The Association

The American Spelean History Association (ASHA) is an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society and exists for the study, dissemination, and interpretation of spelean history, and related purposes. All persons who are interested in these goals are cordially invited to become members. Dues are $2 per issue of the Journal of Spelean History mailed to U.S. addresses. The rate for foreign members is U.S.$5.00 per issue for printed copies or $2.00 per issue for electronic (PDF) copies sent as email attachments. Checks should be made payable to “ASHA” and mailed to the treasurer. Checks must be payable in U.S. dollars and drawn on a U.S. bank.

The Journal

The Journal of Spelean History (JSH) is the Association’s publication and is mailed to all members. JSH includes articles covering a wide variety of topics relating to man’s use of caves, including historical cave explorations, saltpeter and other mineral extraction, and show cave development. Members are invited to contribute material and to comment on published material. ASHA assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

Authors are strongly encouraged to submit electronic copies in Microsoft Word, with minimal formatting, by email. Images should be saved as jpg. Photos and illustrations will be returned upon request. ASHA cannot publish copyrighted material without permission. Contributors are responsible for determining whether material is copyrighted and securing the appropriate permissions.

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Scanned digital copies of all issues over five years old may be viewed and downloaded at no cost on the ASHA website at www.cavehistory.org/back.html.

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Front Cover: Dr. John Croghan, courtesy of Historic Locust Grove, Louisville, KY.
See the article by Hobart, Thompson, and Warnell in this issue.
THE EARLY HOTELS AT MAMMOTH CAVE

Richard Hobart, Bob Thompson, and Norman Warnell

Mammoth Cave was under private ownership before it became a national park in 1941. For over 85 years, the cave was owned and operated by John Croghan and his heirs. Dr. John Croghan of Locust Grove had the foresight to preserve the cave and its surroundings for others to enjoy. It was while the cave was under the management of Croghan and his heirs, trustees, agents, lessees, and staff that extensive improvements were done at the cave including the building of hotels and other structures. Here is a look at the past hotel structures under the ownership of the Mammoth Cave Estate.

Mammoth Cave Hotel 1841 - 1916

Lodging has played an important role at Mammoth Cave since the first cave trips were given in 1816. From 1833 on, there has been some type of accommodations at the cave. The first lodging accommodation provided at Mammoth Cave was a hotel that originally started as a log cabin as shown in the painting above. This cabin was known as the Gatewood House as it was operated by Fleming Gatewood, once owner of Mammoth Cave.

![Log Cabin](image1.jpg)

The original log cabin was weatherboard and connected to the two-story hotel as shown above. Before the hotel fire in 1916, the log cabin was used as a kitchen and laundry room.

![Hotel Fire](image2.jpg)
“Mammoth Cave House” 1847.

This diagram drawing shows the stages of the Mammoth Cave Hotel from about 1835 to 1842 and changes up until 1916.
1. Represents the original log cabin that was built c. 1812 to house the saltpeter workers.

2. The Gatewood House, built before 1835. In the Robert Montgomery Bird painting, the artist depicts this building with the front facing towards the south of the hotel yard. The back of the building is facing the ravine that goes down to the cave. Attached to the Gatewood House is the original log cabin from the 1812 era. If one compares the 1835 painting to the 1889 photo shown on the previous page, you can see that the original log cabin roof runs on a slant where it was attached to the hotel. The Gatewood House had two 18 foot rooms on the first floor beneath a second story. There was also a 10 foot hallway which ran between the old cabin and the rooms in front which appear to be a dog-trot, a common feature in most log buildings at that time, which was apparently weather-boarded over when this painting was made. This was the earliest known hotel setup at Mammoth Cave until Franklin Gorin of Glasgow, purchased the cave on April 17, 1838.

3. Under Gorin, more rooms were added on to the Gatewood House by enlarging it to sleep 30 to 40 people.

4. (and)

5. Lodging at the cave was quickly expanded under the new ownership of John Croghan of Locust Grove, Louisville, KY. Croghan purchased the cave from Franklin Gorin on October 8, 1839. Adding to the existing structure, Croghan hired Joseph C. Shackelford to build two three-story buildings on the ends of the two-story hotel.

6. After Shackelford built the two three-story buildings, he built a second story building to the very west end of the hotel which is where the visitor waited to go on cave trips. The building also had a second story overlook where visitors could look over the hotel yard to the south and the river valley to the west.

7. After constructing the two-story building to the north, Shackelford built a long row of 20 cabins. The long row of cabins (no. 7) and the two-story building (no. 6) were the only buildings that were not attached to the main hotel. According to Croghan, by the end of 1841, accommodations at the cave were “extensive and comfortable.” In the spring of 1842, Croghan continued to construct large buildings for the increasing number of visitors.

8. After the long row of cabins was built, Shackelford built the Dining Room/Ballroom building.

9. The kitchen was the last building to be built onto the hotel. The food for visitors came from the 1812 log cabin which was used as a kitchen up until then. After the kitchen was built in 1842, there were few changes made to the hotel until the turn of the century.

10. Around 1900, the Estate started to board over some of the windows on the overlook (no. 6) and also some of the windows on the south side (no. 5).

11. A veranda was added to the front of the hotel around 1910.
12. A garage was built along the side of the dining room/ballroom most likely the same time they built the veranda. When the spacious frame hotel building was completed, it was in the shape of the letter “L” with wide verandas and a covered portico.

The Mammoth Cave Hotel 1841-1916.

