

ŠKADAVNICA CAVE EXPLORED BY ENGLISH TRAVELLERS IN 1737

KAKO STA ANGLEŠKA POPOTNIKA 1737 RAZISKOVALA JAMO ŠKADAVNICO

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Izvleček

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Trevor R. Shaw: Kako sta angleška popotnika 1737 raziskovala jamo Škadavnico

Majhno jamo Škadavnico sta raziskovala leta 1737 dva angleška potnika, Richard Poccocke in Jeremiah Milles. Ta obisk pa je bistveno starejši od kasnejših raziskav te štajerske jame severovzhodno od Ljubljane. Njuni opisi Škadavnice so prvič objavljeni v tem prispevku, z nekaj poročili o krajših potovanjih po Sloveniji, na Cerkniško jezero in o obisku štirih jam iz okolice Postojne.

Ključne besede: Poccocke, Milles, speleologija, geologija, zgodovina, biografija, Slovenija, Škadavnica.

Abstract

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Trevor R. Shaw: Škadavnica cave explored by English travellers in 1737

The small cave of Skadavnica was explored in 1737 by two English travellers, Richard Poccocke and Jeremiah Milles, thus doubling the length of time since the first cave was reported in north-eastern Slovenia east of Ljubljana. Their descriptions of it are printed here for the first time, with some account of the rest of their short tour in Slovenia during which they visited Cerkniško jezero and four caves near Postojna.

Key words: Poccocke, Milles, speleology, history, biography, Slovenia, Škadavnica.

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INTRODUCTION

It had been thought that the earliest record of a cave in Slovenian Styria, indeed of any cave in north-eastern Slovenia east of Ljubljana, was a mention of jama Pekel near Šempeter in 1860 (Štorman 1991). Habe et al. (1978) state that it was discovered in that year.

Škadavnica, a small cave about 1,5 km north-west of Vransko and 42 km north-east of Ljubljana (Fig. 1) was thought to have remained unrecorded until 1902, when cave fauna was collected there.

This paper shows that Škadavnica had, in fact, been explored and described by two English travellers, Richard Pococke and Jeremiah Milles, in 1737.

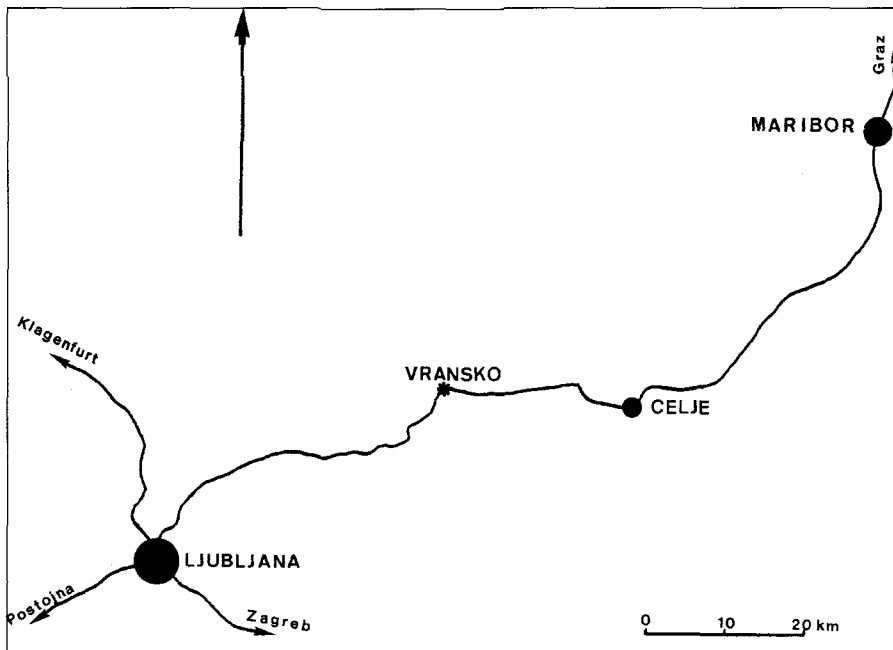


Fig. 1: Map showing location of Vransko.

ŠKADAVNICA TODAY

The name of this cave has been spelled in several ways. 'Škadavnica', as preferred here, is used in the *Krajevni Leksikon Slovenije* (Natek 1976a; b), by Radešček (1993) in his description of the cave, and in the unpublished Kataster folder in the Karst Research Institute at Postojna; it is also the form painted on the rock outside the cave entrance. Naraglav (1977) uses "Ško-

