

Plant Quarry

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FIND 600-FOOT-LONG CAVE IN QUARRY WALL

By Frank N. Jones

During the past few days some of the quarry workers at the Santa Cruz Portland Cement company, three miles east of Davenport in the coastal hills, have developed an intriguing pastime—they investigate a newly-discovered limestone cavern at least 600 feet long.

The cavern mouth, half way up the side of the 500-foot-deep quarry, was accidentally uncovered a few days ago after a blast. The cavern winds back and forth through the limestone formation.

So far no one has found the end but it is believed to have another opening as there is a steady current of air the entire length. Workmen found a piece of clothesline and some initials on a wall which bears out the two-entrance theory. If the owner of the initials "K.K." will come forward and tell how he got in the cave he might solve a mystery.

About 100 feet from the entrance on in are stalactite and stalagmite formations which would be very familiar to a resident of the limestone regions of New Mexico or Kentucky.

Four quarrymen, Mathew Gorman, Jim Doyle, Arnold Johnson, and Bill Scharfenstein, say they have gone back to a point probably 600 feet in the sidehill. Robert A. Kinzie Jr., cement plant superintendent, has penetrated nearly that far and is ripe for a climb-squeeze to the end.

Scharfenstein and Doyle say that they went back so far it took them 12 minutes to come back. (Naturally they investigated during their lunch hour.)

The mouth is reached by a path along the quarry side. The cavern passage varies from four feet at the entrance, gets so narrow a man cannot get through in an upright position, and then toward the 600-foot point, widens at least to two large rooms. One of them, says Doyle, is 50 feet wide, 100 feet long, and at least 12 feet high.

The passage is lined, top, bottom, and sides with white and brown stalactite and stalagmite limestone formations which give a spooky, glistening effect by flashlight. (In case you have forgotten your high school geology, a stalactite is caused by water dropping which forms an icicle-like formation on a ceiling or wall. The stalagmite is the

inverted stalactite found on cavern floors.)

Kinzie pointed out the dark coloring comes from dust which filters in and mixes with the water. Water seeps in through cracks in the formation of the entire hill as it has been doing for untold thousands of years. It evaporates, leaving the calcium carbonate formation known as limestone.

The superintendent said there are many caves in the quarry area, some discovered before 1906 when the present company began operations. The newly-discovered cave is one of the largest found to date. Lime is essential in cement manufacture. It is also used for making glass, soap, and steel.

The one catch to the quarry cave is that it cannot be seen by the public. If visitors were permitted, work would have to cease as the lime rock is blasted out of the hill. However, Kinzie and the four quarrymen are fascinated by those initials and will probably investigate right to the end of the passage, including what lies around a 40-foot drop at one point near the end.

If they don't develop claustrophobia, as the writer, a veteran of a climb of 115 feet up the plant smokestack did, there may be a future report on the quarry cave.

Bill May Regulate Signs Advertising Bargain Gasoline

Sacramento, May 19 (AP).—Those little signs advertising gasoline at "5 cents off" may be regulated from the highways.

The assembly has passed and sent to the senate a bill requiring that such signs also include the total price of the gasoline offered, its brand name and the total prices and names of all other brands offered for sale at the station.

It was lambasted as "a monopoly bill" by Assemblyman Sam L. Heisinger, Fresno, but its author, Assemblyman Laughlin E. Waters, Los Angeles, said the law change is needed to curb deceptive advertising.

The measure passed by a 56 to 17 vote.

Early French and Spanish settlers of New Orleans built their houses on stilts.