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JULY 2010 • ISSUE 49

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The voodoo underworld of New Orleans



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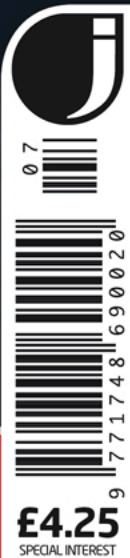
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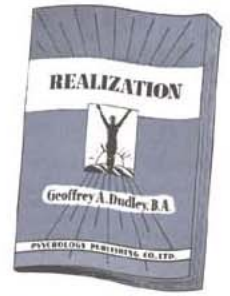
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Exploring the world of the unexplained

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BY JOHN STOKER



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MONSTROUS ERRORS

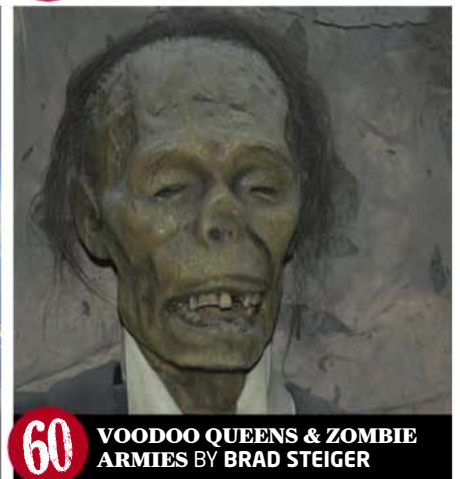
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Exploring the world of the unexplained



EDITORIAL Conformity to your Will



For some reason we've had quite a few mentions of Voodoo in the magazine since I took over as editor. I don't know why. It's not deliberate. Largely it's just because people have been writing books on the subject.

Either that or someone's willed me to do it. It is

possible some Voodoo Queen has got herself a Richard Holland doll, stuffed it (well stuffed it) with straw and cockerel feathers and is now bending it to do her evil will. I'm not convinced the Welsh Border is quite the Voodoo hotspot that New Orleans is, though (anyway, in Wales it would be spelled 'Fwdw').

Brad Steiger's absorbing article on 'Voodoo Queens and Zombie Armies' suggests that Nawlans has been home to 'sosyetes' (secret societies) of Voodoo practitioners since the grim days of the slave trade and that they are still active there today. Indeed, some people even claim to have recently witnessed rituals in which corpses have been reanimated, and then turned into that icon of Voodoo lore, the Zombie.

It's all pretty scary stuff. Stuff is always scarier when it's closer to home - on the edge of what we like to think of as our 'civilised' world. But of course it shouldn't be forgotten that Voodoo *is* a civilised religion - approximately 80 million people practice it, or its many variants, worldwide. For its believers, Voodoo is not about sticking pills into dolls (very often) and certainly not about Zombies, it's about the spirits - the loa - who help them in their day-to-day lives.

Nevertheless, the so-called Voodoo doll has become the most recognisable example of the principle behind a great deal of occult practice - sympathetic magic. Sympathetic, contagious and homeopathic magic are the cornerstones of spell-craft. So fundamental are they to much we would consider paranormal, I have asked Dr Leo Ruickbie, a scholar well versed in such matters, to explain them to us. He does so in his article 'Sympathy From The Devil', which I have placed just before Mr Steiger's feature on

Voodoo as a kind of occult hors d'oeuvre (on page 56, if you're counting).

Is it possible, as Crowley put it, 'To cause Change to occur in conformity with Will'? Can you change the world around you, your fortunes, your future through the power of thought or ritual? Can you influence others to do your Bidding?

Dunno. But there is a way YOU will be able influence ME, dear reader, and therefore *Paranormal Magazine*. And you won't need to resort to magic.

'There is a way you will be able influence *Paranormal Magazine*. And you won't need to resort to magic.'

When you turn to page 11, you will see, we have inserted a Readers Survey. We want to know what YOU want in your magazine. Which subjects interest you, which don't? What would you like more of, or prefer less of? Are there any subjects we're not covering that you'd like to see covered? Anything about the design or presentation you'd like to see changed? The entire team - myself, the publisher, designer, advertising executives, and all *Paranormal Magazine's* guest writers - would love to know your views.

So please - in advance of our milestone 50th issue (which comes with a stylish new cover layout, by the way) - take the time to fill in the Readers Survey and promptly return it. You don't always get what you want in this life, but hey, this time you might.

Anyway, it's more practical than sticking pins in an overstuffed doll.

Richard Holland, Editor

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Paranormal News

The latest from the world of weird

Are they finally saying hello?

A remarkable radio emission from a neighbouring galaxy may be the indication of an alien civilization astrophysicists have been looking for.

When astrophysicists started monitoring a stellar explosion in a galaxy near our own Milky Way, they suddenly got more than they bargained for. An unknown object in the same galaxy, M82, started to send out radio waves – and they are unlike anything previously recorded.

‘We don’t know what it is,’ admitted co-discoverer Tom Muxlow, of the Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics in Cheshire. Muxlow and his colleagues were using Britain’s MERLIN network of radio telescopes when the ‘bright spot’ of radio emission suddenly emerged. Muxlow explained that the source has hardly changed in brightness over the course of a year, and its spectrum is steady – very unlike the usual sources of such emissions, super novae.

His best guess is that the radio source is some kind of super-dense object like a

black hole or ‘microquasar’ but if so it is quite unlike anything recorded before. Could it there for be artificial?

If so, not everyone will be thrilled. In *Paranormal News* in issue 46, we reported how a scientist speaking at the Royal Society Conference on extraterrestrial life in April warned that we should expect any visiting aliens to be hostile. Professor Conway Morris said: “[Visiting] ETs could be disturbingly like us, and that might not be a good thing ... we don’t have a great track record.’

Now über-boffin Stephen Hawking has spoken out in agreement. He told the *Sunday Times*: ‘We only have to look at ourselves to see how intelligent life might develop into something we wouldn’t want to meet. I imagine they might exist in massive ships, having used up all the resources from their home planet. Such advanced aliens would perhaps become nomads, looking to conquer and colonise whatever planets they can reach.

‘The source has hardly changed in brightness over the course of a year, and its spectrum is steady. “We don’t know what it is,” admitted co-discoverer Tom Muxlow, of Jodrell Bank.’



STRANGE SIGNAL: The Jodrell Bank Observatory is at the centre of a cosmic mystery.

‘If aliens ever visit us, I think the outcome would be much as when Christopher Columbus first landed in America, which didn’t turn out very well for the American Indians.’

Sci-fi fan Hawking, who has guest-starred in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (as well as several *Simpsons* episodes), says that in a universe with 100 billion galaxies he has little doubt intelligent aliens exist somewhere in the universe.

‘To my mathematical brain, the numbers alone make thinking about aliens perfectly rational,’ he said.

Professors Hawking and Morris will therefore be delighted to know that, according to scientists on the SETI program, the Earth is getting harder to spot. Apparently we have digital and cable television to thank for this: there are far

Paranormal Shorts



LIFE ON MARS

The latest evidence for possible life in the solar system is the most compelling of all. A space probe sent to Mars has revealed the likely presence of a form of ‘pond scum’ containing the building blocks of life.

NASA scientists state that the probe has discovered the presence of sulphates on Mars, particularly calcium phosphate, also called gypsum. The space missions have shown that the Red Planet has ‘vast areas’ covered in sulphates, while research here on Earth has proved that gypsum preserves organic matter.

New missions are now being planned, with scientists ‘optimistic’ at finding evidence of ancient life in the gypsum.

[SOURCE: The Sun, Apr 28]

BEAST THIEF

A sideshow owner is offering a reward for the return of his star exhibit – an alleged mummified chupacabra. Brian Stevens has been charging people a dollar a head to view the beast at his booth in the San Antonio, Texas, Fiesta. But overnight the exhibit was found to have been stolen.

‘I’ve owned the chupacabra for more than a year and my partner, David Walker had owned it for two years prior,’ said Stevens. ‘It’s one of three, and the other two are in Mexico, where this one was purchased.’

The San Antonio Police Department is investigating.

[SOURCE: KENS5.com, Apr 21]

NOT HUNGRY

Prahlad Jani, 82, claims he has not taken food or drink for 70 years. He is currently in a military hospital in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, where he is being closely monitored to see whether he possesses a genuine ability which could help save lives. At the time of going to press he had undergone six days without food or water and had shown no signs of hunger or dehydration.

Mr Jani is as a ‘breatharian’, believed to be able live on a ‘spiritual life-force’. India’s Defence Research Development Organisation believes he could teach them to help soldiers and disaster victims to survive longer without food.

[SOURCE: The Telegraph, April 28]

Alien hijacker diverts passenger plane

A 'space alien' who caused a rumpus on an internal flight in the USA caused the pilot to make an unscheduled landing. The flight from Helena, Montana, to Salt Lake City was interrupted by Matthew Kleindorfer, 32, from Las Vegas, who began banging on the cockpit door and yelling that he was 'a space alien' and wanted to fly the plane. The pilot diverted the plane to Idaho Falls, where Kleindorfer was arrested after a struggle.

[SOURCE: Fox13.com, May 5]



fewer analog broadcasts and this has greatly reduced the number and power of radio waves leaking into space.

In addition, mobile phone signals are so extensive that they are probably indistinguishable from noise. Even military radar signals are now bounced around in a confusing manner to stop enemy powers jamming them.

'Our improving technology is causing the Earth to become less visible,' said SETI's Frank Drake. But because his job is trying to find other civilizations out there in the cosmos, Professor Drake isn't happy about this.

'If we are the model for the universe, that is bad news,' he said.