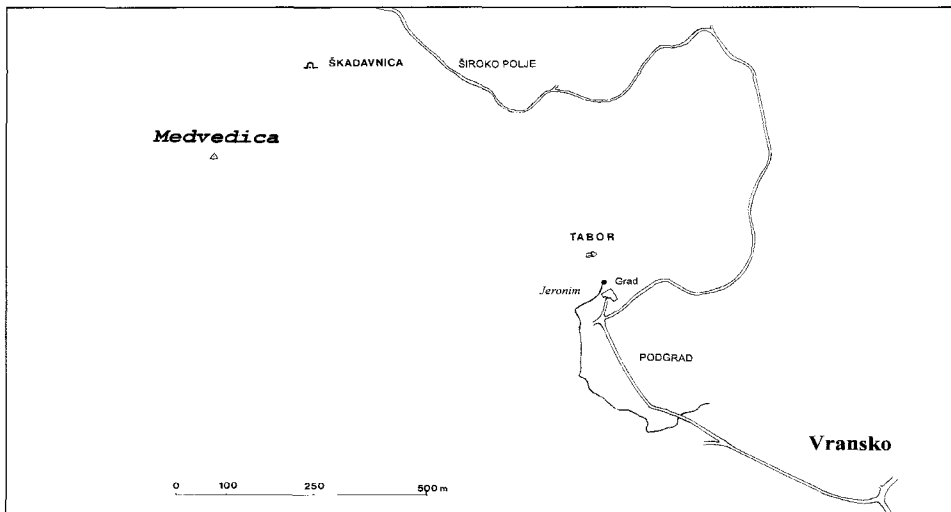


Fig. 2: Škadavnica cave and its surroundings, showing also Podgrajska graščina (described by Poccocke as “a Gentlemans house”) and the rising at Pogreška jama.

davnica” (which is also given as an alternative in the Kataster and used on the 1973 plan). Kocbek (1926) uses ‘Škadovnica’ and Radešček (1993) gives this also as an alternative.

The entrance is approximately 1,5 km in a west-north-westerly direction from the church in Vransko. Part way up the north-east slope of the hill Medvedica (Fig. 2), it is best approached by the motorable track from Podgrad, through Široko polje towards Treska. The final 150 m from the track is done on foot through a plantation of conifers which makes the entrance very difficult to locate. The cave is some 700 m west-north-west of Tabor, the prominent white-painted church on the hill top above the buildings at Jeronim, and which is mentioned in the 1737 account.

The 1973 survey (Fig. 3) makes detailed description of the cave unnecessary. The entrance (Fig. 4) is 5 m

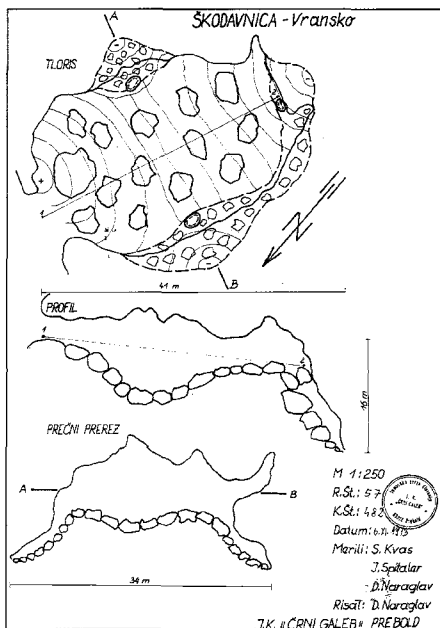


Fig. 3: Survey of Škadavnica cave made in 1973 by members of the Jamarski Klub “Črni galeb” of Prebold, reproduced with their permission.

wide and opens directly in the hillside, with no cliff or other indication of its presence. The main chamber, the only chamber in fact (Fig. 5), is oval in shape and measures 41 m long by 34 m broad at its widest point. It slopes downwards from the entrance and its floor is entirely covered with boulders. There are many holes between and beneath these boulders, three of which are deeper than the rest; the largest of all is at the back of the cave and reaches its deepest point, 16 m below the entrance. A little flowstone remains on the walls near some of these holes. The cave is dry, and daylight penetrates, dimly, even to the back.

Another small cave in the vicinity was also visited in 1737 and so is described here too. Immediately to the south of the church Tabor, at the foot of a steep wooded hillside, is a large house Podgrajska graščina (Fig. 6) together with its block of former stables. The building is now (1996) being restored but, as will be seen, it is much the same as it was 250 years ago. Behind it, close up under the cliff, is the rising of the Podgrajščica (or Pogrešca) stream which emerges from Pogreška jama (Fig. 7). The stream outside the cave is now confined in a concrete channel which may have raised the water level somewhat. The stream entrance is about 1,5 m wide and 1 m high above the water; a dry entrance close by (50 cm x 1,2 m high) leads to the water also.

20th CENTURY HISTORY OF ŠKADAVNICA

The earliest reference to Škadavnica known until now has been that of Penecke (1904), who in 1902 discovered there and in Štabirnica cave the first cave beetles to be found in Štajerska (Slovenian Styria). Naraglav (1977) drew attention to this but did not cite the original paper.

In 1926 Kocbek described Škadavnica briefly, saying that it was 40 m long and 30 m wide, with stalactites. He mentioned also the rising at Pogreška jama, which was said must be long because a draught can be felt at the entrance.

Egon Pretner (1937) visited the Škadavnica cave in July and September 1937, just 200 years after Pococke and Milles, collecting beetles. The hillside around the entrance was overgrown with scrub at that time. His sketch plan and section are reproduced as Fig. 8, and he described the main chamber as 50 m long and 30 m wide. One of the holes in the floor was said to continue for a long way but he did not explore it. Some flowstone was noticed on the right hand side.

Members of the future Jamarski Klub "Črni galeb" of Prebold made their first exploration of the cave on 25 May 1969, Tito's birthday holiday (Vedenik, pers. com., 3 Oct 1995). Some flowstone and dull stalactites on the roof were noticed. The Club returned on 6 November 1973 and made the survey printed here as Fig. 3 (Naraglav & Kvas 1973). A path then led to the entrance, around

which was a more open mixed woodland than today.