Floor Plan of the Mammoth Cave Hotel 1841-1916.
According to the floor plans of the old hotel from 1841-1916, the large frame hotel consisted of mainly two floors, three floors on part of the hotel. The front, first floor, main entrance to the hotel, had offices and a bar room to the left of the long hallway. To the right of the long hallway, on the first floor, was a Dining Room that was 95 feet long with a 40 foot kitchen. On the second floor was a Ballroom, 95 feet long. Most of the bedrooms of the hotel were located on the first and second floors of the two-story and three-story buildings that were outside behind the front of the main entrance to the hotel. The long row of cabins also had bedrooms.

There was a 387 foot walkway or hallway that ran the whole length of the hotel from the front entrance to the back porch where visitors waited to go on the cave trips. The walkway/hallway went inside the front entrance of the first three-story building until it reached the outside of the hotel and then went under a long covered porch of the two-story building until it reached another three-story building where it went inside and then outside again under another covered porch of another two-story building until it reached the end of the hotel where visitors waited for cave trips. This walkway traversed five buildings total.

A veranda was added to the front entrance of the hotel during the 1910s. This grand old hotel provided guests with reasonable accommodations for 75 years until the hotel and what was considered the “log row” burned to the ground on December 9, 1916.

A large guest cottage (Log Bungalow) was built to the south of the Mammoth Cave Hotel in 1912 and was converted into a Cave Office after the 1916 hotel fire.
Cave Office, c. 1923. The photo shows the large guest cottage (Log Bungalow) after being converted into the Cave Office.

Mammoth Cave Hotel 1917 - 1924
The management of the Estate was slow to provide a new hotel for guests after the 1916 hotel fire. The management wanted visitors to visit the cave after the fire, but discouraged them from spending the night because of the lack of accommodations. The Estate could make more money on the cave than they could on the hotel.

Mammoth Cave trustee, Albert C. Janin made the statement to T. W. Thomas in the Neale Building in Bowling Green, KY, “My object was to show that there is absolutely no necessity of our having a big hotel at the Cave to accommodate boarders. Our object is to have accommodations enough for visitors who will take two trips in the Cave and go away and make room for new Cave visitors who will pay our $3.00 Cave visits against the unquestionable bill of hotel boards.”

The two-story log bungalow, smaller cottages and tents were the only accommodations available for visitors at Mammoth Cave after the hotel fire until a somewhat larger hotel building was constructed in 1919.

Two years after the fire, the Estate had one cottage with seven bedrooms, a sitting room and four baths, another cottage with five bedrooms and another room that could be used for a bedroom and four combination houses and tents which could accommodate in each, eight visitors. Janin had started the construction of a 14 room, two-story building, containing a dining room large enough to accommodate over 100 at a time. It was built of lumber cut on the place. Yet, the accommodations were not suitable for the usual travel of visitors to the cave.

In 1919, a 20-room Hotel was built and called the “Rooming House.” A porch was added on the front in 1920. Lumber was cut from trees on the Estate to build the 1919 Hotel.

**Mammoth Cave Hotel 1925 - 1930**

![The 1925 Mammoth Cave Hotel and Cave Office, c. 1928.](image-url)
In 1925, a new 22 room Hotel with Cave Office and kitchen was built to accommodate more visitors to the cave. All the rooms were on the second floor. The new 1925 Hotel was built just to the right of the Open-Air Pavilion. The Open-Air Pavilion was built c.1923 as an add-on to the Cave Office (Log Bungalow). When the 1925 Hotel was built, the 1919 Hotel became the Hotel Annex.

**Interior of the 1925 Mammoth Cave Hotel and Cave Office, c. 1928.**

The interior of the 1925 Mammoth Cave Hotel showing the front desk, hotel entrance to the right, and the doors to the dining room in the back. The Cave Office (not shown) was to the left of photo.

**The 1925 Hotel (right) Open-Air Pavilion (left) c. 1928.**
The 1925 Hotel (right) The 1919 Hotel (left) Open-Air Pavilion (middle) c. 1928.

The 1919 Hotel and Cottages (left) Log Bungalow and Open Air Pavilion (right) c. 1928.

Mammoth Cave Hotel 1930 - 1979

In 1930, an addition with 21 rooms was added to the Hotel on the left side of the 1925 Hotel after taking apart the Open-Air Pavilion. The new Hotel had a dining room with kitchen. Each room had a bath with running water and electric. This Hotel was demolished in 1979.
Sources


*History of Mammoth Cave* by O. P. Shackelford, unpublished manuscript, no date.

*The Old Mammoth Cave Estate* by Norman Warnell, unpublished manuscript, no date.

Gatewood House Watercolor Painting courtesy of Robert Montgomery Bird.

Map Drawing of the Mammoth Cave Hotel courtesy of Richard Hobart.

Floor Plan of the Mammoth Cave Hotel courtesy of National Park Service.

Artist Engraving of the “Mammoth Cave House” courtesy of Thomas Lera.

Photos courtesy of Bradley Cantrell Jr., Richard Hobart, and Norman Warnell.
AN ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATION OF THE NITRE AND MINING BUREAU IN GEORGIA AT THE TWILIGHT OF THE CONFEDERACY

Donald B. Ball

In response to an ever growing need for, and chronic shortage of, niter for the production of gunpowder, on April 11, 1862, the Confederate Congress authorized the creation of a “Corps of officers for the working of nitre caves” (Lester and Bromwell 1864:163-164; see also Matthews, ed. 1862:27-28). Under the terms of this act, President Jefferson Davis was “...authorized to appoint a corps of officers, consisting of one superintendent, with the rank, pay, and allowances of a major of artillery, four assistants, with the rank, pay, and allowances of a captain of artillery, eight subordinates, with the rank, pay, and allowances of first lieutenants of artillery” (Lester and Bromwell 1864:163). The Nitre and Mining Bureau per se was formally established in an act passed April 22, 1863 (ibid.:164). As subsequently amended on June 9, 1864, the staff of the Bureau was expanded to include “...one colonel as chief of bureau, two lieutenant-colonels, six majors, twelve captains, who shall have the same pay and allowances prescribed for officers of cavalry of the same grade” (ibid.: 306). The same amendment also provided “That chemists and professional assistants, absolutely essential for the operations of the bureau, not to exceed six of each class, shall be appointed by the Secretary of War, with pay in no case to be above that of lieutenant-colonel of the commissioned corps” (ibid.).

