

King Solomons Cave

David Wools-Cobb



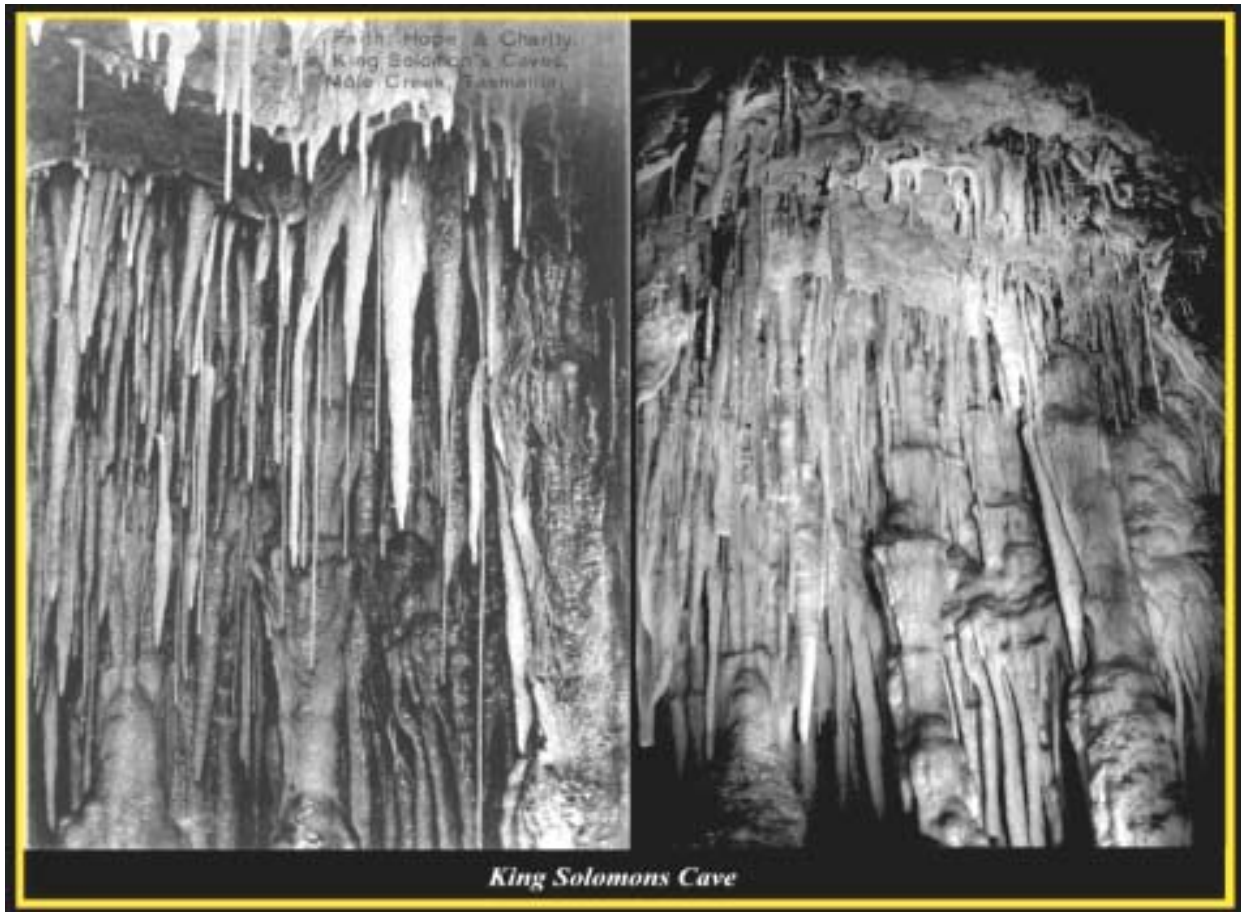
- Located in Mole Creek Karst National Park (MKCNP) Tasmania
- Discovered 1906/7
- Opened as tourist cave 1908
- Lit by acetylene
- 1 main chamber, 2 passages leading off
- Extended in December 1928, electrified with generator soon after?
- Gazetted a cave reserve 1939
- Connected to main electrical grid system about 1953
- ? New electrical system upgrade 110 volts 1970's
- Electrical system replace with 12v 1983
- Low intensity system with C-bus control July 2004 (Kell)

