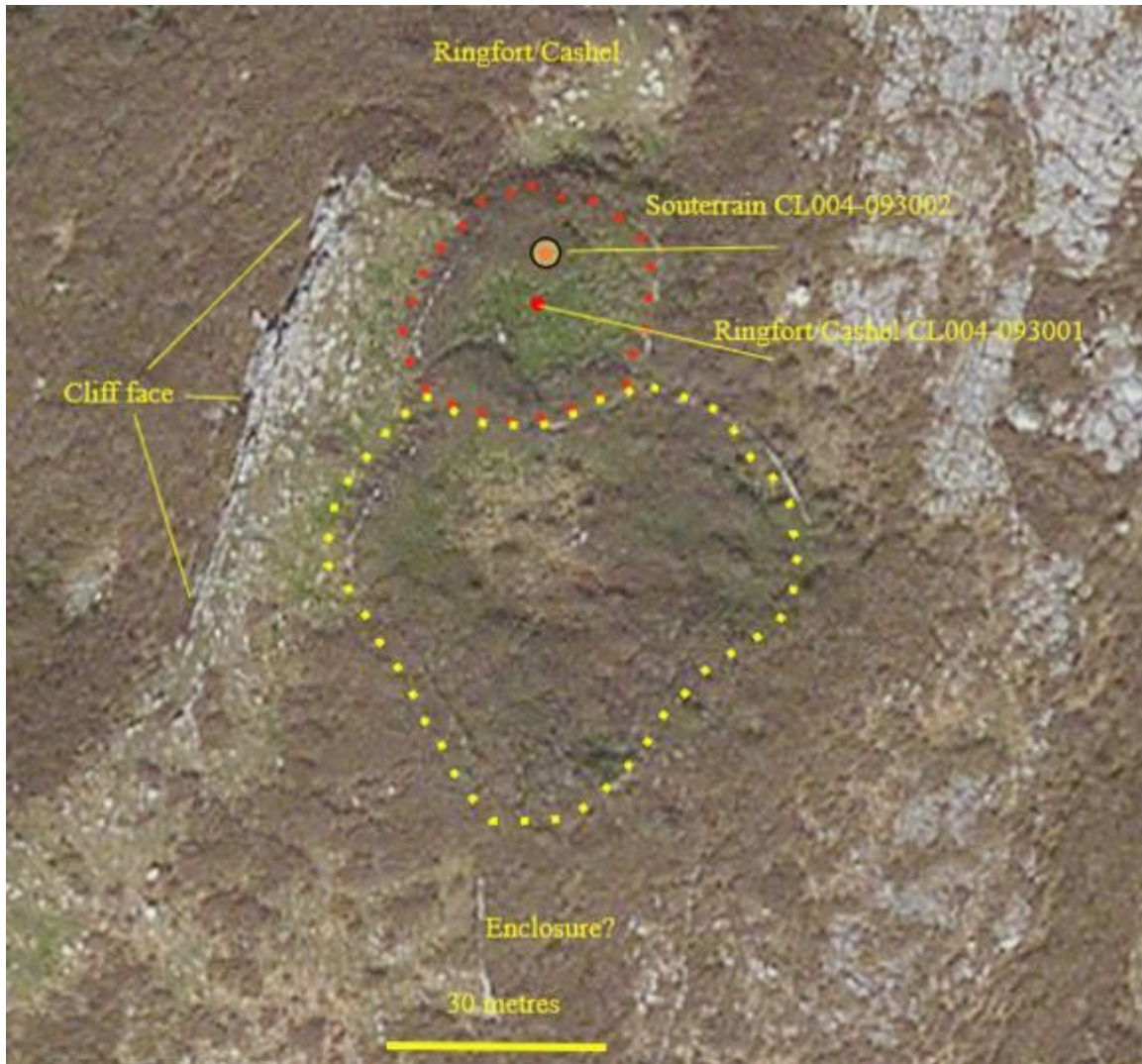
Hours 5 (2382), Southend (1332), Kibbles 22 (**4529**), Nets 3 (**807**), Total **5336**.

1st December Souterrain CL004-093002

Solo

13:30. Fabulous day: Bright: Chill: Wind NE, F2: Cloud 0%: Visibility, infinite. The plan: revisit Ringfort/Cashel, (CL004-093001), in Ballyryan, at ITM 509191 x 701795, (recorded on national database), to locate its souterrain; previously sought 10th August 2012. As many cattle with young present, parked adjacent Poulsallagh Bay; headed eastward, navigating north of the widespread herd. Two areas of thicket impede this route; these may be passed following narrow cattle pathways through, and beneath the 2.5 metre high foliage.