Commanded by Major (later Commissary-General) Isaac Munroe St. John (1827-1880) from his office in Richmond, Virginia, “...on Bank, st., near 9th, (in newly painted brick houses [sic])” (Anonymous 1863:14), the Bureau was consistently praised for being one of the government’s most efficiently operated agencies with one of the smallest staffs. A particularly informative summary of the operations and organization of the Bureau appears in St. John (1900). Informative descriptions of the effective but labor intensive extractive methods used by the Bureau’s workmen for obtaining niter from cave deposits and protected soil beneath structures are discussed in some detail in both LeConte (1862) and Rains (1861). Indeed, in a report dated October 13, 1864, from Brig. General Josiah Gorgas to CSA Secretary of War James A. Seddon, it was noted (Gorgas 1876:59) that:

The mechanical means of the [Confederate Ordnance] Bureau for the production of powder are ample for a war conducted on any scale, and are so arranged as to be almost beyond casualty. The supply depends alone on that of saltpeter and sulphur, and for the present on the former. While we must still depend on importation as our chief supply of nitre, it will be indispensable that the efforts of the Nitre and Mining Bureau be sustained, in order that the home production may be assured. A certain force of white and black labor ought to be permanently assigned to this duty of procuring nitre and sulphur and the other operations of the Nitre and Mining Bureau.

Understandably, a considerable body of scholarship has been directed toward documenting and better understanding the subsequently initiated “grass roots” operations of the Confederate Nitre and Mining Bureau within a framework of the geographical or political Districts into which it was organized and this effort has resulted in a number of informative and well-researched papers on the people, places, and processes associated with the extraction of niter from the caves of the South. But a minimal sampling of this literature includes sources such as Ball and O’Dell (2001), Osterlund (1982), Powers (1981), Schroeder-Lein (1986), Sheridan (1980), and Smith (1980, 1981, 1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1996). However, it should be noted that the majority of these studies have been oriented toward examining the workings of the Nitre and Mining Bureau as it functioned on a more or less day-to-day basis prior to the latter phases of the war which witnessed the fall of Atlanta and landward division of the Confederacy brought about by Sherman’s “March to the Sea.”
As the military position of Gen. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia continued to deteriorate in early 1865 due to (among other reasons) increased desertions and numerous logistical problems, it was eventually necessary for him to inform President Davis on the morning of Sunday, April 2, that Richmond could no longer be defended and he should evacuate the Confederacy’s capital by that evening. By the early hours of Monday, April 3, the last government train had departed Richmond and Jefferson Davis was in an unsuccessful flight to the Trans-Mississippi Department hoping to re-establish the Confederacy in Texas. Later that same day much of Richmond would be in ashes as fires set to destroy government warehouses burned out of control and consumed much of the city (cf. Lankford 2002). Less than a week later, Robert E. Lee surrendered to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865, at the village of Appomattox Court House, Virginia.

It is within this chronological context that the following “Circular Letter” authored by Capt. Henry P. Farrow, Superintendent of the Nitre and Mining Bureau, District of Georgia, and dated April 24, 1865, takes on particular historical importance, most notably its verification as to the continued—though rapidly collapsing—operation of the Nitre and Mining Bureau so late in the war in an area presumably captured and controlled by Union forces. While any niter produced by the operatives under Farrow’s command would have been routinely shipped to the Augusta Powder Mill in Augusta, Georgia (cf. Rains 1882), by this late date there was little or no assurance that it could be delivered. It is abundantly obvious from Farrow’s remarks that the only medium of exchange which had any real value at this time was food and the Nitre Bureau was hard pressed to deliver that, a circumstance which may have prompted him to instruct his agents “to return anything for which payment was to be made in Corn.” With the subsequent surrender of CSA Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to US Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman in North Carolina on April 26, 1865, and the capture of Jefferson Davis near Irwinville, (southwestern) Georgia, on the morning of May 10, 1865, any further activity on the part of the Bureau within the state was fated to become an inconsequential matter. The citation for this single page document is:

Farrow, Henry P.

1865 Circular Letter. [CSA] Office Nitre and Mining Bureau, District of Georgia, Atlanta.

A photographic reproduction of Farrow’s Circular, described as broadside measuring 37 x 21 cm, appears in Parrish and Willingham (1984:plate facing pg. 258). According to these authors, an original copy of the Circular is on file at the University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

***************

CIRCULAR LETTER.

OFFICE NITRE AND MINING BUREAU, DIST. OF GA.

Atlanta, Ga., April 24, 1865

To the Agents of the Nitre and Mining Bureau in Northern Georgia:

As your reports show that we have collected much material in some of the counties in Northern Georgia which has not been paid for, and as the chances of getting provisions into Cobb, Bartow, and Floyd [counties] are becoming very bad, I desire you to communicate the fact to the people to whom we owe provisions, that they may not depend upon us for supplies. I regret that we have not been able to meet every obligation we have made, and those who have had an
opportunity of knowing will bear evidence that I have done all in my power to do so. My business extends over the entire State, as I have operations going on in seventy-two different counties, and as I have more than three thousand operatives to feed and look after; but nevertheless I have given every attention that could be given to this matter, and would have succeeded had it not been for the unexpected and rapid movements of the enemy. Columbus and Macon are now in the hands of the enemy, and unless some unforeseen occurrence should enable me to get Corn from South-Western Georgia or Central Alabama, it will be impossible for us to meet the demands against us in Corn. I hereunto append a letter written to Col. Spullook, a short time since, for your information and for the information of those interested; and as intimated in it, you are at liberty to return anything for which payment was to be made in Corn, to the parties who delivered it, taking up our receipts for the same. I will yet do anything in my power to aid in relieving the people of our impoverished country.