Photographer Stephen Spurling 3 1896-1962

- Ambitious in travels & what photographed
- Claimed first to use dry plate method in Tasmania
- Possibly magnesium flash method
- Willing to climb for the right angle and squeeze through to non-tourist section
 - Relocate specific sites within cave Re-photograph
 - Compare to determine changes over past approx 98 years
 - Consider any patterns to changes/damage

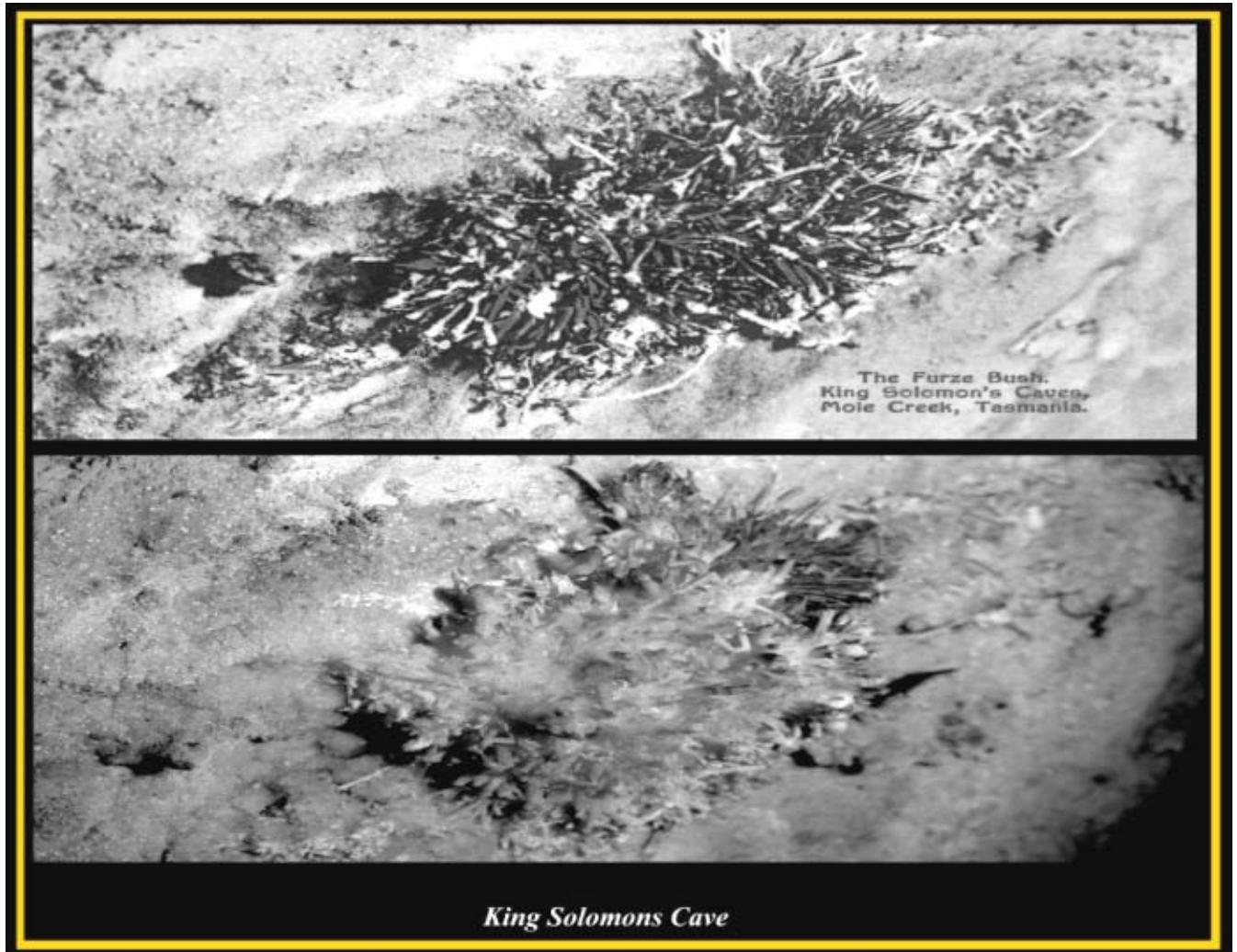
Method

- Digitalising originals
- Printing for locating in cave
- Location of features
- Attempting to determine angle of view & lighting
- Digitally photograph
- "Layer" beside original
- Analyse changes