[SOURCES: *New Scientist*, Apr 14; *Science news*, Apr 24; *The Telegraph*, Apr 25]

MYSTERY GHOSTS SPOOK STAFF IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS

A Day Centre in South Wales and a Yorkshire Town Hall have become haunted, according to the nervous staff who work in them. [SOURCES: *Western Telegraph*, May 5; *York Press*, May 5]



hosts are causing mayhem at Pembrokeshire County Council's Wintern Day Centre, in Fishguard.

Spooked staff claim that printers have started printing even though they're not plugged in; keyboards have turned upside down overnight; furniture has been moved and items have been flying off the walls.

Local legend has it that the building is haunted by two maids who lived in the attic, and hanged themselves in a suicide pact after both became pregnant. The tragedy is said to have happened when the bluebells bloomed, which is supposed to explain why an aroma of bluebells was detected about the place a month ago, before they were even in flower.

'It's a very scary situation, staff are not willing to work there at night at all,' said one employee. 'It's worse now than ever. It must be especially frightening for someone new starting work there.'

A Pembrokeshire County Council spokesman confirmed that they have had spooky reports from the Wintern Day Centre.

'Members of staff at the centre have reported some strange activity and unusual noises,' said a spokesman. 'The council has arranged for the building to be inspected in order to reassure the staff working there.'

Meanwhile: 'A mysterious man dressed in old-fashioned clothes

has reportedly been seen stalking the rooms of Selby Town Hall, in Yorkshire – and for once [adds the cheeky *York Post*] it is not the mayor.'

A staff member told Selby's mayor, Steve Shaw-Wright, that she had seen the apparition while locking up the town hall.

Mr Shaw-Wright said: 'She saw a man in the balcony of the arts centre and asked him what he was doing up there. He said nothing, but moved across the balcony to the staircase – the only exit.'

'The staff member went to unlock the downstairs door so he could get out, but no one came down the stairs. She went up and no one was there.'

Mr Shaw-Wright said the figure was described as having dark hair and wearing a long, velvet jacket: the impression was someone of the Victorian or Edwardian era.

Selby Town Hall started life as a Methodist chapel in 1862 and since then has had various uses, as diverse as being a health clinic and a tyre depot.

Other employees have now come forward to say they have had heard footsteps on the first floor when nobody was up there and have noticed electrical equipment turning itself on and off.

The Mayor assured them: 'The council will be looking into this, asking for information from past users of the building to see if anything else similar had happened. We will also be looking into the past residents of the former chapel.'

X-ORCISM

X-Factor starlet Diana Vickers has called in an exorcist to rid her home of 'bad vibes' and tapping noises that were keeping her awake at night. The 18-year-old singer told *OK!* magazine: 'I got an exorcist to come round and she told me there was the ghost of a little boy in the house. She did an exorcism and sent him away, but I didn't see it – I was in my bedroom shaking like a leaf.'

Vickers revealed she also experienced ghostly activity in her parent's home when she was a child. She saw the 'white outline of a little girl' and was bashed in the head by something invisible.

[SOURCE: MSN, April 28]

WORM WHOLE

A legendary 'giant' worm from the USA has finally been found again. After years of searching, scientists at the University of Idaho have captured two specimens, one adult and one juvenile, of the 'Palouse earthworm' in Washington State. Three cocoons were also found, two of which have hatched.

University of Kansas earthworm expert Sam James has positively identified the worms, which have been considered possibly extinct – or even mythical. The adult is more than ten inches (25cms) long but has so far disproved the legend that it can spit or that it smells of lilies.

[SOURCE: KREM.com, Apr 27]

SPIRITED WORK

A painting of ghostly soldiers formerly owned by Sherlock Holmes creator Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is to be auctioned in Sidney, Australia. The large oil painting is by William Francis Longstaff and entitled *The Rearguard (The spirit of ANZAC)*. It was purchased by Doyle, who lost a son in World War 1, in 1928. After the war, Doyle became a champion of spiritualism, writing widely on the subject.

Longstaff was an official War Artist and was himself injured at Gallipoli. *The Rearguard* is said to have been inspired by psychic influences, and was considered lost. It is expected to sell for up to A\$40,000 (ie about £24,000, US\$36,000).

[SOURCE: TimesOnline, Apr 25]

JORDAN AGAIN

Last month we reported that model Jordan, aka Katie Price, was putting her Surrey mansion up for sale because she believed it was haunted by two ghosts. Now astrologist Russell Grant (now also a clairvoyant?) has found a third ghost – but it's friendly, he says.

Grant claims to have seen the spirit of a nurse, who haunts the house because she wants to help Jordan's disabled son, Harvey. He said: 'I saw a woman in a white nurse's uniform. I have no doubt she is not a harmful spirit. She is bringing healing!'

Because the ghost was 'good', Grant generously decided not to 'move her on'. [SOURCE: *The Sun*, May 5]

One day their Prince will come

A South Seas tribe has been worshipping an unlikely idol for the past 30 years with a belief system due to culminate in June this year.

South Pacific islanders await the arrival of a being they believe to be sacred. A being who promised to return to them in June this year. Will he fulfill his promise and return to live among them? Only the Duke of Edinburgh can decide – because oddly enough, it's him.

More than 30 years ago Prince Philip visited the remote island of Tanna and told the Yaohnanen people that he would come back to them on his 89th birthday, June 10.

The Yaohnanen believe the Duke of Edinburgh is descended from one of their spirit ancestors, temporarily apart from them so that he can live in a vast palace, but happy to return to live in a hut and hunt wild pigs with the rest of his tribe on the magic date.

The background to the belief is a little complicated but seems to date back to a visit to (the Vanuatu nation) made by the Queen and Prince Philip in 1974. The Yaohnanen had made a gift of a pig to a British officer some years before and were still waiting for a gift in return. When the royal couple arrived, they heard that the Duke of Edinburgh had only shaken hands with members of their own tribe. Impressed, they wrote to him directly asking after their long-awaited present.

In response they received a framed portrait of the Duke, and their worship began. The Duke has kept in touch with the island ever since. All his correspondence, newspaper clippings about him and his portraits are kept in a shrine. Children are taught about a god who lives in England and will one day return.

Siko Nathuan, the chief of the Yaohnanen, said: 'He made a promise that in 2010, on his birthday, he will arrive in Tanna. We know he is a very old man, but when he comes here he is going to be young again, and so will everyone else on the island.'

Even if Prince Philip is unable to turn up, the Yaohnanen will forgive him. Kirk Huffman, an anthropologist who has studied Vanuatu, told *The Telegraph* newspaper: 'They will have been creating songs and dances to be performed whether he turns up or not. If he doesn't turn up, they have their own ways of explaining why not; it won't destroy the belief.'

[The Telegraph, April 30]



GODLIKE: Despite his poor reputation for foreign diplomacy, one remote tribe worships Prince Philip and is expecting him to visit them, magically rejuvenated.

'HONEST, MOM - IT WAS A UFO THAT CRASHED THE CAR!'

When a teenage girl and her boyfriend returned home after borrowing the car, she offered an unusual excuse for why it had been pranged. She told her astonished parents that an alien spaceship had tried to steal it, damaging it in the process.

The two unnamed New Hampshire teenagers said they had been sitting in the parked car near their home in Laconia when a black-coloured UFO tried to lift it into the air. Failing in the attempt, it dropped the car back onto the pavement 180 feet away. The windshield cracked and the air-bags activated. \$5,000 worth of damage was made to the underside of the car.

When they spotted the UFO, said the 18-year-old girl, they attempted to drive the car away.

'The front end got picked up and the car could not move. We steered left and right but the car just kept on going up into the air,' confirmed her 16-year-old boyfriend.

'I was trying to pay attention to everything that was going on but it felt like I couldn't. When I looked up, everything was black. [There was] an odour I've never smelled before. I heard absolutely nothing - it was silent. I felt immobilized.

'I heard a loud noise like a horn. Once. And then, the car just dropped.'

When the car hit the ground, they drove quickly away to the girl's home, where her mother called the police. The claims are being looked into by Mutual UFO Network investigator Steve Firmani, who says he has found three-inch chips in the roadside kerbing where the car supposedly hit the ground. He said further study would be made to the undercarriage body parts, which MUFON has retained from the body shop.

• Meanwhile, Down Under, a weather balloon - the type supposedly mistaken for UFOs - crashed into a car near Alice Springs. So severe was the impact that the car was flung over on to its side.

The accident happened moments after the balloon was launched from the local airport. Fortunately the car was stationary and no one was hurt, but the scientific equipment worth millions of dollars the balloon was carrying was totally destroyed.

[SOURCES: Examiner.com, Apr 18; ABC news (Australia), Apr 29]

WOOD FROM NOAH'S ARK?

For decades it has been claimed that remains of Noah's Ark can be found on Mount Ararat in Turkey, where some believe the Ark came to rest after the biblical flood.

Now a group of Turkish and Chinese evangelists have returned from Ararat's summit with claims they have recovered bits of wood from a 'structure' on the mountain. They say carbon dating has shown the wood to be 4,800 years old.

'It's not 100% that it is Noah's Ark but we think it's 99.9% certain that this is it,' announced Yeung Wing-cheung, a Hong Kong documentary filmmaker and member of Noah's Ark Ministries International. Wing-cheung said the structure had several compartments, some with wooden beams, which 'were believed to house animals'.

The group now hopes the Turkish government will apply for UNESCO World Heritage status so that the site can be protected while a major archaeological dig is conducted.

[SOURCE: DiscoveryOnline, Apr 27]

BIG 50TH ISSUE COVER REDESIGN

Next month *Paranormal Magazine* celebrates an important milestone - the August 2010 issue is our 50th issue! We're marking the occasion with an exciting new look for the cover. You can see a preview of the stylish new cover on the right. The redesign reflects our continuing commitment to providing you with the most fascinating magazine you can buy. Please don't forget to fill in our Reader Survey on page eleven to help make sure we give you the best read possible.