HENRY P. FARROW,
Capt. and Supt. Nitre and Mining Bureau, District of Georgia

***************

OFFICE NITRE AND MINING BUREAU, DIST. OF GA.

Macon, April 17, 1865

To Col. J. M. Spullook, Ass’t Supt. Nitre and Mining Bureau, Rome, Ga.:

Dear Sir,—Your letter of the 10th instant [i.e., April 10, 1865], urging me to send forward the provisions designed for Floyd and adjoining counties, and informing me that some to whom we are indebted are almost in a state of starvation, has just been received. From my own knowledge of the state of things in the up country, I know the appeals to you must be many and urgent. No one could have been more anxious than I have been, nor could any one have made more faithful efforts and exertions than I have made, to introduce into Northern Georgia supplies for the relief of the people. After spending a few weeks in Cobb, Bartow and Floyd [counties], urging the people to bring forward all Lead, Copper, Brass, Zinc, Wagons, Wagon Material, &c., &c., —which I had been particularly ordered to do by my superior officer—I left Kingston on the 26th of February [1865] and arrived at my office in Macon on the 3d of March. After procuring all necessary papers and making all preliminary arrangements requisite for business, I left Macon on the 7th of March in company with my agent, Maj. William Milner, for the grain-growing portion of Alabama, below Selma. Maj. Milner was not only acting as my agent, but, by my consent, had received from quite a number of the citizens of our county funds with which to procure them Corn, which Corn was to be forwarded to Kingston through the same agencies as our Government Corn. I had forwarded to the head of the Blue Mountain Railroad two teams to haul Corn from there to the Steam Boat on Coosa River, a distance of twenty-two miles, and had perfected arrangements by which six additional teams were to arrive there ten days later.

Upon my arrival at Selma, I lost no time in taking such steps as were necessary to procure the desired amount of Corn, and soon succeeded in coming to an understanding with the Quartermaster of the Post, by which he was to furnish me all the Corn I desired for this Bureau, and I then went to Marion, Perry county, where I made arrangements for the purchase of five thousand bushels, at five dollars per bushel, for those who had sent money by us for such purposes. Thus it seemed we were about to be able to meet every demand against us in Northern Georgia, and also aid many of our citizens in Bartow county. Unfortunately, however, the military situation was rapidly becoming such as caused apprehension on my part that the Corn could be gotten to Rome [Georgia], all communications would be destroyed and the country occupied by the enemy. Being deeply impressed with this idea, I then declined receiving the Corn from the Quartermaster at Selma or closing the purchase in Perry county until further developments. Upon getting further information, I determined on the 15th of March to abandon the entire enterprise, and proceed forthwith to Blue Mountain, where I ordered the teams to return to Kingston. Maj. Milner was also ordered to proceed to Bartow county, and inform the people that the scheme for providing Corn from that direction was a failure, in consequence of the movements of the enemy.

I deeply regretted the necessity for the abandonment of this enterprise, as the success of my department as well as the comfort and welfare of my neighbors and friends, depended upon it. But subsequent developments show I did right, as the enemy occupied Selma within two weeks from that time. I then determined to obtain the supplies in South-Western
Georgia, and ship them by Railroad to Atlanta, from which point I shall haul them by wagon. The distance over which it will now be necessary to haul by wagon will be three times as great as it would have been by Rome, but that is not an insurmountable difficulty. As early as possible after my return from Selma, I sent an agent, Capt. L. P. Dodge, Acting Inspector General for my District, into South-Western Georgia upon this business. He writes me that he has already drawn upon requisition enough Corn to meet all demands against me in Bartow and Floyd [counties], and that Corn can be purchased in small quantities at fifteen dollars per bushel. I shall proceed without delay to hasten all the Corn I possibly can to Atlanta, to be hauled from there to Bartow and Floyd, as the enemy have captured Selma and Montgomery, and are now moving upon Columbus, Ga., which of course threatens Macon. Apprehensions are already entertained as to the safety of this city, as we have not a force sufficient for its defense. Should I fail to get this Corn through to Atlanta, (which failure will be avoided if possible) and should all Railroad communication with South-Western Georgia, as well as Central Alabama be destroyed, then I see no possible chance to introduce into Bartow county and Floyd the supplies which I so greatly desired to send up. It may be, however, that Railroad communications will not be destroyed, and in that event the supplies will yet be sent forward as rapidly as possible. I have instructed my agent at Kingston, and now extend the same instructions through you to my agent at Rome, not to remove such things as the people have delivered to us until we are able to deliver to them the compensation promised them; and should it become impossible for us, in consequence of the enemy in Alabama and this State, to compensate them as promised them, I shall require each one of my agents to return to them such things as they have delivered to us. I will pursue this course, notwithstanding the orders I have been acting under, for I never have and never will, knowingly, impose upon the people, and if their things are to be taken from them, and they are to be left without compensation, some other officer must perform that duty, as I will not do it.

I hope that Railroad communication between South-Western Georgia and Atlanta will not be destroyed, and that I may yet be able to send forward the supplies; but should I fail, from the inability of our forces to defend and protect our cities and Railroads, then the course above indicated will be pursued.

Very respectfully, &c.,

H. P. FARROW,
Capt. and Supt. Nitre and Mining Bureau, District of Georgia

Literature Cited


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Matthews, James Muscoe (editor) (1862). Public Laws of the Confederate States of America, Passed at the First Session of the First Congress; 1862. R. M. Smith, Printer to the Congress, Richmond.


