

Superficial Geology Of The Valley Of The Ottawa And The Wakefield Cave

1962

HOGARTH: GEOLOGY OF GATINEAU-LIÈVRE DISTRICT

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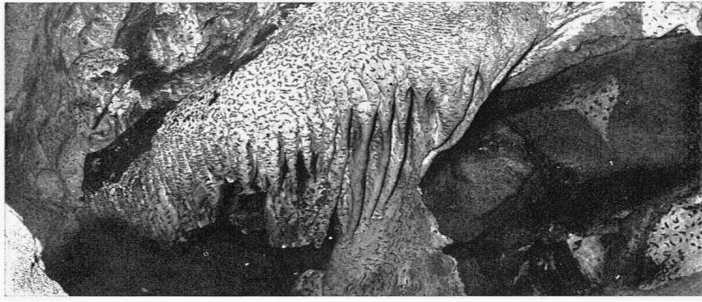


FIGURE 20. Stalactites (Lafliche Caverns).

LAFLÏCHE CAVERNS

Lafliche Caverns are situated in a narrow band of Precambrian limestone. The main passageway comprises a series of connected openings along a length of 500 feet; the largest room is about 100 feet long, 30 feet wide, and in one place 20 feet high. Another room is 90 feet high and displays notable stalactites and stalagmites (Figure 20). A third room projects 30 feet upwards as a series of chimneys, and at its ceiling, tree roots have penetrated from the surface. Water has filled the lowest parts of the cave; an underwater chamber, 25 feet long, is known to connect with a lake to the east. The cavern remains at a constant temperature of 45°F throughout the year.

The passageways were thought to have been formed in Pleistocene time or earlier. When it was discovered, much of the cavern was filled with stratified sand and gravel containing fossils typical of the Champlain Sea. Deposition of this material must have occurred when the circulation of underground water was much greater than it is today, possibly at the close of the Pleistocene epoch.

Lafliche Caverns were discovered by a hunter in 1865 and were described in detail by Dr. Grant of the Ottawa Natural History Society in 1869. The caverns were opened to the public in 1923. The present owner has preserved the natural entrances and has opened a new exit with a tunnel 176 feet long. Guided tours are conducted during the summer.

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