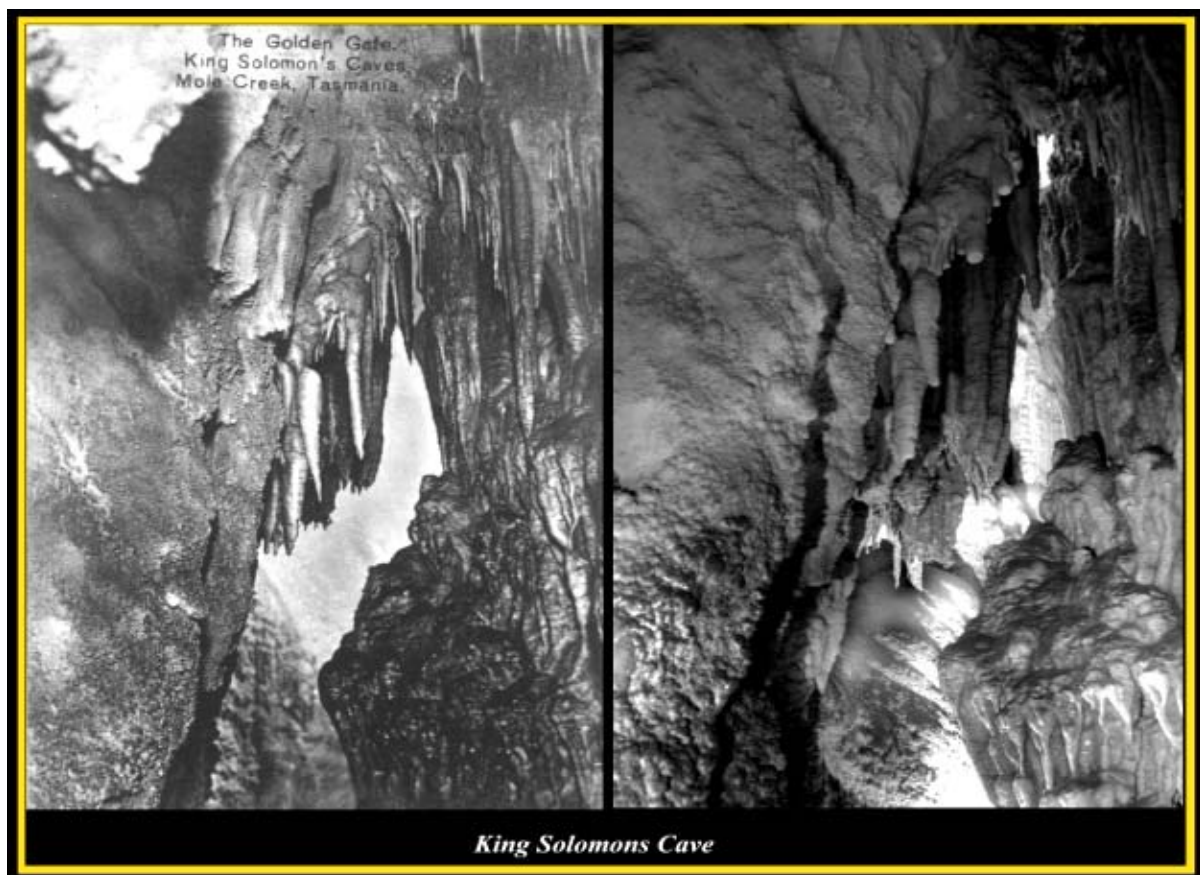