Both Škadavnica and Pogreška jama were made more widely known by Natek (1976 a; b) in the *Krajevni Leksikon Slovenije* but this contains no new information.

The latest account of the cave appears in Radešček's (1993) "Guide to the Postman's Cave Route".

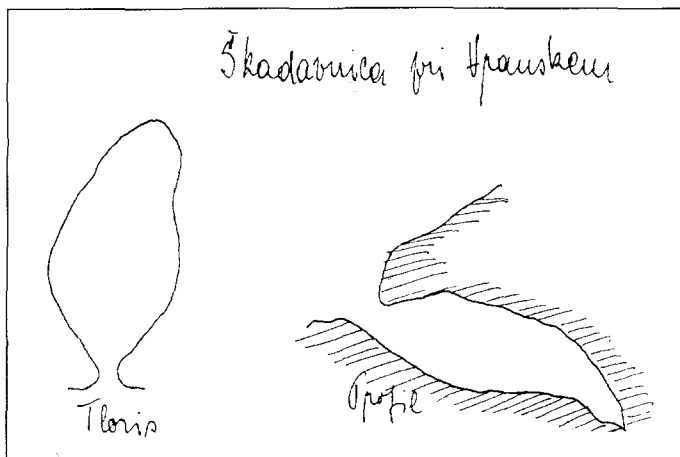


Fig. 8: Sketch plan and section of Škadavnica, made in 1937 by Egon Pretner (from the *Cave Kataster of the Karst Research Institute, Postojna*. No scale).

POCOCKE

Turning now from the present to the past, an outline is given of the lives of the two men who explored Škadavnica in 1737.

Richard Pockocke (Fig. 9) was born at Southampton in England in 1704. He went to Corpus Christi College Oxford in 1720 and graduated BA (Bachelor of Arts) in 1725 and DCL (Doctor of Civil Law) in 1733. Already in 1725 he was appointed Precentor, one of the Canons, at Lismore cathedral in Ireland.

Immediately after gaining his doctorate in 1733 he started on his series of foreign tours, which continued until 1741. These tours, together with those of Milles who accompanied him on some of them, are treated separately below. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society in the year of his return from his travels, perhaps in recognition of their value. It is probable that he was awarded an honorary LL D



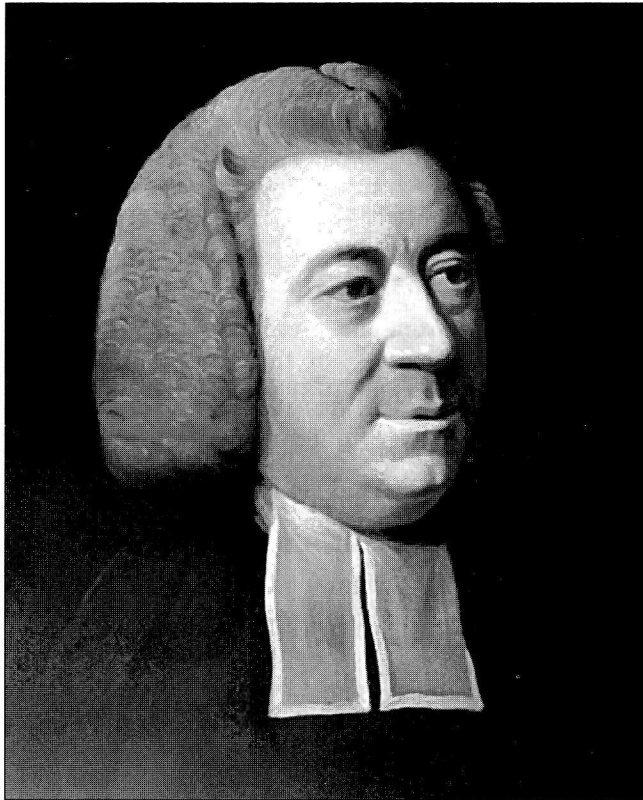
Fig. 9: Richard Pockocke in later life (from Pockocke 1887). A younger portrait is reproduced in fig. 11.

(Doctorate of Laws) for the same reason, for he uses this degree on the title page of his book in 1743, rather than DCL.

In 1744, when his first series of travels was over and his book written, he was made Precentor of Waterford cathedral. Then in 1756 he became Bishop of Ossory, also in Ireland. In July 1765 he was appointed Bishop of Meath but a few months later he died, on 25 September (Anon. 1765; Kemp 1887; Foster 1891; Wroth 1896).

MILLES

Jeremiah Milles (Fig. 10) was Pococke's cousin. He was born in 1714, probably in Cornwall. In 1729 he entered Corpus Christi College, Oxford, becoming BA in 1733 just before his travels with Pococke, and DD (Doctor of Divinity) in 1747. From 1735 to 1745, as a priest, he was Treasurer of Lismore cathedral and for much of this time he was also Precentor at Waterford. In 1747 he was made Precentor of Exeter cathedral (England), a post he retained until he was appointed Dean there in 1762. Milles was interested in archaeology from an early age, being elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1742 and becoming president of the Society of Antiquaries in 1768. He died in London on 13 February 1784 (Courtney 1894).



