

A dramatic photograph of a cave entrance leading to a bright, sunlit beach with waves crashing against dark rocks. The cave's interior is dark and textured, with the light from the opening creating a strong contrast. The text 'CAVE' and 'HUGH BOWEN' is overlaid in a red, serif font.

# CAVE

HUGH BOWEN

# Cave

by

Hugh Bowen



STRATEGIC BOOK GROUP

ALSO BY HUGH BOWEN:

REVERSAL  
WHY?  
EDGE

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## Dedication

I dedicate this book to the whole Bowen tribe: my grandparents, Sir George and Lady Florence Bowen; my father, Air Commodore "Van" Bowen, one-time Lord Lieutenant of Pembrokeshire, and my mother Noel; Mr. Smith of Berry Hill farm; Essex Havard and the many people of Newport; the household staff of the ancestral home, long since converted into a hotel; and the innumerable Bowen family: brother and sisters, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, cousins galore, now scattered far and wide around the world. I particularly thank my cousin Joy Neal and her interest in the history of our family, and my niece, Joanna Bowen, resident of Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, who helped me in multiple ways and edited a draft of the book. Not least in my memory is my cocker spaniel, Topsy, who helped me shoot rabbits and birds, much needed in wartime, and loved to run with me all over the northern part of Pembrokeshire.

Finally, without my wife, Wendy, and her patient editing of the text, this book would be much less than it is.



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# Preface

The primary scenes of this story are set in the south-west coastal region of Wales in the UK. The small town of Newport, Pembrokeshire and its locality were important to me as I grew up and I have a deep affection for the area and the ways of the Welsh people who live there.

The folklore of those Welsh shores has been written about in historic novels, particularly and admirably those by Brian John.<sup>1</sup> His stories are set in Newport and its nearby countryside and my book follows in his footsteps, mixing fact<sup>2</sup> with fiction. In writing it, I have drawn on

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1 *On Angel Mountain, House of Angels* and others. Trefelin, Cilgwyn, Newport, Pembs SA42 0QN

2 All the locations and place names in the story are true, sometimes with a slight variation, such as Llwyn for Llwyn-gwair. I have used this means to stay true to the geography and history of the region while avoiding the implication that



my family background stretching back to the 13th century and my knowledge of the place and region.

In my youth, I became acquainted with the people there when cycling along the roads, running along the coast and in the hills, fly fishing in the streams, and shooting rabbits with a little .410 shotgun. It was wartime, when every bit of food was valuable. I worked on the farms and after ten hours in the fields I would be brought along with the men to drink beer, underage as I was, in the public houses, the "pubs," in Newport, Neveern, Cardigan, Felindre Farchog, Crymych, and Eglwys-yrw<sup>3</sup>, to name a few of the local places. I learned Welsh pronunciation and Welsh songs. Though little of a singer myself, I loved the spontaneous taking of parts by the basses and tenors, and the soprano parts sung by the few women who, in those days, came to the bars.

An introduction to the long history of smuggling in the region can be found on the Internet<sup>4</sup>. In 1983 there was yet another smuggling incident along the coast; this one close to Newport. I knew of it at the time from my relatives living there and a BBC program picturing the place and the

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the present residents of these locations are those depicted in the book. One way to find a map of the region and the places mentioned is to go to *get lat long* on the Internet, then enlarge the hybrid map of the region.

3 Only occasionally have I indicated the pronunciation of Welsh words. In those cases, I've thought, the sound of the Welsh word, repeatedly said by the characters, helps the story along. The reader may consult <http://britannia.com/celtic/wales/language.html> to learn how to pronounce this inherently musical language.

4 See, for example, [http://www.smuggling.co.uk/gazetter\\_wales\\_10.html](http://www.smuggling.co.uk/gazetter_wales_10.html)

people. A prime player in the drama, and the discoverer of the place where the smuggling occurred on the coast, was the late Essex Havard, an acquaintance of mine from childhood. He kept the Ironmongers<sup>5</sup> shop in Newport.

An account of this incident from the police point of view is recorded in "Operation Seal Bay" by Pat Molloy published by the Gomer Press, Llandysul, Dyfed, UK. At the time, Pat Molloy was Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Dyfed-Powys Criminal Investigation Department. The book provides a documentary account of the police work and the legal aspects of the case.

In CAVE I have used some of the actual events of this smuggling incident and, in the same manner, have used an actual visit by Queen Elizabeth II to St. David's Cathedral in 1955 for background in my otherwise fictional story.

As mentioned in the story, the word "cave" in Latin does not mean a cave as in English. It is pronounced *kay-vee*, at least by English school boys, and means "Beware!"

Hugh Bowen  
Denver, Colorado  
September 2010

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5 My policy has been to use words natural to the indigenous people portrayed in the book and to allow word meanings to emerge from context in the story. However, here and there, I translate. Thus, an ironmongers shop in the UK is a hardware store in the US, and a torch in the UK is a flashlight in the US. For foreign words, I provide their meanings in parentheses.



# Chapter 1

## A Drowning

The blonde man cursed, but only in his brain. His voice had gone. His muscles had lost all power. The last of his feeling was being stolen from him by the cold water.

The life jacket was barely keeping him and his sodden clothes afloat. One of his shoes had disappeared. If he still had the strength, he would have kicked off the other. He had tried to put the pencil in a pocket, along with the numbers, but it had floated away.

He knew he would soon be gone. At least he had killed one of them. Perhaps the pencil would be found. Perhaps someone would make sense of the numbers. He'd done the best he could.

The water took him down. The pain in his chest was searing. His throat clenched shut in a spasm.

Then there was nothing.

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