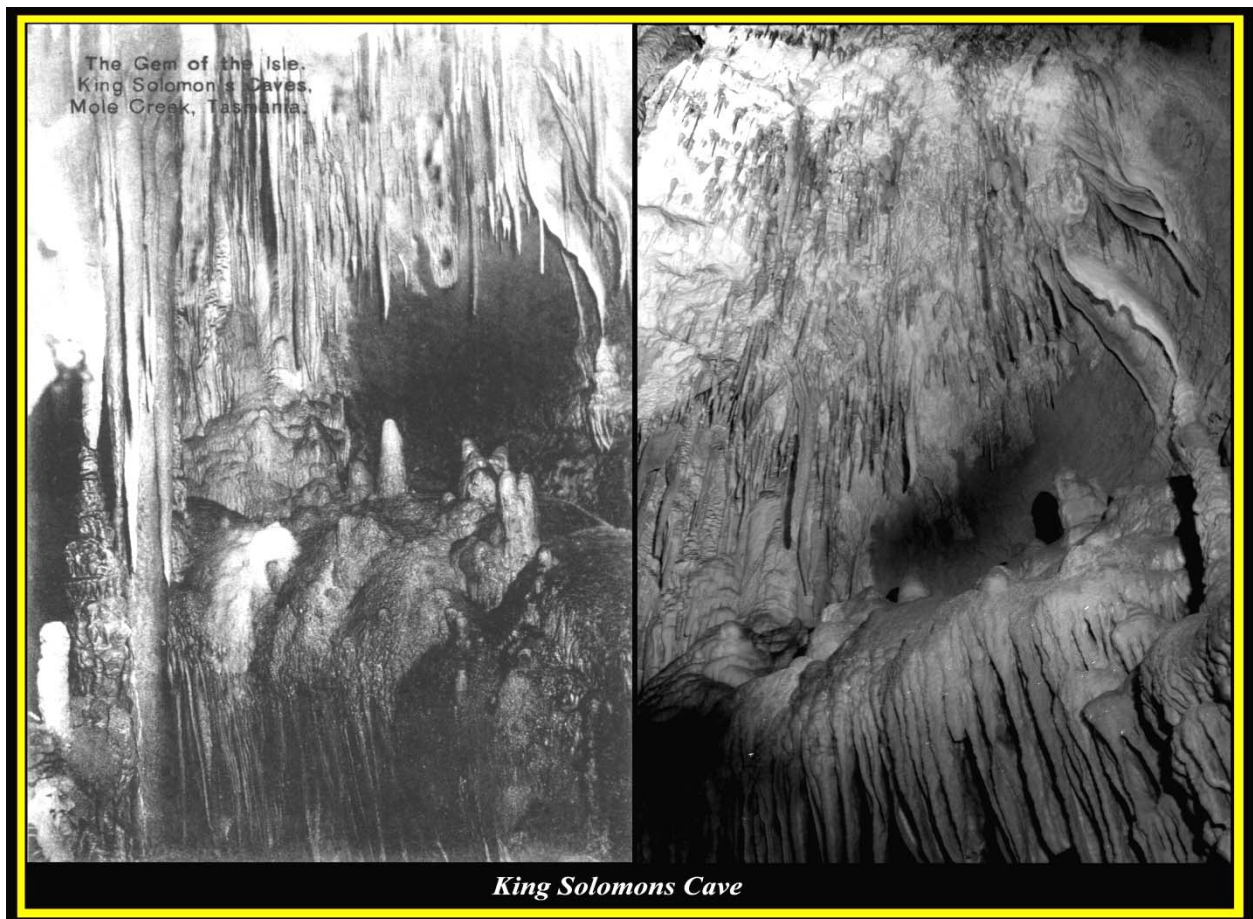
Problems