*Fig. 10: Jeremiah Milles in later life. An oil painting by Nathaniel Dance, or a later copy of it, in the collection of the the Society of Antiquaries of London and reproduced with their permission. His strange wig was apparently so notorious as to attract a humorous cartoon in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (Anon. 1782).*

THEIR TRAVELS

Before coming to their Slovenia visit of 1737 and their exploration of Škavadavnica and other caves there, it is useful to summarize Pococke and Milles's other travels, and to review the extent of their interest in caves elsewhere. In this way the characters and interests of the two men should become apparent.

Their first tour abroad was in France and Italy, from September 1733 to July 1734. Thus they were about 29 and 19 years old respectively when they set out from England. Milles had just left Oxford and Pococke had gained his doctorate in the same year. In the summer of 1735 Milles alone travelled in central and eastern England.

Then came their major tour together which included Slovenia and from which Pococke (1743-45) continued alone to Egypt and the Middle East. They left England on 31 May 1736 and travelled through Belgium, Holland, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Slovenia and Istria to Italy again. From there Pococke sailed from Livorno for Alexandria on 18 September 1737, and Milles (1737a; 1737b) returned over the Brenner Pass and through Austria, Germany and Belgium to Dunkerque (29 November 1737) and London. Pococke meanwhile landed in Egypt in October and spent the next four years travelling there and in the region which is now Israel, Lebanon and Syria, in Cyprus, Crete and the Greek islands, and then through Turkey, Greece, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland and Belgium, reaching London on 10 September 1741. So enthusiastic had Pococke become after travelling in the Middle East that he had his portrait painted in Turkish dress (Fig. 11).

At the time of these travels, dates were sometimes reckoned by the Old Style (Julian) calendar, and sometimes



Fig. 11: Richard Pococke in Turkish dress. Probably painted in 1740 when he and the painter were both in Constantinople, it shows him three years older than when he was in Slovenia. An oil painting by Jean-Etienne Liotard in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire at Geneva and reproduced with their permission.

by the New Style (Gregorian) calendar used today which was not formally adopted in Great Britain until 1752. In the New Style calendar the same day had a date eleven days 'later' than it did by the Old Style. Pococke and Milles used both forms in their writings but in this paper all have been converted to New Style.

Later in life Pococke (1887; 1888) made several series of tours in the British Isles visiting many parts that were little known and describing them accurately in his diaries. His travels in England were made mainly between 1750 and 1757, with a few later. Irish tours took place in 1749, 1752 and 1758; and he visited Scotland in 1747, 1750 and 1760.

Milles (1735-43), too, explored parts of Great Britain, but less extensively than his cousin. Between 1738 and 1743 he made several tours in southern and western England and in Wales, but there is no record of his going further afield.

THEIR INTEREST IN CAVES

As will be seen shortly, the caves that Pococke and Milles found in Slovenia in 1737 occupied a great deal of their attention. The earlier parts of their European travels seem to have resulted in no such visits and it is likely that they had not, by that stage, seen any of the British caves. Not only had neither of them made any extensive tours in Britain, but they never compared what they saw in Slovenia with caves they had known at home, as travellers so often did. Cadell (1820), for example, likened Vilenica jama with Peak Cavern in Derbyshire; and Pococke (1751) in his later tours compared caves in the north of England with two he had seen previously in the Midlands.

Nevertheless when they passed near the Drachenloch at Mixnitz on 13 June 1737, only a few weeks before arriving in Slovenia, they were sufficiently interested to comment on it and to regret that they were unable to explore it.

In the later stages of his tour Pococke visited several caves and it seems that he made a point of enquiring if there were any to be seen. On 23 June 1738 he went into a cave 29 km south-east of Tripoli in the Lebanon, comparing the stalactites in it with those "in the grotts of Carniola". In Crete the following year he explored a small cave on Mount Ida (7 September) and a larger stalactite cave near Hania on 24 September. The ice cave of Grace Dieu near Besançon in France was visited in June 1741.

The very fact that the caves in Slovenia were described in such detail in Pococke's (1743-45) published book is evidence of the interest they held for him, for in this *Description of the East, and some other countries* only about 140 pages out of a total of 886 are devoted to his crossing the whole of mainland Europe, and many parts of his journey are not described at all.

In England Pococke (1750; 1888, p.152-3) went into Wookey Hole in Somerset on 22 October 1750. On 24 and 28 May of the following year

(Pococke 1751 ff.17-19; 1888 p. 192, 196-8) he visited several caves in western Yorkshire - Boreham Cave, Dowkabottom Cave, Weathercote Cave, Jingle Pot, Hurtle Pot, Yordas Cave and Tatham Wife Hole, though of these it was only Boreham and Yordas that he actually entered. Jingle Pot and Yordas he compared with Eldon Hole and Peak Cavern respectively, as if he had seen these previously. He may have done this when he was in Derbyshire in 1743 but his manuscript record of that journey, formerly "in the possession of an Irish gentleman" (Kemp 1887), cannot now be traced.

The Scottish cave of Smoo, a limestone cave on the extreme northern coast of Sutherland, was seen at the end of June 1760 and the then celebrated stalactite cave at Slains in Aberdeenshire a month later (Pococke 1887).