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Alien spaceship claim by Russian official

Regional leader announces he has made first contact with extraterrestrials.

On a primetime television interview Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, regional president of the southern Russian region of Kalmykia, announced that he had been taken on board an alien spaceship which had come to planet Earth to take samples. And he says there were several witnesses to the epoch-making event.

Fellow MP Andre Lebedev has written to the Russian president Dimitry Medvedev questioning Mr Ilyumzhinov's sanity and asking whether he is fit to govern. But he is also concerned that he might be telling the truth!

If so, he says, it was an historic event and Mr Ilyumzhinov should have reported it to the Kremlin. Not only that, but if he may have given away state secrets, and therefore would be guilty of a breach of national security.

Mr Ilyumzhinov is a millionaire businessman and has been president of Kalmykia, a small Buddhist region which lies on the shores of the Caspian Sea, for 17 years. He is also president of the World Chess Federation but has a reputation as 'an eccentric character'.

In his letter to President Medvedev regarding Mr Ilyumzhinov's claim, Mr Lebedev also asks the president whether there are any official guidelines for what government officials should do if they are ever contacted by aliens. *Paranormal Magazine* would love to know if such guidelines exist for any nation, not just Russia!

[SOURCE: BBC News, May 5]

HIGHEST LEVEL: Russian president Dimitry Medvedev has been asked to investigate claims that one of his regional leaders has had contact with extraterrestrials.



OFFICIAL SANCTION: A letter from a former chief constable reveals that the local police force had no doubts about the existence of a monster in Loch Ness.

SCOTTISH POLICE FULLY BELIEVED IN NESSIE

An archive letter by the head of the Inverness police in the 1930s reveals that his force believed 'beyond doubt' in the existence of the Loch Ness monster. [SOURCE: STV, Apr 26]

In the letter, addressed to the Under Secretary of State at the Scottish Office, former Chief Constable William Fraser said: 'That there is some strange creature in Loch Ness seems now beyond doubt, but that the police have any power to protect it is very doubtful.'

The typed note is dated 1938 and is one of a number of files recently revealed by the National Archives of Scotland. Its subject was a would-be monster hunter from London, Peter Kent.

Mr Fraser wrote: 'Mr Peter Kent visited Fort Augustus on Friday, August 12, and was seen there by my officer stationed at Fort Augustus, to whom he stated that he was having a special harpoon gun made and that he was to return with some 20 experienced men on August 22 for the purpose of hunting the monster down.'

'I have, however, caused Mr Peter Kent to be warned of the desirability of having the creature left alone, but whether my warning will have the desired effect or not remains to be seen.'

In 1933, The Scottish Office had been asked to confirm the existence of a creature in Loch Ness following the first wave of alleged sightings and photographs. Of course, they were unable to do so, but there was a proposition that official photographers be stationed around the loch to try and capture the necessary proof. If such proof had been forthcoming, the next step would have been to try and trap Nessie.

A spokesman for the National Archives of Scotland said: 'In the end it was felt that as the monster provided public interest and amusement, it would be better to let it continue to do so than to kill it.'

The government file on the Loch Ness Monster, including the Mr Fraser's letter, features in the Open Secret exhibition at the archives in Edinburgh.

FAKE RABBI'S 'HOLY FLUID'

A former employee of the Israeli defence ministry set himself up as a rabbi and then tricked women into having sex with him. [SOURCE: BBC news, Apr 27]

Nissim Aharon told the women that his semen was holy and had healing powers. He has been imprisoned for ten years for rape, sodomy, indecent acts and aggravated fraudulent acquisition. Not only did he exploit women - the youngest in her teens - for his sexual satisfaction, he also received large sums of money from them.

Aharon impersonated people in authority and would then refer the troubled women to a rabbi - himself, of course - for healing. In the guise of the rabbi, he told his victims, among other things, that 'a holy scent comes from him, and that his semen is a holy fluid, which by contact could heal body and soul.'

He had been getting away with the deception for many years. 'His behaviour is despicable and even monstrous,' his judges said. 'There are no words to describe the ugliness of his actions... There were no means that he would not use in order to exploit women young and old. His sexual appetite could not be satisfied.'

As well as the prison sentence, Aharon has been ordered to pay 100,000 shekels (\$26,866) to each of the five women who filed the complaint against him.

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READER SURVEY

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At *Paranormal Magazine* we are committed to bringing you the best magazine we can and we felt it was time to let you, our readers, tell us what you think. So if you like (or dislike) something in *Paranormal Magazine*, tell us and we'll try and change it. As a thank you for answering our questions, we will automatically enter you into our competition. Prizes up for grabs are: Paranormal Mugs plus print and digital subscriptions to *Paranormal Magazine*. (If you are already a subscriber, we will automatically renew your subscription free of charge if you win). You can also fill out the survey online at: www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk/readersurvey

1. Are you: a. Male b. Female

2. What is your age?

- a. 0-15
- b. 16-18
- c. 19-24
- d. 25-30
- e. 31-40
- f. 41-50
- g. 51-60
- h. 60+

3. Are you: a. Married/Living with partner
b. Divorced c. Single

4. Do you have children under 16 years at home?

a. No b. Yes (if so, how many)

5. What is your working status?

- a. Employed full-time
- b. Employed part-time
- c. Business Owner
- d. Not Working
- e. Student
- f. Retired

6. Please indicate your household income:

- a. £0-£20,000
- b. £20,000-£29,999
- c. £30,000-£49,999
- d. £50,000-£99,999
- e. £100,000+

7. What are your main interests and hobbies? (tick all applicable)

- a. Home entertainment
- b. Computing/Gaming
- c. Reading
- d. Sports
- e. Travel
- f. Music
- g. Photography
- h. Eating out
- i. Other (please Specify)

8. How did you first hear about Paranormal?

- a. From a friend
- b. By visiting the website
- c. Saw it on the news-stand
- d. Other (please specify)

9. How long have you been reading Paranormal?

- a. This is my first issue
- b. Less than six month
- c. Six months to three years
- d. Three to six years
- e. More than six years

10. How often do you buy Paranormal?

- a. Every issue
- b. About every other issue
- c. About every three months
- d. Less often
- e. Only when I want info on something specific

11. Where did you buy this copy of Paranormal?

- a. WHSmith
- b. Asda
- c. Tesco
- d. Sainsbury's
- e. Morrisons
- f. Waitrose
- g. Local Newsagent
- h. I am a subscriber
- i. Other (please specify)

12. What other paranormal related magazines do you read? (tick all the apply)

- a. Fortean Times
- b. Ghost Voices
- c. Spirit and Destiny
- d. Fate
- e. Other (please specify)

13. Which of these factors is most important to you when buying a magazine? (tick one)

- a. Price
- b. Regular features
- c. Imagery
- d. Ratio of adverts to other pages
- e. Cover
- f. Features
- g. Number of pages
- h. Style
- i. Other (please specify)

14. With its cover price of £4.25 in mind, do you think Paranormal Magazine offers good value for money compared to other magazines in its sector?

- a. Very Good Value
- b. Good Value
- c. Average Value
- d. Poor Value

15. Do you have internet access?

- a. At home
- b. At work
- c. No

16. How often have you visited the Paranormal website?

- a. Never
- b. Once
- c. A few times
- d. Every few months
- e. About once month
- f. About once a week
- g. Every day

17. Have you ever responded to an advert in Paranormal Magazine?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. On a scale of one to ten (1=poor, 10=excellent), how would you rate Paranormal Magazine in general?

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19. How would you rate the regular articles in Paranormal Magazine (1=poor, 10=excellent)?

- a. Paranormal News _____
- b. Sightings _____
- c. The Good Fear Guide _____
- d. Popular Haunts _____
- e. Unearthed _____
- f. County spotlight _____
- g. Experiences _____
- h. Reviews _____
- i. Bookend _____

20. What are the paranormal subjects you are most interested in? (tick all that apply)

- a. Ghosts
- b. UFOs and aliens
- c. ESP
- d. Weird creatures
- e. Folklore
- f. Magic and witchcraft
- e. Spirits and mediums
- g. Other (please specify)

21. How many people read your copy of Paranormal magazine?

- a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4+

22. What would you like to see more of in Paranormal Magazine?

23. What would you like to see less of in Paranormal Magazine?

24. Do you have any other comments about Paranormal Magazine?

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sightings

Have you had a Sighting? Please let us know if you have seen a ghost, UFO, mystery beast or anything else strange and inexplicable. Send the details of your sighting to: editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk or visit www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk



GHOSTS

SECRET ROOM: The Farla family from Telford in Shropshire discovered a secret basement in their Victorian home after checking out a three metre metal grid which had always puzzled them. Behind the grate they found a hole just big enough to crawl through which led to a large room underneath the house. On the floor was a large wooden cross and stairs that led back to the back of a cupboard in their house. The family now believe they have released a "ghost" as strange events now occur, including floating orbs which they have captured on camera. (Source: *Daily Mail* 11th April).

ORBES: Paul Cliff, publican of the New Inn along Midland Road in Rotherham, could not, apparently, believe his eyes when he checked his CCTV footage and saw "a mysterious orb of light" float across the bar. He said: "I've never seen anything like it. I just can't explain it. The whole episode is just extraordinary. We've been here for 12 years and this is the first time we have experienced anything like this." (Source: *Rotherham Advertiser* 25th April).

HINKY PUNK: Construction workers on a 15th century church in Anglesey which is currently undergoing renovation have reported seeing unidentified "balls of light" on several occasions, which they described as "a wispy ball of light that moves around slowly and seen to grow smaller and dissipate." Steve Mera from the UPIA group visited the scene and discovered the church was surrounded by marshland, he reports: "A closer inspection of the area revealed rotting plants baking in the afternoon sun and a slight scent of methane. It would be no surprise to me if under such conditions that marsh gasses could manifest themselves as *Ignis Fatuus* which is Latin for *Foolish Fire*, and also known as *will-o-wisp*, *jack-o-lantern*, *friar's lantern* and *hinky punk*." (Source: *Phenomena Magazine UPIA & MAPIT May*).