Viewed from the west the obscure outline of the Ringfort is situated on top a small vertical cliff some 6 – 8 metres above the western valley floor, which is filled by dense hazel and blackthorn. A gentle gradient of about 10 - 15° extends, and descends northward, also foliated. To the south a more rugged uneven surface with extensive areas of foliage descends 300 metres to the main road, (R477). The eastern area beyond the Ringfort was not visited. Very little, if any of the rampart is clearly visible; a small section of dry stone wall appears modern; suspect not original. Found a route through the thicket into the Ringfort; foliage inexorably occupying its interior. The route used is maintained by thin cattle seeking the sheltered superior grazing. The national ITM reference was followed across the interior to within five metres of the recorded entrance location, deep within a dense area of foliage. Curiously, from the suspected entrance position a taller shrub has spread a darker green canopy; something to aim at. An almost 360° panoramic view is available from this site; a raised, rib, of ground 100 metres west partly obscures the closer coastline, though views may be obtained toward the Islands, to the north and south also views of the sequence of the cliffs and terraces of Oughtdarra climbing up Knockaunsmountain. The outline of the associated enclosure is wholly obscured. Intend to return with loppers and cut a way through to the entrance location; optimistically the established foliage may have offered protection to the souterrain entrance from erosion by grazing cattle as has happened elsewhere. Minor issue when confronting Mother and calf beneath the thicket; Martha and the Vandella's "Nowhere to run" came to mind backing along the narrow path.



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Sub-circular ringfort and associated settlement enclosure.

2nd December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

09:30. Frost: Cold: Cloud 70%: Visibility 20Nm: Ground wet: Small stream. The Plan: Dig. Prior to commencing time was spent examining options of installing the next ladder section. The encroaching rib of rock from the west wall requires the ladder be moved east by some 6 inches, (150mm). The plan is to replace the two fixed ladders from the staging at -14m to -18m with a single ladder; this will remove the need to re-drill the middle stemple, which would require being suspended in a harness; accuracy of the bolt hole positions would suffer. Hauling began at 10:00; the pace again of one lift processed every five minutes. CC excavated a trench from the "pit" along the east wall to the south end to expose the "undercut" a little further. Of the twenty lifts three were very heavy nets, the seventeen kibbles comprized seven rock, the rest muddy gravels. Generator almost 1/2 full: no fuel on site. Linkage between winch pedal and actuating lever needs minor adjustment. Alas, Coast Guard duties meant no Roadside.

Hours 5 (2387), Southend (1337), Kibbles 20 (4549), Nets 0 (807), Total 5356.

7th December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester

18:00. Dark: Storm Atiyah approaches: Mild: Incessant rain; heavy showers: Wind W, increasing, F7 gusting 9: Ground awash: Large stream: The Plan; Dig. CC digging, PC winching, unloading and barrowing. Previous rain had produced a significant flow down the south end wall, among other sources. CC was incredibly lucky as a steady flow of water landed on the housing of the main light above the digging area producing a shower of water drenching all parts below, this kept CC's new oversuit nice and clean. As the session progressed the normal low rumble from the plumbing became a crescendo as the now regular heavy rain pulses swept eastward. 19:28 the wind began gusting force nine causing the winch canopy to consider flight training. Far below CC, aware of the increase in noise and cascading water continued to fill kibbles as water filled his wellies. Of the twenty lifts eight were muddy gravels, the rest were of nice clean washed rock. No issues tonight when emptying the barrow, it just poured out; rocks were thrown into the cavity adjacent the small tree, nearest the winch shed; this cavity is now filled so the ridgeline is the next area of deposition. The slack in the winch operating pedal linkage was shortened with fence wire; to be monitored, though worked well tonight, no sound of the winch "winding itself up" when started underload. Generator almost ¼ full: no fuel on site. To a quiet Kilshanny House; Popeye returns soon, as does Jim Warny.

Hours 5 (2392), Southend (1342), Kibbles 20 (4569), Nets 0 (807), Total 5376.

12th December

Following trip to Dublin struck down by the dreaded Lurgi; second dam year in a row.