Milles did much less travelling than Pococke after their two European tours together. In England he seems not to have visited the limestone areas of Derbyshire and northern England, and when he was in Somerset his travel diary makes no mention of Wookey Hole. Nevertheless his name is coupled with early records of caves in Devon, the county surrounding his cathedral at Exeter. He accumulated information about Devon with the intention of producing a history and description of it. This was never published but the manuscript materials for it still exist in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The answers to a series of questionnaires he sent out (Milles c.1750) are supplemented in the draft text written in his own handwriting (Milles c.1760). The latter includes references to caves which Milles himself had explored in Buckfastleigh and the nearby village of Dean Prior.

His continuing interest in caves is again shown by two letters he wrote in 1775 and 1776 to George Catcott, commenting on the draft of Catcott's (1792) book on Penpark Hole at Bristol. The letters were printed with the book.

SLOVENIA JULY 1737

The Sources

As with much of the travels made jointly by Pococke and Milles between 1733 and 1737, there are four sources of information on the Slovene part of their tour. These supplement and complement each other, as well as (sometimes) copying one from another.

The most accessible source is Pococke's published book (1743-45) (Fig. 12), most of which is devoted to his travels in Egypt and the Middle East, together with Cyprus, Crete and parts of Greece. Physically it is a large and impressive book, consisting of two folio volumes 42 cm in height and containing almost 900 pages besides maps and illustrations. As already mentioned, it contains a much fuller account of the visit to Slovenia than it does of most of the travelling in mainland Europe, but the dates of particular visits are often not stated in it. The English edition was followed by a German translation (Pococke 1754-55), a French translation (1772-73) and then a Dutch translation

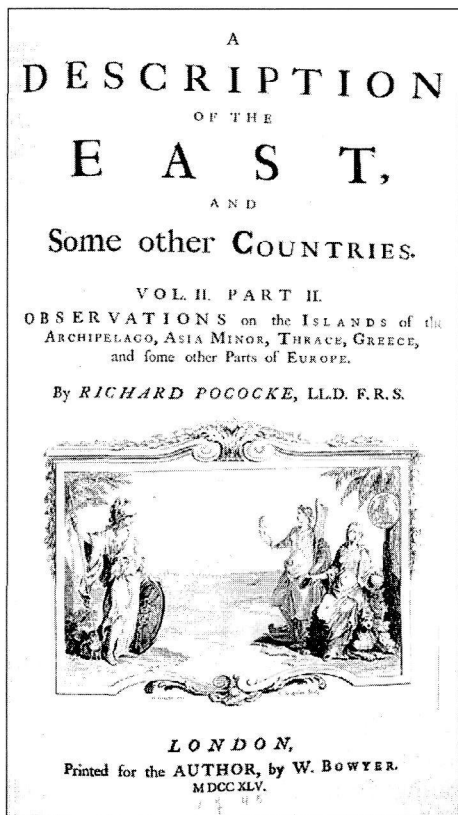


Fig 12: The title page of the volume of Pococke's book which describes the journey in Slovenia.

published at Utrecht in 1776-86. So the travels were widely known throughout Europe.

Of the manuscript sources the most detailed is Pococke's 'Journal of Travels' between 1733 and 1741, in 19 volumes, of which volume 16 (Pococke 1737) describes the journey through Slovenia and includes the detailed description of the Škavadnica cave printed here as an Appendix (pp. 000-000). Again, though, precise dates are often lacking. The letters that Pococke (1736-37) wrote to his mother have far less detail but do furnish reliable dates.

Milles's main travel diary (1736-37a) ends on 10 June 1737, just before arrival in Slovenia. But his volume of letters written to the Bishop of Waterford (Milles 1736-37b) covers the Slovene visit, providing considerable detail in places, and also dates. Although these sources differ in many ways it so happens that the descriptions of the caves around Postojna are almost identical in three of them, for the printed book is based on Pococke's journal, which in turn is copied from Milles's letters to the Bishop. Not so

for the Škavadnica accounts, which are different (but not conflicting) in all the sources.

Carmichael (1991; 1992) has commented on their principal interests in Slovenia which she regards as mainly botany and architecture, and on the different styles of their writing.

The Journey

The two men entered Slovenia from Gorica on 7 July 1737 and travelled through Vipava to the mercury mines at Idrija, as most travellers did at that time. Thence they continued to Vrhnika (10 July) and, because the road to Ljubljana was so bad, they went there by boat down the Ljubljanica river, arriving at Ljubljana on 11 July. It was in the course of a four day excursion from there to Celje and back (Fig. 1) that they visited the Škavadnica cave,

Pococke's account of which (1737, ff.120-122) is considered later. Then they went to Cerknica (18 July) and stayed there for two days, giving a detailed description of the lake and its water sinks, followed by a short visit to Rakov Škočjan. At Planina (21 July) they saw the entrance of Planinska jama though the water was too high for them to enter, and on the same day they explored the main Predjama cave beneath the castle. On the following day they saw both Postojnska jama and Črna jama.

Overall, five of the eighteen days they spent in Slovenia were occupied in visiting caves including those at Cerknica. Of the 45 pages of Pococke's diary devoted to Slovenia, eleven describe caves and karst phenomena.