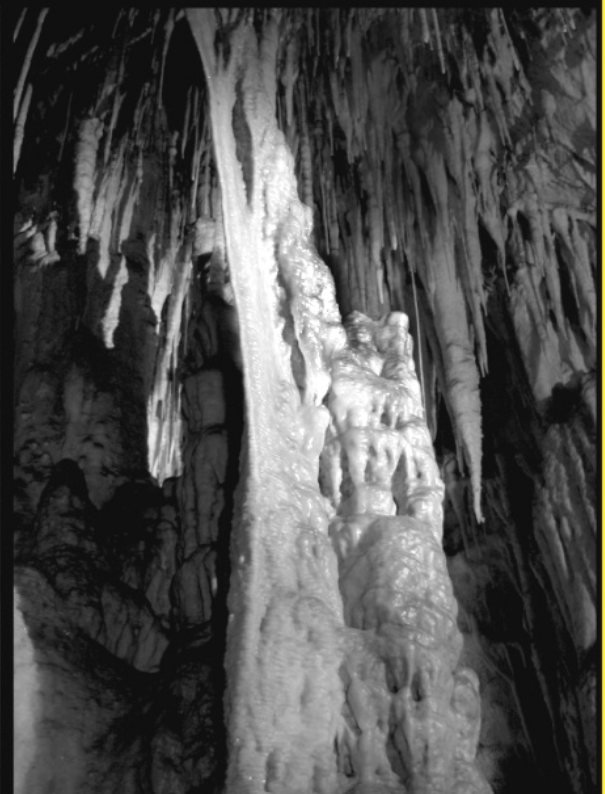
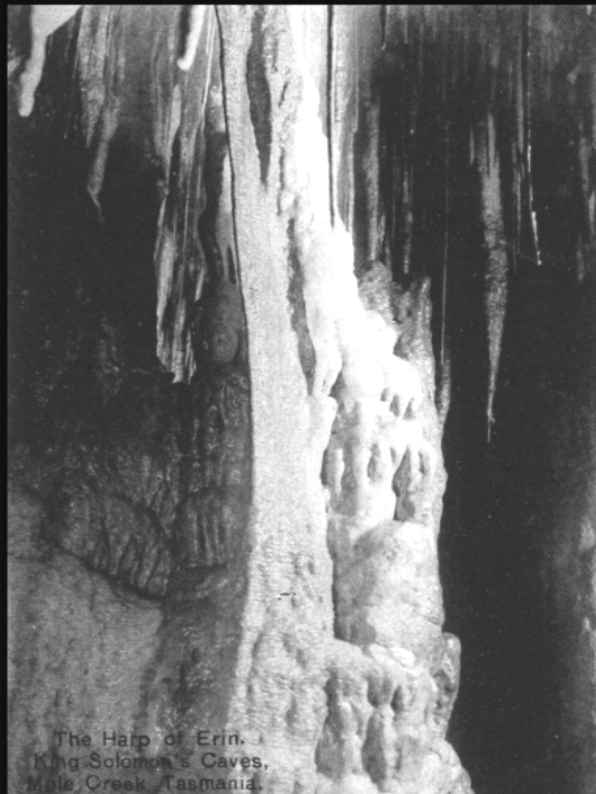
- Names of features change
- Difficulty in locating many sites
- Duplication of light, angle
- Access to some photo points
- Accuracy of background information (references vary)



Observations

- Floor lowered in many places
- Speleothem damage due to
 - Development
 - Light positioning
 - Protect tourists
 - Carelessness
 - Deliberate – souveniring?