21st December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

18:00; Dark: Mild turning cold: Wind E, F 2: Fog: Visibility ten metres: Medium stream: CC Fuel: The Plan Dig. TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. Arrived early to deliver some bottles of wine to Jonathon and Kathy and thank them for their kindness - tolerance. Delighted to be digging again; the Dreaded Lurgi having taking its toll on both PC, TB too, also recovering from a protracted illness, worked the southern area removing the remaining face left by CC; the floor now all but levelled off at -19.9m. Thoughts turned to PC building the 4.6m ladder intended to replace the existing two secured from/below the -14m staging, and installation of the next 2.3m section which will pretty much reach the present floor level. The session was tough on the invalids, though thirty one lifts were raised; one net and thirty kibbles, seven of which were coarse gravels, the remainder rocks, which were thrown onto the boulder pile recently flattened/gardened by CC during a visit to check the status of the site following a severe storm. The generator is around ½ full; no fuel on site: to the Kilshanny House.

Hours 7 (2399), Southend (1349), Kibbles 30 (4599), Nets 1 (808), Total 5407.

22nd December Knock

Nigel Burns

Picked up NB from the aerphort; 14:00 flight; delighted he's here.

23rd December Souterrain CL004-093002

Nigel Burns

13:30: Wind S, F2: Cold: Light showers: Visibility ≤20Nm. The Plan: access potential souterrain entrance within Cashel CL004-093001; Ballyryan: ITM 509191 x 701795. Uneventful, cattle free walk to the site; set about cutting a route through dense briar and hazel undergrowth through to the obvious "dark green" shrub. Enroute passed a low

profile group of boulders: reached the shrub which grows from the stonework of the Ringfort perimeter; the surrounding clear area beneath the shrub absent of clues indicative of an entrance. Returned to the group of boulders; closer inspection suggests this is the most likely spot for the recorded souterrain entrance. NB took many photographs.

23rd December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

18:00. Dark: Cold: Wind S, F2: Visibility $\geq 20\text{Nm}$: Medium stream: Ground sodden: Fuel TB? The Plan; Dig. NB delighted at progress since his last visit, 20th November 2017. NB and TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The session focused on finishing levelling off the floor. The deposit in the south rift left in situ. Of the forty lifts two were very heavy nets; the thirty eight kibbles comprised fourteen coarse gravels and twenty four of boulders. Total weight a minimum of 1.5 tonnes: to the Roadside for pints.

Hours 10 (2409), Southend (1359), Kibbles 38 (4637), Nets 2 (810), Total 5447.

24th December Cullaun I

Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

Wind NE, F2: Bright: Cold: The Plan; to assist Popeye with his project; investigation of erosion studs installed in the 1950/60s, intended to record limestone erosion in several cave streamways. The first dam in the upstream streamway was partly filled with debris NB and PC dug this out and cleared the 2 inch pipe through the dam; meanwhile TB moved upstream checking other associated factors. Stream flow was high, the result of last night having made about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of rain. TB pleased with today's progress; outstanding tasks include locating remaining stud positions. Enroute to the Roadside stopped at Michael Considine's home with bottles of drink for Padraig and himself.

25th December Cullaun II

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

Cold: 0°C: Wind NE, F2: Pockets of low cloud: Ground sodden: Following a change of plans PC rang around the Team who swiftly assembled in the parking area. The Plan: TB and CC to take photos of the erosion measuring studs while NB and PC took the high route to Pool Chamber; meet up there to press on to the pitch. High water flow saw the cascades an impressive sight. Along the streamway, below Pool Chamber, the high flow produced impressive waterfalls; the noise a delightful crescendo. Uneventful exit into a chill breeze: an excellent trip in good company.

26th December Souterrain CL009-021014

Nigel Burns

Cold: Light showers: Wind S. F2: Ground sodden. The Plan: to show NB the Lisnanroum souterrain and enclosure project and search for a souterrain NNE of Lisnanroum. Winter has reduced ground cover to a bare minimum, the result, many lump and bumps more visible than ever; and just as ever anonymous. The "burial mound" stands out very clear as does what appears to be the outline of a house in the original enclosure; a further survey visit is needed sometime January to take advantage of such clarity. The original gate area is much more visible owing to the foliage having died back. Photographs taken, the Team began to head to the location of the next souterrain. The route was through dense hazel, briar and blackthorn, all of which concealed treacherous, deep grykes, which regularly took their toll on the Team. A kilometre of hell later the souterrain was located within a denuded Cashel. It is a substantial construction in the form of an "L", though it may be larger in extent. Many more photos taken by NB; enroute to find shelter

for a brew up encountered Luke Davoren who took the Team to a curious enclosure recently exposed during hazel clearance. During enquiries discovered that the souterrain visited is on Davoren land; when requested PC received permission to work away on the site or any other on their land. Exchanged farewells; headed back for tonight's session.