They left Slovenia and arrived in Trieste on 23 July, having travelled across the Classical Karst for most of the previous night "for coolness". Two days later they went by boat to Koper, and the next day on to Izola and Piran en route to Pula. Having returned to Trieste on 3 August, they visited Socerbska jama a few kilometres to the east, either the next day or the day after, noting the presence of stalactites and an altar (Milles 1736-37b, f.120v). On 6 August they left Trieste for the last time, looking at the Timavo rising Duino on their way on into Italy.

VISIT TO ŠKADAVNICA

The description of Škadavnica cave and of their visit to it in Pococke's manuscript journal is printed complete as the Appendix to this paper, and one page is reproduced in facsimile as Fig. 13.

The one fact which Pococke does not supply — namely the date of the visit — is provided from Milles's letters. They had left Ljubljana on 12 July and travelled via Trajaniberg [Trojane] to Frantz [Vransko] where they stayed the night. Then "the next morning [13 July] we saw a Grotto in the mountain pretty large and curious, but not abounding much with petrifications." (Milles 1736-37b, f.92v). They went on to Celje the same day. The road from Ljubljana to Celje, then as now,

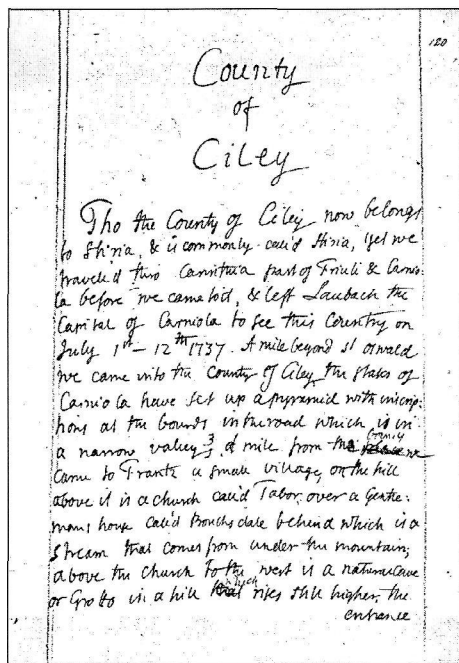


Fig. 13: Part of Pococke's detailed description of the Škadavnica cave on f.120 of his journal, vol. XVI, reproduced from the British Library Add. MS.22993 with their permission. The date "July 1st - 12th" is given in both the old and new styles.

suffered from heavy traffic and the road had been improved in 1728, just nine years before their visit (Natek 1976b).

Before considering Pococke's (1737) detailed description of the visit to the Škadavnica cave, the statements made about it in the other two sources are printed here for completeness.

In his published book, Pococke just records:

... saw a grotto at Frantz, where there are some curious petrifications; but we could not find that it had any communication with the rivulet below it ... (Pococke 1743-45 2(2), p.254)

And in his letter to his mother he wrote:

We went to see a natural Grotto in the side of a hill about 100 feet diameter and very curious, where we saw many stalactities or stone's like isicles formed by the dropping of the water; when broke it is like Alabaster, & one was large & rise up like a pillar to the top of the Grott.

(Pococke 1736-7, f.64v)

It is to be noted that this was written before he had seen the stalactities in Črna jama nine days later. Nevertheless the pillar, which is mentioned also in his fuller account, must have been quite impressive. It does not exist now.

As Pococke's (1737) entire journal account is printed in the Appendix, it is necessary here only to note those points that require comment such as those by which the identity of the cave has been confirmed.

(f.120) ... we came to Frantz [Vransko] a small village on the hill above it is a church call'd Tabor, over a Gentlemans house call'd Bouchsdale behind which is a Stream that comes from under the mountain;

The "Gentlemans house" is the house at Podgrad, Podgrajska graščina, shown on the map (Fig. 2). Its present appearance (Fig. 6), compared with the view engraved by Vischer (1681) (Fig. 14), shows that it has not greatly changed in three centuries. No doubt Vischer's picture is the closer representation of what Pococke and Milles saw. "Bouchsdale", recorded by Pococke as the name of the house, would be his understanding of the old German word *Burckstal*, which is what Vischer called it. The "Stream that comes from under the mountain" is the Podgrajščica, emerging from Pogreška jama.

The position of the "natural cave or Grotto in a hill which rises still higher ... above the church to the west" (f.120) is consistent with that of Škadavnica on the slope of Medvedica (604 m compared with 428 m for the church Tabor). The cave entrance is described as "about fifteen feet [4,6 m] wide & eight [2,4 m] high" (f.121), which is not significantly different from the 5 m by 3 m of the 1973 survey. "the cave seems to be about a hundred feet [30,5 m] in diameter being round" compares quite well with its measured dimensions of