NSS CONVENTION CACHETS AND CANCELLATIONS

Thomas Lera

Since 1979, the Postal Service’s *Postal Operations Manual* (POM) has provided standards for postmarks applied to single-piece First-Class Mail.¹ The postmarking process uses the three basic methods of imprinting: automated, mechanized, and manual. Manual postmarks are applied by hand-stamp devices by Postal Service employees for local cancellations or philatelic requests. The term “postal marking” refers specifically to the part containing the date and posting location, although the term often is used interchangeably with “cancellation.”² The portion of a cancellation does not contain writing but is designed to deface the stamp is also referred to as the “obliteration.”

Cancellation, or cancel for short, is a postal marking which includes lines and bars applied on a postage stamp to deface the stamp and prevent its re-use. They come in a variety of designs, shapes, sizes and colors and show the date and post office location from where the stamps were mailed.

The United States Postal Service distinguishes between special cancellations, which have a caption publicizing an event, and pictorial cancellations, which contain an image of some sort.³ Sometimes cancellations combine both of these types as exhibited in the NSS Convention cancellation.

Official pictorial cancellations are applied at post offices for a limited time only. Event covers are an example of this type of decorated, stamped, and commemorative cancellation created specifically to celebrate a special event like an International Congress or the NSS Convention. The envelope design, called a “cachet,” reflects a special attribute, historical portrait, or local cave pertaining to the convention, and is generally placed on the left side of the envelope (Fig. 1).

![Figure 1. Cachet with cancellation for the 1992 NSS Convention at Salem, Indiana.](image_url)

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³ Scott 2005 Specialized Catalog of United States Stamps and Covers, Scott Publishing Company. Sidney, OH: p.28-29A
Every summer since the 1991 NSS Convention at Cobleskill, New York, Larry Cohen, Roger McClure, and/or Ronnie Nixon from the Speleo-Philatelic Section of the NSS have prepared special NSS Convention cachets, and worked with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to create a ‘Convention Station’ cancellation. Each convention cancellation reflects the unique character and theme of the NSS Convention. Included on the cancellation are the words “National Speleological Society Convention Station,” the convention’s location, zip code, and at least one stylized bat.

![Convention Station Cancellation Example](image.png)

Fig. 2. Wednesday Cancellation submitted to the USPO at Waynesville, Missouri.

These cancellations are applied at the United States Post Office nearest the convention. Each day of convention, Monday through Friday, Section representatives visit the post office to have cancellations applied to the special convention envelopes (Fig. 2). Appropriate first-class postage is applied to the envelope, and a cancellation handstamp is used with the day's date. Five different cancels are created, the only difference being the date. The USPS destroys each day's cancellation handstamp after it is used.

During conventions, the Speleo-Philatelic Section sells stamped convention envelopes at Speleobooks to NSS members as supplies last.4

The following table shows several different cancellations, with dates, and, in italics, the theme and cachet designs.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 16-21, 1995 Blacksburg, VA</td>
<td>blacksburg va</td>
<td>July 16-21, 1995</td>
<td>Convention Station — The Bridal Chamber, Weyers Cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 3-7, 1992 Salem, IN</td>
<td>salem in</td>
<td>August 3-7, 1992</td>
<td>The Heartlands of the Karstland — Threading the Auger-Hole, Wyandot Cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 5-9, 1996 Salida, CO</td>
<td>salida co</td>
<td>August 5-9, 1996</td>
<td>Heart of the Rockies — The Dairy and Churn, Manitou Grand Cavers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2-6, 1993 Pendleton, OR</td>
<td>pendleton or</td>
<td>August 2-6, 1993</td>
<td>Oregon Trail — Natural Cave, Douglas Co., Oregon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
June 19-25, 1994  Bracketville, TX
Cave the Republic of Texas — Texas Blind Salamander, Typhlomolge rathbuni Stejneger

August 3-7, 1998  Sewanee, TN
Cave Softly — The Monument Pillar — Higgenbotham Cave

July 12-16, 1999  Twin Falls, ID
Convention Station — Indian Tunnel, Craters of the Moon

August 4-8, 2003  Porterville, CA
Convention Station — Calaveras Cave, Mercer Caverns

June 26-30, 2000  Dailey, WV
Cave the Millennium — Stratosphere Balloon Cave, Pendleton Co., W. Va.

July 12-16, 2004  Marquette, MI
Convention Station — Bear Cave, Berrien Springs, Michigan
July 23-27, 2001   Rock Castle Co, KY

NSS 60th Anniversary 1941-2001 — Great Salt Petre Cave, KY

July 4-8, 2005   Huntsville, AL

Convention Station — Alabama Cave

June 24-28, 2002   Camden, ME

Convention Station — Anemone Cave, Mt. Desert Island, ME

August 7-11, 2006   Bellingham, WA

Convention Station — Peterson Cave near Mt. St. Helens, Lewis River Valley

July 23-27, 2007   Marengo, IN

Convention Station — The Pillar of the Constitution, Wyandot Cave

July 18-22, 2011   Glenwood Springs, CO

Convention Station — Hubbard’s Cave, CO
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<td>Lake City, FL</td>
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THE HISTORY OF ROUBIDOUX CAVE
Jack Speece

Roubidoux Cave, Pulaski County, Missouri, has quite a history beginning long before its written record in 1816. It was the home of Native Americans, outlaws, bushwhackers, and tavern owners. It was mined for saltpeter during the early settlement of the region. Several commercialization attempts were made. The current survey reports the system at over 8500 feet.

CAVERS AND CONJURERS: A KINDRED BREED
Dr. Cato Holler, Jr.