CLEOPATRA HILL: The Jerome Hotel on Cleopatra Hill in Los Angeles has several spectres that keep the guests awake on a night. Staff and visitors alike have reported being kept awake by the spirits, who are said to be a caretaker who hanged himself in the boiler room, a handicapped man who wheeled himself off the balcony, and an executive who shot himself in Room 32. The nosiest ghost is said to be Harvey the caretaker, who was killed in a lift accident in 1935 when it came down on his head. Desk clerk Debra Altherr said: "He plays with the lights too." Other manifestations include noises akin to "moans and groans" and a lady in white. (Source: *Los Angeles Times* 12th April).

HAUNTED LIBRARY: Pam Ziobran was working late at the Deep River Public Library in Connecticut, recently, when she sensed she was not alone. She said: "It was just a feeling. It was just so light and airy, like a female coming down the stairs. It was very, very real." Susan Oehl was the only person in the area when she heard a sound coming from the next room, and reports: "I heard distinctly a woman clearing her throat, but when I checked there was nobody there." The ghost is said to be a man, but no more details of him are known. (Source: *Connecticut Courant* 20th April).

COLD SPOTS: The *Oakdale Leader* newspaper claims that its premises in Oakdale, California, is haunted. In April the Western Region Paranormal Research (WRPR) group conducted an investigation on the premises. Editor Marg Jackson reports: "One evening, working late, I had my daughter at the office with me and saw her go past my door, out of the corner of my eye. I went back to check on her, because I assumed she went to the break room but when I got there, the lights were out and she wasn't there. In fact, she was still seated at the desk up front when I went there. So she wasn't who I saw go past my door. And no one else was in the building." (Source: *Oakdale Leader* 21st April).

COWBOY: Brent Aspinall who owns the Emerado bar in Gilby, North Dakota, believes a ghost called Cowboy tugged his shirt while he was working behind the bar, and the incident has even been captured on CCTV, although the ghost was not seen. On another occasion customer, Penny Sorteberg, reports: "I saw a figure by the dart board. It was quick and fast. It was an older man with dark rimmed glasses and a hat that snapped in front." Brock McAdam, another customer said: "All of a sudden I heard a tap on the bar, and I got chills and my hair stood up on my arms and just got cold all of a sudden." (Source: *wuai.comnews* 1st May).

SOPHEA: What is said to be the ghost of a dead actress called Sophea is still making curtain calls today at the Schonell Theatre, University of Queensland, in Australia. Several members of staff, including cleaners and supervisors have been frightened by the ghost who wears "an old fashioned long dress and appears as a real 'flesh-and-blood' human." She has been seen to enter a particular dressing room but never leave. When checked no one is inside even though there is no other way out. Sophea also plays games with the cleaners, discarding rubbish in a previously cleaned area. Vera, one of the cleaners says she just tells the spirit to "stop it" and that "usually does the trick." (Source: *ABC.net* 15th April).

AFTER THE DISASTER: Survivors of the Chilean earthquake claim they can hear the screams and moans of those that died in the tragedy. The *Elmercurio News* reports: "Ghostly shadows cross the Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez Bridge in Constitution; cell phone screens light up suddenly, as if trying to receive phone calls. The moans and tears of children and their mothers resonate throughout the wooded Curanipe camping grounds, where thirty people lost their lives on February 27th." Ricardo Figueroa, a psychiatrist specializing in disasters at the Catholic University Hospital, explains: "When unexpected deaths or states of grief exist, it is normal for people to report experiences that may catalogued, in quotation marks, as supernatural. But this is a normal occurrence that increases during catastrophes." (Source: *Elmercurio News* 5th May).

DJINN: A series of fires in Deir al-Balah in the Gaza strip are being blamed, by locals, on the Djinn (genies). Two unexplained house fires in March and late April caused such an uproar with the local population that the police had to issue a statement denying that Djinn were responsible. The police also threatened legal action to anyone who said that Spirits were responsible for the fires. (Source: *trueslant.com* 24th April).



UFOS

AIR THREAT: An unknown cameraman took footage which apparently shows two military jets chasing a UFO over the M5 in the West Midlands, taken from a service station car park. Nick Pope remarked: "This is one of the best videos I've seen. It could be a new drone - that might explain the military jets. But you don't normally test-fly secret projects in daylight. Alternatively, this could be the real thing - a UFO in our airspace and military aircraft scrambled to intercept, probably due to it being tracked on radar." The MOD refused to comment but did agree that if they perceived any air threat to the UK they would scramble jets to intercept that danger. (Source: *The Sun* 10th April 2010).

ZIGZAG: John Pritchard, who describes himself as a previously being a UFO sceptic, filmed two objects over the Machynlleth, Mid Wales, night sky. He said: "The lights were moving quite slowly at first, and then they sped up and zigzagged away. It was very strange. At first I thought it must be an aeroplane but it definitely was not because when I enlarged my recording on the television, I could see an orange circular light which then changed to a purple colour." (Source: *The County Times March*).

BALL OF FLAMES: Mid April, Bangor, North Wales: A couple were walking home at midnight when they noticed a shining light in the sky, they at first thought it may have been a Chinese lantern until it moved from side to side then "shot down and back up." One witness said: "I wasn't sure what to make of it as it just disappeared in a ball of flames after five minutes. Strangely enough I was out with my girlfriend again a couple of nights later when we noticed two of the lights above the Menai Straits, this time with about five accompanying, smaller lights around each of them." (Source: www.uk-ufo.co.uk April).

BRIGHT LIGHT: 1st May, 10pm, Dunfermline: "As my wife and I were saying goodbye to relatives who had been visiting, a bright light appeared in the sky moving horizontally very fast indeed. Our front door faces south and the bright light was moving from west to east. I shouted to my wife and relatives to look up. My wife came to where I was standing and she saw the light as well. As we watched the light I thought it was a plane on fire as bits of light then began to trail off behind the main light. The light then suddenly disappeared as quickly as it had come." (Source: www.uk-ufo.co.uk 1st May).

LIGHT BEAM: Lon Strickler of the website *Phantoms & Monsters* received an email and video footage of what is described "as a beam of light" over a field in Wiltshire on the 3rd of May. The witness observed the light through night vision equipment and said: "Throughout the night we witnessed many unusual sightings of lights - fields lit up with pale blue flashes - streaks of three white lights." The footage can be seen at <http://naturalplane.blogspot.com> (Source: *Lon Strickler, Phantoms & Monsters*).

STRAIGHT LINES: Lanark, 6th May: "Two objects came over first flying north to south, then shot away in an upwardly direction when almost out of sight. The other three came individually within a 15-20 min timeframe. They moved in a straight line at all times. There was a commercial aircraft flying northwards at the time of the first sighting on a similar flight path to the objects albeit much lower." (Source: www.uk-ufo.co.uk 6th May).

LIKE THE SUN: Ramsgate, Kent, 6th May, 11.20pm. Witnesses at a bus stop in Ramsgate observed a large bright orange ball of light in the sky, one witness said: "It seemed to just stay in the one place. I called over two people walking down the hill to come over to also see it, by the time they got to us the ball started to move off and then just was not there. This was not A Chinese lantern, as it was as bright as the sun." (Source: www.uk-ufo.co.uk 6th May).

LIGHTNING STRIKE: In Chicago, on the 4th of April a witness believes he saw a bolt of lightning strike a UFO. He reports: "I first noticed a large C-shaped dark object that looked like a large boomerang manifest then get hit by lightning in the sky over Chicago. It was Easter Sunday 4/4/10. What's interesting is that a part of the lightning strike forms what I think looks like a cross and halo above a symbol of a man. The witness took video footage of the incident and posted it on YouTube." (Source: *MUFON* 4th April).

STAR WARS: On the 4th of April a male witness in Missouri claims he saw two UFOs firing missiles at each other, he said: "I first saw what I thought was a helicopter. I watched for some time then saw the light fire a missile which hit another similar ball of light. The two lights then threw missiles at each other for some time, until finally the second light zigzagged back and forth then disappeared, as though it had been destroyed. The witness mentions a similar incident in the area in 1997 in which a cow was found dead the next morning." (Source: *MUFON* April).

TRIANGULAR: Two triangular-shaped craft were seen over Kingston, New York, on the 29th of April. One witness reports: "The first of these, visible around 9:30 pm, shone bright headlights in front, two white flashing lights from behind, one or more flashing red lights at wingtip, and no less than four large round, non-flashing lights visible underneath, two white, one red and one green. The craft in question flew out of the northwest above Overlook Mountain and headed southeast towards Kingston. No less than seven other aircraft were visible in the air at the time, at various distances and altitudes, and at least two of them, bright yellowish spots of light, similar in appearance to the helicopters." (Source: *UFO Clearing House* April).

CIGAR-SHAPED: A witness told MUFON: "During my daily exercise walk on the 30th of April, I spotted a mysterious cylindrical (cigar-shaped) UFO hovering low over a suburban section of Richmond, Virginia. I noticed the craft during beautiful weather and clear skies at approximately 6:30 p.m. while walking east down Riverside Drive on the south bank of the James River. The craft, perhaps the length of a football field, appeared to have a dull metallic fuselage with light and dark sections fore, aft, and amidships. There was no writing on the craft or standard markings,

no advertisements like you would expect on a blimp, and it did not appear to be a conventional blimp, dirigible, or zeppelin of which I am familiar." (Source: *MUFON* April).