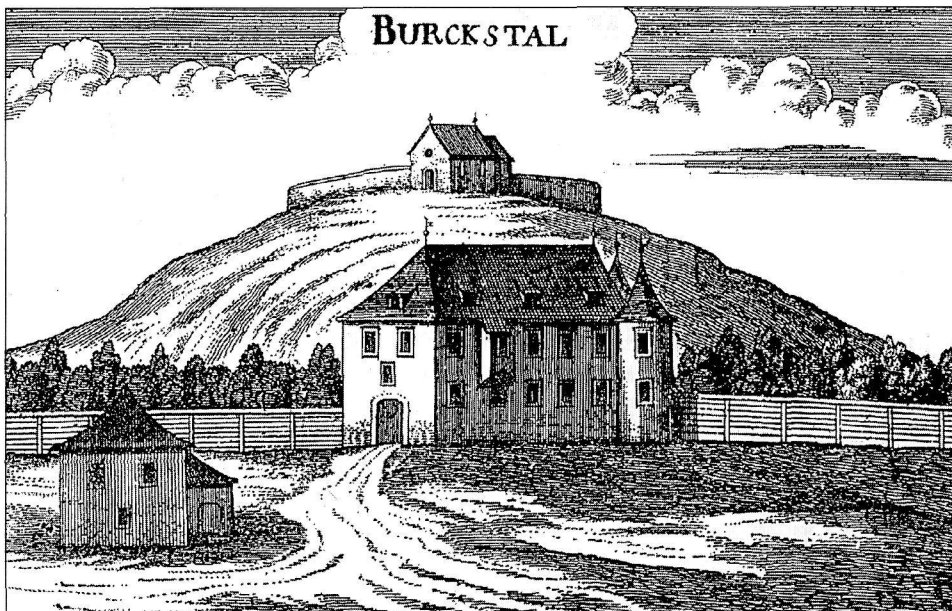


Fig. 14: Podgrajska graščina in 1681. An engraving by J. M. Vischer.

34 m by 41 m. Again, the “confus’d heap of great stones” on the floor and the “rough [ceiling], as if those stones had fallen from it” is a fair description of Škadavnica. The statement that “there are several holes & cavities round it especially three larger than the rest”, matches with the holes shown in the 1973 plan (Fig. 3). The word “crow”, to which Pococke likens some of the stalactites, is an obsolete English word meaning the membranes which secure the intestines within the abdomen of a pig or other animal. The evidently greater quantity of stalactites in 1737 than now is what would be expected of a cave known to the people of the local town, even if it were only occasionally visited by foreigners who brought away “one peice growing like a Coley flower [cauliflower] but in the shape of a Cone.” (f.122).

CONCLUSION

Pococke and Milles’s exploration of the Škadavnica cave is significant for two reasons.

Firstly, any previously unpublished information about a cave deserves being made accessible. It is particularly significant, at least in a local context, when it doubles the length of time since the previous earliest record of any cave in the region and more than doubles the period for which the cave itself has been known.

More generally, the interest which Pococke and Milles showed in caves, visiting most of the recognized tourist caves in Slovenia and even going out of their way to see a small and not very impressive cave, demonstrates that there were some highly educated travellers who regarded such natural phenomena as important and worth their attention. In this way they were somewhat similar to Edward Brown (1673) whose description of the Cerknica lake and the Idrija mine are well known. Many of the better-known early reports of caves had been either as part of a deliberate regional survey, as in Valvasor's *Die Ehre dess Hertzogthums Crain* (1689) or compiled on royal instructions as were those of Strein in Austria in 1592 (Schallenberg 1592; Schmidl 1857), and Nagel (1747) in Austria and (1748) in Moravia and Carniola.

Very many travellers had only the conventional interests of more conventional educated men, in art, architecture and antiquities — the subjects which were originally chosen to further the education of young men travelling with their tutors on the Grand Tour of parts of Europe.

It is the breadth of Pococke and Milles's interests which is important to the history of foreign travellers, while it is their specific interest in caves and other karst phenomena that is important for the historian of karst studies and of caves in Slovenia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Tone Vedenik and members of the Jamarski Klub "Črni galeb" of Prebold for relocating the entrance of the Škadavnica cave and for taking me to it. They have also permitted reproduction of their 1973 survey with this paper. My colleagues in the Karst Research Institute at Postojna have helped, especially by accurate determination of the entrance position (Franjo Drole), taking photographs (Jurij Hajna), preparing the map for publication (Leon Drame) and for finding much of the 20th century literature (Andrej and Maja Kranjc). The staff of the British Library in London, which holds the 18th century diaries quoted here, have been their usual helpful and efficient selves.

APPENDIX

POCOCKE'S ACCOUNT OF THE VISIT TO ŠKADAVNICA CAVE
ON 13 JULY 1737

FROM HIS MANUSCRIPT JOURNAL (BRITISH LIBRARY ADD.
MS.22993)

Came to Frantz a small village, on the hill above it is a church call'd Tabor, over a Gentlemans house call'd Bouchsdale behind which is a Stream that comes from under the mountain; above the church to the west is a natural cave or Grotto in a hill which rises still higher, the entrance to it is about fifteen feet wide & eight high, it is a descent & the cave seems to be about a hundred feet in diameter being round, it is at bottom a confus'd heap of great stones, & the top is rough, as if those stones had fallen from it by some accident as an earth quake or a unhingin of the ground under, there are several holes & cavities round it especially three larger than the rest into which we went & saw the furthest extent of 'em being not above 4 or 5 yards, all over the Grotto are Stalactites or Stone made by the droppings of the water, but there are more in the holes than in the other part of the Grot, & one always sees the water dropping in several parts; some of these are of the Stalagmate kind that on the stones rising up about an inch & look like tallow growing cold, Some rise up like a cone, one to a good heigth, & large like a pillar broke off. & there is a pillar yt [= that] rises up to the very top as if it supported the arch, some are like Icicles hanging from the vault, & some hangs about six or eight inches deep for six or seven feet exactly like what is calld the crow in the entrails of swine, & is transparent, all this stone being of the nature of Alabaster is brittle & shining; we examin'd this Grotto very nicely because they said there was a hole which went down to the notch[?] by the Gentle mans house, before mentiond, & that a bull had fallen in & came out at that place, all which we found to be false, & concluded it was only a story to frighten children, & prevent the danger of breaking their legs or bones by going in which they might easily do; we brought away of the stalactites, particularly one peice, growing like a Coley flower but in the shape of a Cone. When we left Frantz the next day we came into the fine plain in which Ciley [Celje] stands.