After many years of pursuing my two favorite hobbies, caving and magic, it suddenly dawned on me that even though they may appear totally unrelated, in reality they do have much in common.

As far back as the Ice Age, magicians and shamans decorated the walls of their caves with their mystical artwork. To the laymen, caves often represent a world of mystery, as is the world of the conjurer, filled with amazement and secret wonders. Many of the props, scenery, and posters used by magicians over the years have utilized strong elements of the mysterious underground, including bats, dragons, satanic figures, and actual representations of caves themselves. I also discovered that numerous other cavers have taken up the conjuring arts including the well-known cave photographer and lecturer Russell T. Neville. In expanding the idea of lovers of adventure being attracted to magic, I found that the old Rough Rider himself, Teddy Roosevelt, was a big fan of the magical arts and even a personal friend of Harry Houdini as was adventure author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Several of our astronauts including Buzz Aldrin, and even sports figures like Muhammad Ali have a keen interest in conjuring. Just as cavers enjoy that rush of adrenalin as they push that virgin lead, so too do magicians as they step out on the stage to perform their latest miracles to the applause and admiration of their appreciative audiences.

SEARCHING FOR THE SPELEAN HISTORY OF MISSOURI
H. Dwight Weaver

Missouri caves are a vast resource for spelean history research, but a topic for study that has been largely ignored by professional historians of Missouri as well as cavers. The presentation reviews the author's recent book Missouri Caves in History and Legend published by the University of Missouri Press. The book details the social and cultural history of Missouri caves from the Ice Age to modern times covering such topics as saltpeter, onyx, and guano mining. Chapters are devoted to such intriguing subjects as early bear hunting; the use of caves for water supply and cool storage; for the making of beer and moonshine; as repositories for Pleistocene animal bones as well as human burials; the foolishness of buried treasure seekers; the vandalism that occurred in the caves before the coming of electricity and air conditioning when people used caves for parties and picnics and caused great damage to speleothems; the coming of the show cave industry, organized caving and today’s efforts to protect and preserve the cave resources of Missouri. The author explains how he became a caver with an interest in writing about Missouri caves and the methods and difficulties he faced over the past five decades in his effort to unlock the spelean history Missouri.

KARL GORDON HENIZE AND HIS LIFE OF ADVENTURE
Charles A. Lundquist

Karl Henize was born on October 17, 1926, in Ohio. While a university student in Virginia, he was recruited into caving by Bill Stephenson. Bill picked up Karl, who was hitchhiking, and took him on a caving trip. Karl, with NSS #535, was one of the founders of the University of Virginia Grotto. Karl also developed an interest in astronomy at the U of VA. After receiving BA and MS degrees, he accepted employment by the University of Michigan in 1948 to make
observations of the southern sky at an observatory in South Africa. In 1951, he returned to the U of MI, completing a
PhD in astronomy in 1954. There, he met and married Caroline Weber, who became an NSS member (#3331) in 1955.
When artificial satellites became imminent, Karl moved to Massachusetts where he was employed by the Smithsonian
Astrophysical Observatory. He was in charge of deploying a global network of cameras to observe satellites. Karl and
Caroline maintained their NSS membership through 1957. In 1959 Karl accepted a professorship at Northwestern
University, where he stayed until 1967. He then joined the NASA Astronaut Corps. In 1985, he flew on the Space
Shuttle Mission 51-F. After retiring as an astronaut, he continued to work for NASA. In 1993, he took a leave to join a
scientific mission climbing Mount Everest. He became a victim of altitude sickness and died at an advanced base camp
on October 5, 1993. He was buried on Mount Everest.

PRESERVING THE STORY OF THE NSS THROUGH THE EYE OF THE CAMERA

Paul Damon

In 2016, the NSS officially celebrates the 75th Anniversary of its founding in 1941. In 1991, a publication was issued
commemorating the 50th year of the NSS through a combination of text and some historical photography. For 2016, the
NSS plans to update this previously recorded story through a new publication presenting a primarily photographic view
of the past 75 years, rather than just updating the 1991 text.

These efforts have been ongoing for several years, and various NSS resources have been reviewed. However, several
important areas of the NSS history have not been covered as yet. At this point it is hoped that by publicizing these needs
in a group setting, suggestions can be made as to where to find additional photographic history. Suggestions from
members of ASHA or other Society members, at this session, will be quite welcome. We particularly need help in the
area of exploration technology, that is, advancements due to the members of the Society. But, we could also use rarely-
seen photos from some of the early conventions, or from the C-3 Expedition, etc. Let the eye of the camera tell us the
story.

THE CAVES OF THOMAS JEFFERSON’S NOTES ON THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Bert Ashbrook

response to queries about each State’s natural history and economy posed in 1780 by François de Marbois, secretary of
the French delegation to the new nation. Governor Jefferson of Virginia received those queries, but the British invasion
of Virginia delayed his response until December 1781. The future President then spent more than three years gathering
information, revising and expanding his responses to create the famous treatise about the Commonwealth’s natural
history, economy, anthropology, and governance.

In his Notes, Jefferson commented about “many caverns of very considerable extent” in Virginia but he discussed five in
particular: Madison’s Cave (Augusta Co.), Zane’s Cave (Frederick Co.), Blowing Cave (Bath Co.), Gap (Cudjo’s) Cave
(Lee Co.), and the Natural Bridge (Rockingham Co.). Jefferson visited Madison’s Cave at least twice, once to explore its
water-filled passages by canoe, and a second time in October 1783 to prepare the earliest known American cave map. He
enlisted his friend Isaac Zane to measure the temperature in Zane’s cave. Jefferson apparently learned about Gap Cave
personally from Thomas Walker, the family friend who first described the cave on his famous 1750 expedition through
the Cumberland Gap. Jefferson had long admired the Natural Bridge, which was on land he had patented in 1774.
Jefferson included three of these—Madison’s Cave, Zane’s Cave, and the Natural Bridge—as the 1786 map
accompanying later editions of his Notes.