CREATURES

SCOTTISH LION: A retired university lecturer is adamant he saw an African lioness in the Campsie Hills just North of Glasgow. Dr Bob Sharp said: "I saw it for about 10 seconds. Initially, my brain was trying to say it was a fox, but it clearly wasn't. It was 50 yards in front of me, just padding across the hillside, left to right, running, not going at full pelt. I've been walking the Scottish mountains for 35 years and I have never ever seen anything like that." Prior to this BCIB were sent a print found six miles away from the location by Fife Wildlife Officer Mark Maylin. The print is very large and definitely a cat. (Source: *Daily Express* 7th May & *Big Cats in Britain*).

BIG CATS IN BRITAIN: This month has seen several samples and photographs coming in. Only one sample (faeces) is thought to be worthy of DNA analysis and has been sent off for examination. A large black cat was spotted twice by a lorry driver near Amersham. On the 27th of April another lorry driver saw a "sandy brown cat" crossing the M65 near Nelson in Lancashire, the witness is adamant that what he saw was a mountain lion. In Sutherland what was described as a lynx was reported by a family driving near Ullapool. (Source: *Mark Fraser Big Cats in Britain*).

BIGFOOT: A witness believes he saw Bigfoot while on his way to the local store near Thurmont in Northeast Frederick County, Maryland. He saw the creature standing behind a tree while he crossed a railroad track. He said: "It was a light reddish brown with beige. Almost like the hair was two-toned or something. The hair looked like it was in jagged tufts that looked like it would look darker underneath if you lifted the fur. I did not see a face but whatever it was, it was about 6 or 8 ft tall." (Source: *Lon Strickler Phantoms & Monsters*).

SKUNK APE: On the 21st of April the witness was driving along Highway 37 in Berrien County, South Georgia when she saw something "hairy walking off the road and into the woods." She said: "I saw the back of something it was tall. ... I thought it was a bear but a bear don't walk on its back legs. ... Honestly, it looked like an ape. My husband is 6ft tall and it was about the same size as him." (Source: *The Valdosta Daily Times* 7th May).

PEEPING ALIENS: A woman got the shock of her life when she developed photographs that she took of her bedroom in Stephenville, Texas. In the picture, there is, what some say, the clear image of an alien grey type entity staring into the room. She said: "I was going through my photos several days later and my eyes were immediately drawn to the window in the photo. There were no lights outside, no moon, it was completely dark, except for a few lights in the distance. I live in a rural area. There have been numerous sightings of unidentified flying objects in our area." (Source: www.strangeunknown.com April).

LOUD BANG: On the 16th of April the witness woke up hearing "a beeping sound" in their Arizona home. He awoke to a pitch black room but as the witnesses eyes adjusted he could clearly see "small bluish grey aliens, 2 or 3 in height. Not clearly lit up like I was shining a light on them, and they were standing at my bedroom door way." Then a bright light lit up a section of his bedroom wall which extinguished with a "loud bang." With that the visitors disappeared, although the witness sensed he was not alone for some time afterwards. (Source *MUFON* April).

ROCK SLINGING: Yowie researcher 'Tony' has vowed never to go out on his own in the woods after a frightening encounter with what he claims were two Yowie in the Blue Mountains in NSW Australia, on the 3rd of April. He said: "At least two creatures were around me they made themselves very clear I wasn't welcomed." 'Tony' video-taped the incident, although nothing can be seen on the film of the creatures. He claims the creatures followed him into the woods and ran around him before throwing the rocks. In an interview the following day he was "still shaking." (Source: www.disclosetv.com April).

ALMA SAVED: A Russian hunter claims he saved a Bigfoot-type creature from a frozen Siberian river in April this year near the village of Aenzaskiye Kichi in the Perm Region. He and several others were fishing when they heard a loud crack of ice followed by a howl. They saw an unusual creature, "like a huge man covered in dark brown fur" struggling to get out of the river. The hunters rescued the 'creature' by reaching out to it with a branch, as soon as it reached shore, "it just walked away." (Source: *Lon Strickler Phantoms & Monsters*).

FOUR LEGGED MONSTER: On three separate days in early April a strange "four legged grey monster" was seen by separate witnesses in Colonia Chinameca, Mexico. The first witnesses were school children in the Chinameca District, on the 5th witnesses spotted it in the Alamo District where they saw it dive and disappear into the Monclova River. On the 9th a shepherd saw it on several occasions near his land, and he believes it is responsible for the death of ten of his goats. Descriptions are "a little man with smooth, grey skin and four legs." Authorities ordered bathers out of the river where it was last seen. (Source: *Inexplicata* 15th April).

GOBLIN GRAPPLING: A 13 year old school boy in Mukumba, Zimbabwe, is haunted by an invisible "monster." The boy first complained of stomach pains then he suffered bouts of unconsciousness. He has been observed to "physically fight" with an unknown entity witnesses are calling a goblin that caused the boy's body to glow. A school teacher said: "On the first occasion, the boy claimed to have seen a short-bearded man wearing a black cloak. During his initial contact with the invisible creature, he would scream and try to ward off the invisible attacker and we later taught him to pray as a way to fight it off." (Source: *Daily Mail*: 17th April).

Sightings
is compiled
by MARK FRASER
of the research
organization
Big Cats in Britain
(www.bigcatsinbritain.org)



Mysteries of the sea

The oceans are almost unimaginable in their depth and vastness. Not so long ago, making a long sea voyage was as hazardous as a journey to the moon and many lives have been lost in 'Davy Jones's Locker'. Here **JOHN STOKER** offers an eerie selection of some of his favourite maritime mysteries.

ON JULY 11, 1881, a British steam frigate, HMS Inconstant, was sailing off the southern coast of Australia when she sighted a strange vessel enveloped by a glowing red light. The ship was seen by a number of sailors and the incident recorded by a 16-year-old midshipman, who wrote in his diary: 'At 4.00am The Flying Dutchman crossed our bows.'

That young man would later become King George V and he reported that at least 11 sailors had seen the apparition as the Inconstant came within 200 yards of the phantom brig. Two other ships in the convoy also reported strange lights and the outline of a sailing ship in the sea.

There is also a belief that a sighting of the cursed ship can bring about tragedy and in this case that belief seems to have been proved true, for later in the day the first sailor to have spotted the ghost vessel fell to his death from one of the masts.

The sighting was just one of many which call into question whether The Flying Dutchman is merely a legend. The 17th century vessel is supposed to have been cursed as it rounded the Cape of Good Hope during a fierce storm and there have been many sightings through the years. On January 26, 1925, the fourth officer on the SS Barrabool, sailing off the coast of South Africa, saw: 'The hull of a ship, luminous, with two distinct masts carrying bare yards, also luminous. There were no sails visible, but there was a luminous

haze between the masts. There were no navigation lights and she appeared to be coming closer to us and at the same speed as ourselves.'

The vessel came within half a mile of the Barrabool then vanished.

Three of my uncles were ships' captains and they all agreed the sea held as many mysteries, if not more, than the land. Like all sailors they were extremely superstitious and believed that certain vessels were 'unlucky' and particularly difficult to crew. One such vessel was the Great Eastern, the last great project of its designer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel. It was the largest ship of its day but before it even set sail there were problems with accidents during its construction and two riveters vanished without trace.

The vessel should have launched on November 3, 1857, but it stuck on the slipway. Finally, after two more attempts to launch the ship failed, she slid into the river in January of the following year. But the vessel was still suffering technical difficulties and did not begin ocean trials until September. On her first day at sea a boiler explosion blew off the number one funnel, killing five men. When the ship began regular voyages she was constantly plagued by problems which branded her as unreliable. ●

'FIVE MEN DIED DURING HER CONSTRUCTION AND ON HER FIRST DAY AT SEA A SAILOR DROWNED.'

Did a curse sink The Titanic?

One of the best-known, but probably apocryphal, legends of a mummy's curse concerns the mummy case of an Egyptian princess, said to have been found by archaeologist Douglas Murray in 1910.

According to the story, a few days after the discovery, Murray lost his arm in a shooting accident and two of his friends died. He passed the case on to a woman friend, who contracted a mysterious illness. But when her mother died and her lover left her, the mummy case was returned to Murray, who promptly donated it to the British Museum.

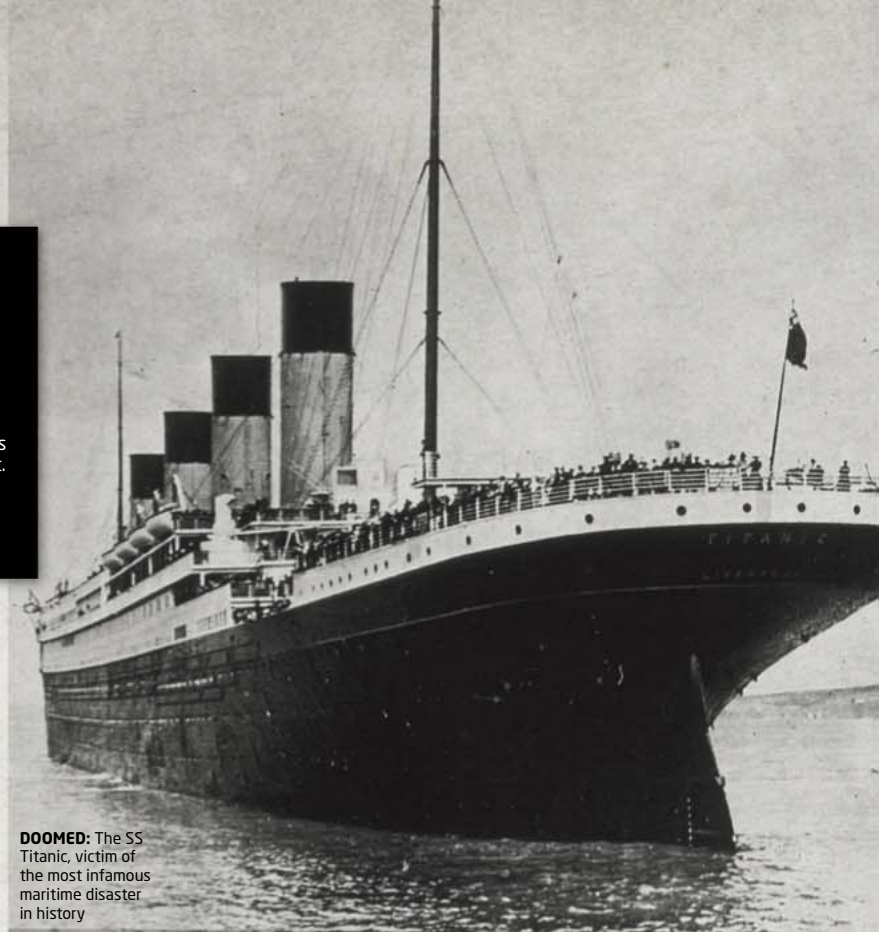
A leading Egyptologist who took charge of the exhibit died, as well as a photographer, forcing the Museum to relinquish control of the artefact. When a New York Museum offered to house it the mummy case was crated up and sent to Southampton for shipping on Britain's newest luxury liner, the SS Titanic. A few days later both the vessel and its ancient cargo reached their final destination, the floor of the Atlantic.