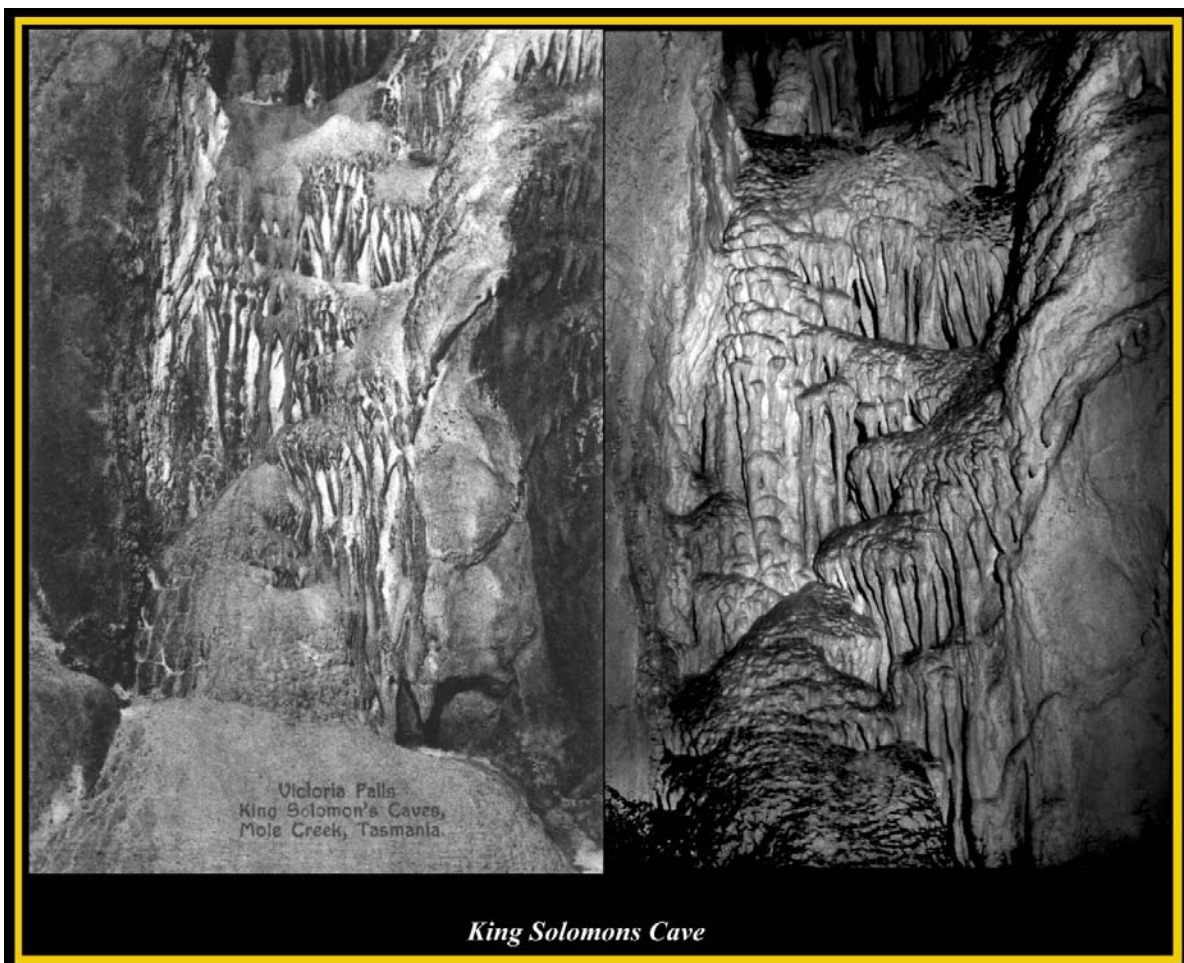




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Acknowledgements

- Michael Simco, Ulverstone - Historical postcard collector
- Paul Flood MCKNP Tourist Cave Manager - access & assistance with photography
- Stephen Blanden – historical search
- Nic Hogarth – historical cross references
- Chester Shaw, retired Park Ranger MCKNP

References

- Haygarth: National Library of Australia newsletter Sept 2004
- Chris Long: Tasmanian Photographers 1840-1940
- Terry & Evans: "To the Westward", Thematic history Meander Valley 2004
- Examiner Newspaper 14/9/1908
- Weekly Courier 8/10/1908