A SHORT VIDEO LOOK AT FLINT RIDGE, 90 YEARS AFTER THE FLOYD COLLINS TRAGEDY

John and Nick Benton

This year of 2015 is the 90th anniversary of the entrapment, ordeal, and attempted rescue and death of caver Floyd
Collins in what is now part of Mammoth Cave National Park in central Kentucky. In January 1925, Collins became
trapped in Sand Cave while searching for a potential show cave that would be on the main flow of tourists to nearby
Mammoth Cave. The rescue attempts endured for over two weeks, and captured the nations headlines and radio
coverage at the time.
Not a lot has changed on or under Flint Ridge over the years. The Sand Cave site is mostly undeveloped and owned by the National Park Service (NPS). Farther back, Floyd’s family home is still there along with the old visitor center for Floyd Collins Crystal Cave. Floyd and most of his family are buried on Flint Ridge, either in Mammoth Cave Baptist Church Cemetery or the nearly forgotten Daniel’s Cemetery. Crystal Cave itself, discovered by Floyd, is seldom visited having been closed as a show cave soon after purchase by the NPS in the early 1960’s. The authors have edited together some segments of Flint Ridge and Floyd Collins from both a historical look back and as seen today from a video standpoint.

**RECENT INVESTIGATIONS IN TENNESSEE SALTPETER CAVES**

**Joseph Douglas**

This paper summarizes recent field work in Tennessee caves conducted from 2011 to 2015 by the author, Marion Smith, Kristen Bobo, and others as part of a larger project to collect information about saltpeter mining and processing in the state. The author uses examples from a dozen saltpeter caves to discuss the types of physical evidence for mining or processing extant in saltpeter caves in the Twenty-first Century. These include waste rocks, sediment removal areas, tally marks, vat and vat remains, and mining tools, which are diagnostic for the activity. There is also evidence which is suggestive but not definitive, such as trail-building and evidence of historic lighting technologies, which can be helpful in assessing a cave’s cultural resources. Several of the caves are new sites, either previously entirely unknown, such as Anderson Saltpeter Cave, or caves that were previously known but not as saltpeter sources, such as Blowing Hole. The problem of chronology can sometimes be solved through solid archaeological field work. Because the cave saltpeter mining industry was fragmented and pre-dates the revolution in business record-keeping of the late 19th century, the industry is poorly documented, making field identification of saltpeter cave sites especially important.

**DID HE REALLY SEE? HOW AN IRISH CAVE PARTICIPATED IN MEDIEVAL “SCIENCE”**

**Cordelia Ross**

In the 12th century, Henry of Saltrey wrote the *Tractatus de Purgotatio Sancti Patricii*—or *St. Patrick’s Purgatory*. This medieval text describes an Irish knight’s pilgrimage into a cave called St. Patrick’s Purgatory on Station Island, Ireland. Though other similar texts talk about dreams and deathbed visions, only the *Tractatus* describes a corporeal man who goes to a real cave. The *Tractatus’s* attention to topography and the natural world indicates its participation in the “new philosophy” Neo-Platonic naturalists were promoting.

Specifically, the *Tractatus* concerns itself with matters of sight and the acquisition of knowledge. The Catholic Church at the time was advocating for a less empirical approach to knowledge, asking that people read the “old books” to answer their questions about the world. The naturalists condemned this approach and claimed that God created the natural world and it was their Christian duty to observe and obtain knowledge about the world as a way to understand God’s objective.

The *Tractatus* is one monk’s solution to the problem. He presents a real cave and describes how it leads to a Christian space. But he also points out that it’s hard to see in the cave, while still advocating for the connection between sight and knowledge. The text’s attention to the problems inherent in relying on vision exclusively argues for a more comprehensive approach to knowledge that includes sight, but prioritizes faith.
CAVES FOR CHEESE MAKING

DISCOVERED IN AMERICA

Because an observant scientist noticed heavy frost on a lantern, during a chance visit to a mushroom-grower's cave, American dairymen may now produce a cheese that is said to vie in flavor with the famed Roquefort of France. The ridicule not convicted Prof. W. E. Combs, of the University of Minnesota, that sandstone caverns of the Mississippi River bluffs matched European caves in providing just the right temperature and humidity for ripening this delicacy. As a trial, he had 10,000 pounds of Roquefort-type cheese prepared from cow's milk and ripened in one of the caves. The experiment, it has just been announced, has been completely successful, yielding a product of fine flavor, and consequently, Prof. Combs concludes that Minnesota alone can produce as much Roquefort-type cheese yearly as the whole country now imports. What makes this project commercially practical is simply that the natural caves remove need for expensive air-conditioning; for no mystery of climate or geography determines what cheese can be made. Nature need not even be depended on to provide the peculiar bacteria and molds that help develop the flavors of various types, because government agencies now supply pure cultures of the organisms. Only slight variations in the fundamental processes of cheese-making—curling the milk, cooking, salting, and shaping the curd, and ripening the new or "green" cheese—are needed to produce all the 400 or more named varieties of cheese.

Common American cheese owes its mild flavor to being placed in cold storage almost as soon as made. Swiss cheese, in contrast, is ripened for weeks or months in a warm cellar to favor development of flavor-forming bacteria. Camembert, Stilton, and Roquefort are among the varieties that derive their piquant flavor from molds; the greenish-blue mold of Roquefort is cultivated on meat bread, dried, and sprinkled with a salt shaker between layers of the new cheese as it is shaped in hoops. An expert can tell from the mold made when a Swiss cheese is tapped, whether it is yet mature.