Then members of the crew began to hear strange knocking sounds coming from the hull which no one could explain. Morale among the sailors collapsed and at one time the ship could not leave port because the crew were drunk. Passenger services were discontinued and she became a cable laying vessel. She was finally sold for scrap and when she was broken up there was a report that a skeleton had been found encased in the hull of the ship. Perhaps it was the body of one of the missing riveters.

Another vessel destined to have an ill-fated career was the German U-boat UB-65. Five men died during her construction and on her first day at sea a sailor drowned. The underwater tests nearly ended in disaster when the submarine failed to surface for nearly 12 hours. The

'SHIPS CREWS HAVE DISCOVERED THE SPIRITS OF DEAD CREW MEMBERS ARE STILL WITH THEM.'

DEATH SHIP: This old drawing successfully conjures up the gothic dread of the Flying Dutchman as it terrifies these mariners who are at the mercy of the elements.



DOOMED: The SS Titanic, victim of the most infamous maritime disaster in history

following day one of the torpedoes exploded as it was being loaded and five of the crew were killed, including the first officer, Lieutenant Richter.

A few days later a sailor deserted the ship after claiming that he had seen Richter walking on the deck. Over the coming weeks there were other reports of the lieutenant's appearance, forcing the German navy to check the vessel for leaking fumes in the belief that crew members were suffering hallucinations.

Finally, Admiral Schroeder, head of U-boat command, after

hearing that many of the crew had requested transfers, decided to spend a night aboard UB-65 in an attempt disprove the many rumours about the vessel. His sleep was unbroken and the submarine returned to sea. But when another member of the crew threw himself overboard, after claiming that he too had seen Richter, another series of accidents began, and these culminated in the loss of another crew member.

Then, on July 12, 1918, an American submarine spotted the U-boat apparently drifting out



of control. Before the American vessel could take any action, UB-65 exploded. As it slowly sank into the sea, an American officer saw a lone figure in German naval uniform on its deck. It seemed that Lieutenant Richter had stayed with his ship until the end.

Other ships crews have also discovered that the spirits of dead crew members are still with them. In 1929 James Courtney and Michael Meehan were killed while working on the SS Watertown bound for Panama. Both men were buried at sea, but the day after their funeral members of the crew saw the faces of their dead friends in the ocean. In fact the faces of Courtney and Meehan appeared to be following the ship, and did so for some days.

When the Watertown returned to New Orleans the Captain reported the events of the voyage to the owners who suggested that the Captain should take a camera with him in case the ghostly faces were to reappear. A few days later Courtney and Meehan made their presence felt again and this time the camera was trained on the faces of the dead men. But when the pictures were processed and examined by the Burns Detective Agency they showed just a wide expanse of ocean, apart from the last one which had finally captured the mysterious faces.

One of the greatest ocean liners, Queen Mary, is now in retirement at Long Beach in California where she enjoys a new life as a hotel and a tourist attraction. In wartime she

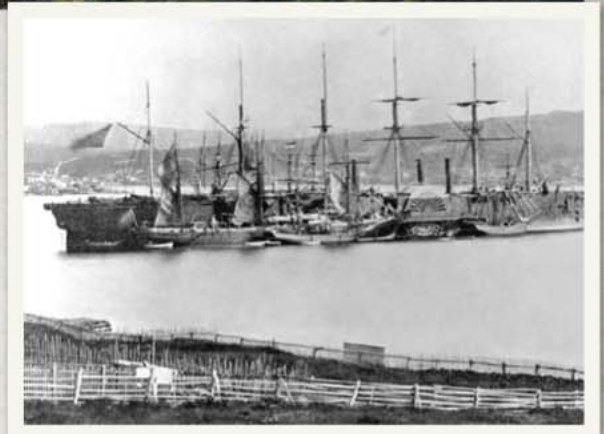


NIGHTMARISH: American artist Albert Pinkham Ryder's striking portrayal of the sudden apparition of the Flying Dutchman, the ship that is doomed to sail the seas forever.

served as a troop ship, repainted to camouflage her from the enemy and dubbed The Grey Ghost, a highly appropriate name. Forty-nine people have died on board, so it should come as no surprise to learn that some spirits appear to have booked permanent accommodation.

The ghost of John Henry, a young crewman who was crushed to death, has been seen in engine room 13 and a mysterious man in black and a woman in blue also appear. The first-class swimming pool seems to be a popular venue for ghosts even though it is now drained. A member of staff saw a woman in a Fifties bathing costume about to dive into the empty pool and when he shouted a warning to her she vanished. The ghost of a young girl called Jackie has been seen running around the second-class pool where she drowned, and a resident psychic, Peter James, claims that the vessel is home to about 150 spirits. Other phenomena include knocks and bright lights.

In 1948 another ship was found to be drifting out of control, this



THE GREAT EASTERN: Brunel's final 'achievement' photographed in 1866. The great iron ship was dogged with problems from the start, leading the crew to believe it was cursed.

time in the Malacca Straits. She was the Dutch freighter Orang Medan and she had already sent out a distress call claiming that members of the crew were either dead or dying. The final message was: 'Now I am also near to death.'

The first ship to reach the stricken vessel launched a boarding party which discovered that the entire crew was indeed dead and a doctor with them confirmed that all the men appeared to have died at the same time. But he was unable to discover the cause of death. The

'A MEMBER OF STAFF SAW A WOMAN IN A FIFTIES BATHING COSTUME ABOUT TO DIVE INTO THE EMPTY POOL. WHEN HE SHOUTED A WARNING, SHE VANISHED.'



ROYAL CONNECTION: The young princes George (one day George V) and Albert Victor on board HMS Inconstant at the time of the sighting of the Flying Dutchman.



THE QUEEN MARY: Now a floating hotel, this former luxury liner is also a popular resort of ghost-hunters. Are there really 150 ghosts on board?

log which the Captain of the Herald took back to his vessel.

As the Octavius drifted away, the captain opened the log book to read the last entry, dated November 11, 1762, which described how the ship had been hemmed in by ice and, having been unable to move, the crew had frozen to death. The location had also been entered, which showed that the Octavius had at that time been trapped in waters off the coast of Alaska. Following this disaster, the empty ship had somehow managed to complete a 13-year voyage through the frozen arctic seas to the North Atlantic and in the process must have found a viable route years before explorers discovered the Northwest Passage. The Octavius was never seen again.

But ships don't just vanish in the vast oceans. As far back as 1678 a vessel called the Griffon vanished in Lake Michigan with the loss of her crew. But sightings of the vessel have taken place through the centuries and the ghost ship still continues

PURSUED: The famous photograph showing the alleged apparitions of two sailors who died onboard the SS Watertown and whose faces then seemed to follow the ship.



a whaling ship sailing off the coast of Greenland in 1775. Through the mist the Captain saw a schooner, the Octavius, drifting, her decks and masts covered with ice. A boat was launched and the captain and some of his crew climbed onto the ship's deck and went in search of the sailors. They found them lying frozen in their bunks, the only clue to their demise being in the ship's