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KAKO STA ANGLEŠKA POPOTNIKA 1737 RAZISKOVALA JAMO ŠKADAVNICO

Povzetek

Manjša jama Škadavnica leži 1,5 km SZ od Vranskega, med Ljubljano in Celjem v Sloveniji. Sestavlja jo en sam podzemlejski prostor, velik 41 x 34 m. Do sedaj se je mislilo, da je prvi dokumentiran obisk jame iz 902, ko so v njej lovili jamske živalice. Enako se je verjelo, da je prva jama, ki je omenjena v literaturi iz SV Slovenije, jama Pekel okoli 1860.

Ta prispevek predstavlja in tudi ponatisuje podrobni zapis o obisku dveh angleških popotnikov 13. julija 1737. To sta bila Richard Pococke (1704-1765), kasnejši škof v mestu Ossory in kasneje v Meathu na Irskem, in Jeremiah Milles (1714-1784), kasneje dekan v angleškem mestu Exeter. Popolnejši opis njunega obiska, ki je ponatisnjen v dodatku, je iz Pocockovega popotnega dnevnika v rokopisu (1737), je pa na kratko omenjen tudi v njegovi knjigi (1743-45) in v njegovih (1736-37) ter njegovega tovariša Millesa (1736-37 b) pismih.

Moža sta že prej, od 1733 do 1734, potovala skupaj. Slovenijo sta obiskala med potovanjem, ki sta ga pričela 1736 in na katerem sta obiskala velik del celinske Evrope. V Sloveniji sta bila 20 dni, med 7. in 23. julijem ter ponovno 25. in 26. julija ter 4. ali 5. avgusta. Pot ju je vodila preko Gorice v Idrijo, Ljubljano, Celje, v Cerknico, v Postojno in iz Trsta v Koper, Izolo Piran in na Socerb. Posebej ju je zanimalo Cerkniško jezero in 4 jame v okolici Postojne, o katerih sta pisala veliko več, kot pa o drugih krajih, ki sta jih obiskala. Konec leta 1737 se je Milles vrnil domov, medtem ko je Pococke šel še v Egipt, Izrael, Libanon, v Turčijo, Grčijo, na Ciper in na Kreto, preden je odpotoval preko Evrope nazaj v London, kamor se je vrnil 1741. Da ga zanimanje za jame ni minilo, dokazujejo misli na jame tudi v drugih deželah. Tudi na kasnejših potovanjih po Angliji in Škotskije obiskal več jam daleč izven njegove poti. Tudi Milles je ohranil zanimanje za jame.

Njuno zanimanje za jame ni pomembno le za krasoslovce. ampak tudi kot primer redkih popotnikov, ki so se zanimali tudi za druge zanimivosti, ne le ustaljeno za umetnost in starine.

Pocockov opis Škadavnice je zelo podroben in natančen, tako da jame, ki jo je videl, ni težko določiti po legi, merah in opisu. Tak natančen opis je nenavaden za tedanje čase. Poleg tega je obiskal tudi razmeroma majhno jamo brez posebnosti zgolj v lastno zabavo. Poleg Škadavnice si je ogledal tudi kraški izvir Pogreško jamo ter omenja graščino Podgrad (Burgstall), ki je še vedno bolj ali manj taka, kot jo je videl Pococke.

REMARK:

In April 1996, after the above paper was written and while revising the plan for publication, F. Drole of the Karst Research Institute ZRC SAZU found several fragments of pottery in a narrow passage leading from among the breakdown blocks at the NW side of Škadavnica Cave. After cleaning and treating them we established that they all belong to one pot. The partly preserved pot has a lip inclined outwards and its edge is shaped. The pot's shoulders are slightly embossed. The clay contains a lot of sand and is well baked. The colour outside and inside passes irregularly from grey-brown to black. The outer surface of the pot is decorated by a comb or twig brush before being baked. Due to its shape and decoration the pot may be dated as of Late Antiquity between the 4th and 5th centuries.

(By Alma Bavdek, Museum of Postojna)



Fig. 4: The entrance of Škadavnica cave, October 1997 (phot. J. Hajna, IZRK collection).



Fig. 5: The main chamber of Škadavnica (phot. J. Hajna, IZRK collection).



Fig. 6: Podgrajska graščina, 3 October 1995 (phot. J. G. Shaw).



Fig. 7: The rising at Pogreška jama, behind Podgrajska graščina, October 1997 (phot. J. Hajna, IZRK collection).