From Popular Science, April, 1935.
Clipping used as an illustration in Greg Brick’s *SUBTERRANEAN TWIN CITIES* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009). The carving of these sewer tunnels in the 1930s revealed hitherto unknown natural caves in the St. Peter Sandstone.
BOOK REVIEW


In *Shaman*, author Kim Robinson portrays a short period in the life of a young man training to become the new shaman of this tribe. The story is set during the period of time encompassing the Middle to Upper Paleolithic transition (approximately 32,000 years ago); an ancient time when modern humans roamed a world that still sustained a dwindling population of Neanderthals.

We first meet Loon during his wander, a difficult rite of passage for boys to enter into manhood. As we get to know Loon, we come to appreciate the fact that he abhors both his teacher and his shaman training—having been forced into this situation by circumstances beyond his control. Indeed, he only continues along this path because he wants to indulge his overwhelming desire to paint images in caves. But he soon realizes that this aspect of shamanism represents only a small fraction of a shaman’s life and overall responsibilities. The day-to-day life of a shaman, let alone learning the complex and myriad details, are of only minor interest to him. This conflict places considerable strain on the young man as he journeys into adulthood in search of his own place in the world.

Most of the book is quite descriptive in nature, often to the point of distraction. During the first half of the book, descriptions are rather terse, diminishing their effectiveness in painting an image. In the latter half of the book, however, Robinson utilizes a more rambling descriptive style although it is often of a long and drawn-out nature. In this respect, he never seems to hit an appropriate stride.

While graphic detail is certainly necessary in setting the stage for this story of our distant forebears, page after page of often-repetitive descriptions—provided largely at the expense of character and plot development—eventually become tedious. Thus, while we quickly gain an appreciation of Robinson’s main protagonist, Loon, development of other important characters is minimal and interspersed in small segments throughout the book. Overall, this makes it somewhat more difficult to appreciate who these individuals actually are. Some of the minor characters, who nonetheless do figure prominently from time to time, essentially remain as unknown entities.

The story tends to jump back and forth in a largely disjointed fashion, with little apparent cohesion from one chapter to the next. Throughout much of the first half of the book, I found myself waiting for a plot to develop. In fact, it isn’t until a point well beyond the middle of the book that a plot and a flowing storyline finally do begin to take shape, providing an impetus for continued reading and a desire to see how this nascent focus of the book plays out. However, the excitement was short-lived and not sustainable because of the author’s almost immediate reversion back to his reliance on descriptive detail. At the height of the story’s drama, for example, Loon and his companions flee in a headlong dash across a wintry landscape, pursued by fiendish members of another tribe intent on murdering or enslaving them. For more than 60 pages, the group scurries through the forest, scrambling up one hill after another and then down through one ravine after another. In the rather anticlimactic finale to this seemingly never-ending chase, Loon and his
companions—hungry, weak, lost, and injured—manage to reach the safety of their clan without ever even confronting their pursuers.

During a thin slice of geologic time at the boundary between the Middle and Upper Paleolithic, modern humans and Neanderthals briefly shared a common stage. While Neanderthals are portrayed in two separate settings in the book, almost nothing is said about their culture or history, leaving readers to wonder just who these ancient people really were. Moreover, an opportunity for creating a literary interface between Neanderthals and modern *Homo sapiens* (see, for example, Auel, 1980) is left virtually untouched. Rather, the Neanderthals seem to have been inserted into Robinson’s novel simply as background material. In our first introduction to these people, the author refers to them as lunkheads and tasks them with mounting a vicious and apparently unprovoked attack on Loon. In doing so, he leaves a lasting negative impression of these people, reminiscent of the dehumanizing and brutish stereotype originally depicted by Marcellin Boule that was so influential for such a long period of time. Even though subsequently referred to as the “old ones” (the age of the classic Neanderthal spanned a time frame from about 250,000 years ago until about 30,000 years ago), and one even assists the young shaman-to-be and his teacher in the life-and-death struggle noted above, the lunkhead image may, sadly, remain firmly entrenched in a reader’s mind.

In the final pages of the book, as Loon begins to fulfill his shamanic destiny, he enters the sacred cave in the nearby hills and Begins his period of painting. He works to create murals of the images he carries in his mind. Although this was the portion of the book that would have held the most fascination for readers interested in cave art and the role of the shaman, it proved to be disappointing. The author barely touches on the symbolic meaning of these ancient paintings, an especially noteworthy omission in the context of the shaman-related plot. This seems to be another potential opportunity missed. Considering the availability of a rich literature arguing for an intimate relationship between decorated caves and shamanism (see, for example, Clottes and Lewis-Williams, 1998; Lewis-Williams, 2002, 2004; Pearson, 2002; and Whitley, 2009), it seems somewhat surprising that the author preferred to invest his protagonist’s shamanic character in a less mystical artistic persona (see, for example, Guthrie’s, 2005, interpretation of Paleolithic cave art).

For the interested Ice-Age reader, Robinson offers a perspective of human life in the distant past. In addressing the conflicting interests, concerns, and hardships of one young man, whose life seems to be sliding awry, he provides an element of humanity. However, the book is not without its downsides; opportunities to incorporate interesting and relevant material into the plot seem to have been sacrificed for the sake of unending descriptive detail.


MEMBER HELP REQUESTED: Bill Halliday, Bert Ashbrook, and Jim McConkey are working on the history of the maps of Grand Caverns, VA. About 1969, Bill bought a manuscript J. Peck map from a map dealer after some other caver had to refuse it because of the cost, and suggested Bill as a potential buyer instead. The long-forgotten name and location of the dealer have become important in their research. Anyone recalling any details of this transaction should contact Bill, Bert, or Jim. Bill's email is wrhbna@bellsouth.net.