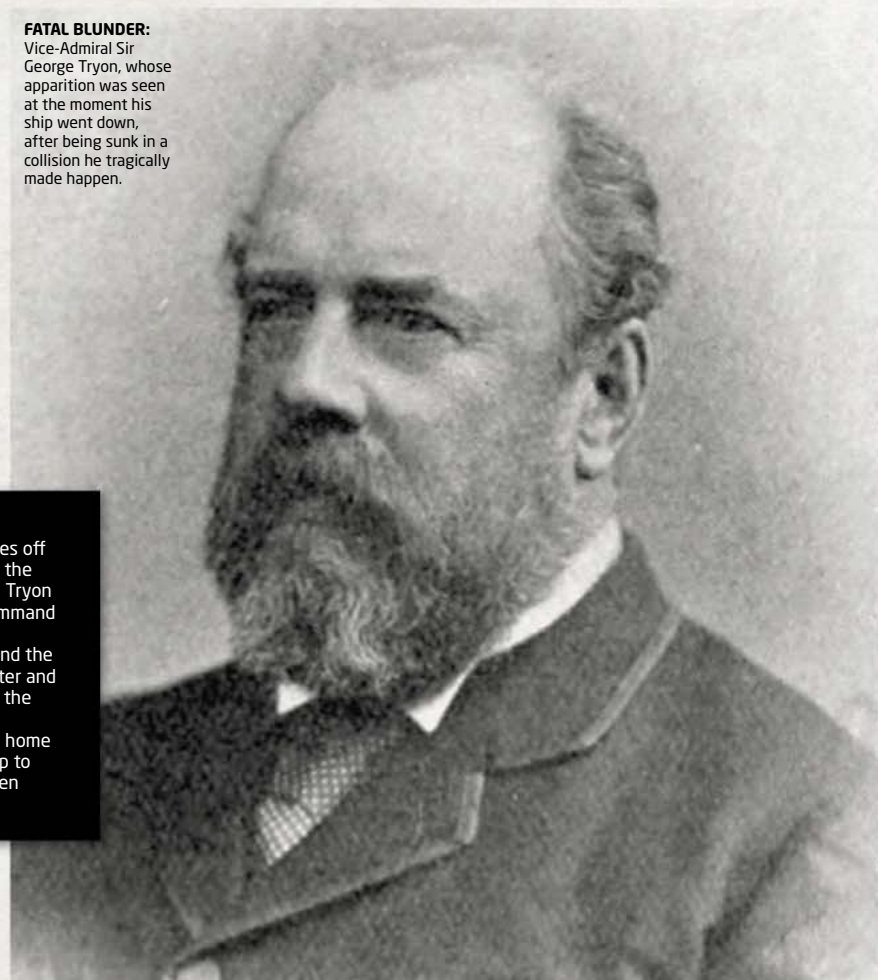
'THE ENTIRE CREW WAS DEAD AND A DOCTOR CONFIRMED ALL THE MEN APPEARED TO HAVE DIED AT THE SAME TIME. BUT HE WAS UNABLE TO DISCOVER THE CAUSE.'

bodies of the officers were all found together in the chart room, while the bodies of the lower ranks were found on the deck.

It was decided to take the vessel in tow, but as a line was being rigged up, a fire suddenly broke out and the seamen were forced to leave the Ourang Medan. Safely aboard their own ship they could only watch as the vessel exploded, consigning the mystery of the Ouran Medan to the depths of the ocean, the final official verdict of 'death by misadventure' leaving no clue as to the cause of the disaster.

An even stranger mystery vessel was sighted by the Herald,

FATAL BLUNDER: Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon, whose apparition was seen at the moment his ship went down, after being sunk in a collision he tragically made happen.



Home is the sailor

On June 22, 1893, Britain's Mediterranean fleet was engaged in exercises off the coast of Tripoli. Steaming in two parallel lines, the ships were under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon in the flagship HMS Victoria. Tryon gave an order which set his vessel and HMS Camperdown, under the command of Rear Admiral Sir Albert Hastings Markham, onto a collision course.

Sir George attempted to countermand this order but it was too late and the Camperdown rammed the Victoria, whose boilers were swamped by water and exploded, killing 358 men. As the Victoria sank, Sir George remained on the bridge, his last words being: "It's all my fault."

On the same afternoon his wife was holding a tea party at the Tryon home in Eaton Square. Suddenly conversation stopped as the guests looked up to see Sir George Tryon walking down the stairs, crossing the room and then exiting through a door. The sailor had returned home for the last time.

to ply the waters of the lake.

In June 1874 the paddle steamer Iron Mountain left New Orleans bound for Pittsburgh with six barges in tow. She stopped off at Vicksburg to take on more passengers and then continued her journey down the Mississippi. She was followed a few hours later by another vessel, the Iroquois Chief, whose crew sighted the barges floating adrift in the river. After discovering that the tow line had been cut, the Iroquois Chief collected the barges and took them in tow to the next port on the river. But there was no trace to be found of the Iron Mountain or her crew or passengers. Even though the river was dragged in the hope of finding wreckage, none was ever discovered.

There have been many theories put forward as to the fate of the Iron Mountain, which range from an attack by river pirates to an abduction by an alien spacecraft. Added to this was the curious discovery of a ship's anchor in a



GHOST SHIP: A phantom sailing vessel of the 17th century is said to still be seen plying the waters of Lake Michigan.

SILENT VOYAGE: For seven years, long after its crew had frozen to death, the Octavius found its own way through frozen seas that still remained uncharted in 1775 when it was sighted by another ship.



'THE MANY THEORIES PUT FORWARD AS TO THE FATE OF THE IRON MOUNTAIN RANGE FROM AN ATTACK BY RIVER PIRATES TO ABDUCTION BY AN ALIEN SPACECRAFT.'

nearby field, a fact nobody has been able to successfully explain. If this was the anchor of the Iron Mountain then how did it get there, where was the rest of the vessel and what happened to the crew and passengers?

The following year a curious incident took place on the banks of the river near St Joseph. A group of young people heard a woman's screams followed by cries for help in French. Although they searched the area they failed to find anyone, but it's interesting to note that a number of the passengers on board the Iron Mountain were Creole women, whose first language was French, and there was also a report of the body of a Creole woman being found on the banks of the river not long after the disappearance of the ship.

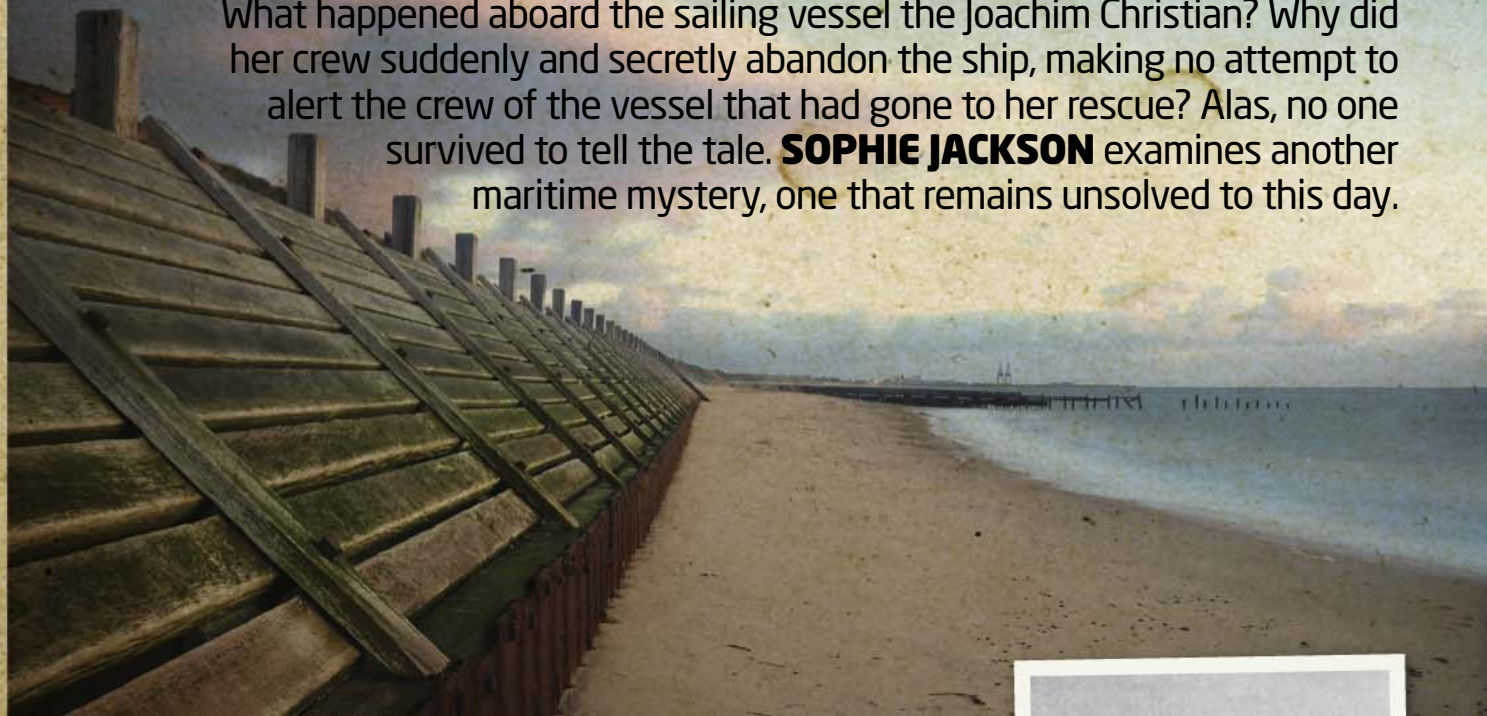
To this day residents along the Mississippi still claim to hear those same cries for help and they still ponder a mystery which, like many other nautical conundrums, will probably never be solved. ☹



John Stoker has spent 40 years working in radio and television, for such companies as the BBC, Thames, Central and NBC. At Anglia Television he helped to launch *Tales of the Unexpected* for Oscar-winning producer Sir John Woolf. He became a freelance writer and director and his output includes *Flesh and Blood* (the story of Hammer Films), *The Templar Legacy* and *Michael Bentine Asks Is There Anybody There?* He is the author of *The Illustrated Frankenstein* and has contributed to magazines as diverse as *Little Shoppe of Horrors* and *The Oldie*.

The Lowestoft enigma

What happened aboard the sailing vessel the Joachim Christian? Why did her crew suddenly and secretly abandon the ship, making no attempt to alert the crew of the vessel that had gone to her rescue? Alas, no one survived to tell the tale. **SOPHIE JACKSON** examines another maritime mystery, one that remains unsolved to this day.



UNSOLVED: The sea is calm in this recent photograph of the sea wall along the coast at Lowestoft. It still hides its secret of what happened on that fateful night in May, 1895.

ON 18 MAY 1895 the appearance of the fishing smack *Vandaura* returning early to her berth in Lowestoft harbour was to be the start of a sea mystery that would spark rumour, debate and conspiracy. The strange story the crew of the *Vandaura* brought with them has remained as puzzling today as it was 100 years ago.