26th December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

Mild: Foggy; cloud base 120m: Showers: Ground waterlogged: Large stream: The Plan; clear out the south rift. NB and TB digging: CC winching: PC unloading and barrowing. The awful deposit was reduced in the rift to just below existing floor level; there remains some deposit in the far end that needs removing. Depth measured from shaft collar at -20m. The session produced forty lifts of which two were nets, of the thirty eight kibbles twenty were of assorted clays and silts. Generator ¼ full: fuel on site. The retaining wall requires its top course to stabilize it, (at some 6 foot high), on the junction of the path and the west spoil dump: through rain and fog to the Roadside.

Hours 10 (2419), Southend (1369), Kibbles 38 (4675), Nets 2 (812), Total 5487.

28th December Black Head

Nigel Burns

11:50. Cold side of Mild: Wind SE, F6 gusting 8: Visibility ≤25Nm: The Plan; to walk to the summit cairn, (314m); wherein, incidentally, lay some of the remains of the very Late Martin Bishop. Wind force increased with elevation; prospecting for cave became moot, as remaining upright was the main preoccupation; a superb walk in rough conditions. Found a well preserved Goat Kid creel; most denuded, this one being almost complete offers a superb example of its simple shape and construction; nice.

28th December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

17:50. Dark: Mild: Cloud: Wind E, F6. Ground sodden: Medium stream: Visibility ≤25Nm. Fuel PC. The Plan: lower the floor by 0.5m; starting the south end. CC winching: NB and TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. The session's steady progress further exposed the developing undercut around the south/southeast wall, along with the ability to see down over two metres between the east wall and boulders; delighting the Team. The session produced forty lifts consisting four nets and thirty six kibbles, of which sixteen were gravels and clays. The gravel pile needs attention, and thought, as how best to stack further spoil therein. The boulder pile begins to encroach into the prepared western extension; care stacking boulders adjacent the field wall is required to avoid any embarrassing collapse. Generator ½ full: fuel on site. Wash tub needs cleaning out. Surfaces have become lethal, all need cleaning. Hose needs lengthening. Winch belt may need minor adjustment. Generator oil needs changing. Section of boulder retaining wall needs topping off. Replacement ladder needs building. NB departs tomorrow: to the Kilshanny for pints.

Hours 10 (2429), Southend (1379), Kibbles 36 (4711), Nets 4 (816), Total 5527.

30th December Considine's Cave (South End)

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

18:00. Dark: Wind E, F5/6: Visibility ≈35Nm: Cloud base ≈ 2000ft: Ground sodden: Medium stream: Last digging session of the year. The Plan: Dig. CC winching: TB digging: PC unloading and barrowing. PC arrived early to clear the duck boards of a build up of clay and lay pieces of carpet on the muddy sections of the barrow way reducing migration of silts onto the platform area. Popeye continued to advance the 0.5m face

northward toward the narrows producing thirty kibbles, of which fourteen were gravels and clays; also confirming the visible depth of 2.5m down between the wall and the boulders: generator fuel on site. To a very quiet Roadside for a very nice pint

Hours 7 (2436), Southend (1386), Kibbles 40 (4751), Nets 0 (816), Total 5567.

31st December Poulmagollum

Solo

Last trip of the year: Cloud base 800/1000ft: Wind E, F2: Visibility ≥ 20 Nm: Medium flow conditions. Laddered the entrance pitch and scampered off down the streamway to main junction, then up to Branch Passage cascade. Even though main stream flow was low before the first waterfall it and Branch Passage cascade were in a state of high flow.

Legend

CC	Cheg Chester	Doolin
JN	Jonathan Normoyle	Doolin
TB	Tony Boycott	Doolin
PC	Pat Cronin	Doolin
JSC	James S Cobbett	Panamá City, Panamá
DH	Dig Hastilow	Woolacombe, Devon
RD	Roger Day	Cambridge
MGL	Mark (Gonzo) Lumley	Castlemartin, Pembrokeshire
KL	Karen Lumley	Castlemartin, Pembrokeshire
BK	Batty Kerins	Finavarra
PK	Philomena Kerins	Finavarra, wife
LK	Lorraine Kerins	Finavarra, daughter
GK	Gerard Kerins	Finavarra, son
CF	Carl Fahy	Finavarra
NMcC	Noel McCarthy	National University of Ireland, Galway
MCo	Michelle Comber	National University of Ireland, Galway
TG	Thomas Griffin	Doonagore
GD	Greg Davoren	Kilcorney
MR	Matt Randall	UK
JW	Jim Warny	Ennis
CM	Cathal Mullane	Limerick