

THEODORE ROOSEVELT'S VISIT TO OROPOUCHE CAVE



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MOST members of the Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists Club will be familiar with the Guacharo Caves at Oropouche. Some years ago a member of the Club, Mr. Ludolf Wehekind, lent me a small snapshot of a party of people at the Oropouche Cave in the year 1911. This photograph is of interest partly because it was probably the first photograph taken at the Caves and partly because one of the subjects in the photograph is Teddy Roosevelt who was at one time President of the United States.

The photograph published in this issue of the Journal was made from a negative which I made of the original snapshot. Needless to say, the quality is not very good because of the size of the original snapshot and because of the state of photography

in those days. It is obvious that artificial light was not employed but some detail of the mouth of the Cave is discernible. For example, the party is standing in the stream and some blurred motion of the water is obvious to the left of the stooping person. The boulders in the stream on which some of us may have sat for lunch are however clearly there in the photograph.

Teddy Roosevelt probably travelled to Valencia by train and over the hills by horse, mule or by walking. Presumably he spent the night at the Leotaud Estate. Ludolf did identify one of the party to the right of Teddy Roosevelt as a Mr. Carr and I would be most interested in confirmation of this. The stooping person remains unidentified.

* *Theodore Roosevelt was the 26th president of the United States, 1901 - 1909. (Ed.)*

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