The *Vandaura* was a local boat skippered by Charles Crews. She returned home minus two of her hands, including the mate, but her flag was not flying half-mast, so witnesses presumed there had been no deaths. In fact, the flying of the flag full-mast was down only to the hopes of the skipper - before long it was to become clear that 13 men had lost their lives at sea.

Crews told a perplexing story. Late in the afternoon of the previous Thursday the *Vandaura* had come upon a foreign barque flying distress signals. Calling

'JUST OVER AN HOUR LATER, THE VANDAURA'S LIFEBOAT HAD GONE. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE CREW ANYWHERE YET ALL THE BARQUE'S OWN LIFEBOATS WERE STILL FASTENED TO THE SIDES.'

across, Crews was told by the captain of the vessel that he was taking on water and his pumps were choked. The barque was listing and drifting leeward, making it difficult for the *Vandaura* to keep pace with her.

Crews tried to ask the foreign captain whether he wished to be towed, but the sea was rough and the captain could not hear. Crews held up a rope and when the foreign captain did the same Crews assumed this meant he wanted to be towed. The only option he had was to send two of his own men across.

The *Vandaura*'s mate, Charles Lincoln, and her third hand, Charles Bolan, climbed into the *Vandaura*'s lifeboat to sail across. Before leaving, Crews threw a life belt into the little boat and told Lincoln: 'You might want it - there's no telling.'

His words were to prove prophetic. Lincoln and Bolan sailed across to the barque. Once aboard Lincoln had the distress signal flags lowered. He then attached a line to a lifebuoy and tried to throw it back to the *Vandaura* so that the barque might be towed. He threw the line half a dozen times but with the leeward drifting of the barque and the rough seas he could not get it to the *Vandaura*.

By now evening was drawing in and it was growing too dark for much more to be done. Lincoln called to his skipper: 'Run to



Right EXPERIENCED: Suffolk fishermen from the late 19th century. Men and youths like these were born to a life at sea and the inexplicable nature of the *Vandaura* / Joachim Christian incident shocked the fishing community in Lowestoft.

leeward, luff the vessel to and keep by till daylight.' He meant he wanted the *Vandaura* to circle the barque and keep an eye on her until morning, when they would try tossing the line again. Those were the last words Crews would ever hear Lincoln say.

All night the *Vandaura* stayed close to the barque and circled her three or four times. At one o'clock when they sailed past the stern, they saw their lifeboat fastened there and the barque burning sidelights.

However, just over an hour later, at 2.30am, when they sailed past the stern again, the *Vandaura*'s lifeboat

had gone. There was no sign of the crew anywhere yet all the barque's own lifeboats were still fastened to the sides. The ship's deck appeared deserted, even the little dog Crews had seen running about the barque had vanished.

Crews was dumbfounded. The Vandaura had never been further than half a mile from the barque and he was certain he would have heard his men shouting out or seen a light being shone if they had been trying to reach him. Crews stayed with the barque until 6am, hoping the crew would suddenly appear from below decks. When it became undeniable that there was no living soul left aboard, he sailed north, hoping to come across the lifeboat and the men. He found nothing and finally gave up, sailing into Lowestoft harbour on the Saturday afternoon.

The mystery shocked everyone in the little community. Why

should the foreign vessel's crew suddenly abandon ship and yet give no signal to the Vandaura, which was nearby and could have been reached easily? The barque had not been in immediate danger of sinking and, anyway, it seemed extraordinary that the two local men had not made any effort to get back to their own boat.

Crews hoped to see his men alive, but he was to be disappointed when at 10.30pm another fishing smack, the Florabell, came into harbour carrying three bodies. One was Charles Lincoln, the other two were foreign sailors, presumably members of the barque's crew. The bodies had been found floating 50 miles east-south-east of Lowestoft. All the dead men wore life belts and Lincoln had a lifebuoy round him. They were taken to the mortuary, where the police searched them to see if the foreign men could be identified.

Between them the foreign seamen had a small amount of Dutch money, a couple of English sixpences, a pipe, a Meerschaum cigar tube and a pair of knuckle-dusters. This last item was to generate a surge of speculation over the nature of the abandonment of the foreign barque.

Early the following Sunday another smack, the Renovation, brought home the body of Charles Bolan. He had been found floating near the upturned lifeboat. The boat was in one piece but showed signs of men having clung to it while it was upturned, the rope fender being considerably frayed and the flanking of the boat marked by fingernails.

There seemed little doubt that after one o'clock the 13 men aboard the barque had abruptly abandoned ship in the lifeboat which had later been capsized. But still the overriding question was, why?

'CREWS HOPED TO SEE HIS MEN ALIVE, BUT HE WAS TO BE DISAPPOINTED. ANOTHER FISHING SMACK CAME INTO HARBOUR CARRYING THREE BODIES.'

The inquest on the bodies was opened and then abruptly closed as the coroner wished for small, bloody marks on the two Englishmen to be examined, no similar marks appearing on the foreign victims.

Rumours circulated that there had been an altercation, the knuckle-dusters being clear evidence of this. Foul play was whispered, but was quickly quashed when the coroner announced the marks on the men were not significant.

Some of the mystery was resolved when the foreign barque was finally identified as the Joachim Christian, a German vessel. The identification was made by the skipper of the Jane & Martha, who witnessed the empty ship sink. He had also found one more body floating in the water, wearing a cork vest. A sixth body was trawled up by the Wildflower near the sight of another shipwreck, that of the Elbe. Papers taken from the body indicated it was not one of the Elbe's crew. The documents were written in the 'Dano-Norwegian language' and consisted of the diary and letters of a seaman.

Efforts now began to try and identify the foreign bodies. ●

FISHING SMACK:
Old postcard of a Lowestoft sailing vessel very similar to the Vandaura which came across the stricken ship.



GRIM FIND: This old engraving shows the crew of a lifeboat recovering a body from the sea.



'NO MORE BODIES APPEARED AND THE CORONER HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO CLOSE THE INQUEST WITH VERDICTS OF ACCIDENTAL DROWNING. THIS LEFT TOO MANY QUESTIONS UNANSWERED.'

Photographs were taken and the bodies searched for distinguishing marks. One had the initials 'A.T' marked on his clothing, the second body had several tattoos and a bore a handkerchief with the initials 'A.P.' This last was eventually identified as Albert Pfretzscheiner; his father was able to identify a photograph of his son, who had been the cook and steward aboard the Joachim Christian.

The other men remained unknown, though the authorities had obtained the crew records and knew that aboard the barque had been two Swedes, one Russian among the primarily German crew. One body whose linen was marked 'A.S' might have been Albert Schentz, a lad of 16.

No more bodies appeared and the coroner had no choice but to close the

inquest with verdicts of accidental drowning on all six men. This left too many questions unanswered and the local newspaper labelled it 'The Mystery of the Sea Inquest'.

Thoughts turned now to mourning. The German consul had been contacted about the loss of the Joachim Christian and they were sufficiently moved by the actions of the dead Englishmen to offer compensation to their families. This unexpected benefit enabled Charles Lincoln to be the first of his family

to have a gravestone. It was a small consolation to the young wife and small children he left behind.

The other bodies were buried in the local cemetery. The father of Albert Pfretzscheiner arrived two hours too late to witness his son being interred.

Seven men were never recovered, not to mention the unfortunate ship's dog. They simply vanished beneath the waves never to be seen again and are probably still lying somewhere at the bottom of the ocean.

Only they could explain what had caused the sudden panic that made them abandon ship, that caused them to all board the Vandaura's small lifeboat rather than unhitching some of the Joachim's boats. They must have feared drowning, as they all wore life belts for what little good it did, but why they failed to signal the Vandaura, and why they failed to call out for help when they capsized has to remain a deep sea mystery.

Whatever happened on that fateful May Day over 100 years ago has to remain between the drowned men and the ever-rolling ocean waves. ☉

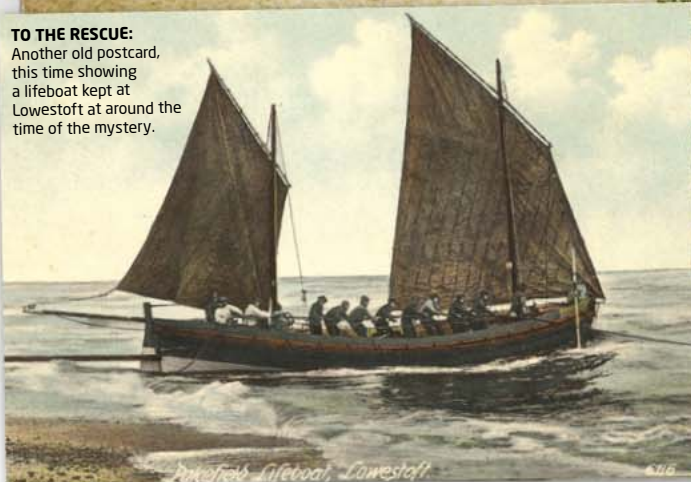


Sophie Jackson has worked as a freelance writer since 2003, with a special interest in unusual history. She has two non-fiction books to her name, *The Medieval Christmas* and *The Horse in Myth and Legend*, and has just completed her latest book about POWs held in Britain during World War 2 (*Churchill's Unexpected Guests*).

HERO: The grave of Charles Edward Lincoln, one of the fishermen who went to help the crew of the Joachim Christian, only to lose his life in mysterious circumstances. © Sophie Jackson



TO THE RESCUE: Another old postcard, this time showing a lifeboat kept at Lowestoft at around the time of the mystery.



**THIS IS THE
SECRET
THAT THE RICH
TRIED TO
STOP YOU
FROM
KNOWING!**

**I Will Tell You
How To Get Rich
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Photo: NASA



They came from planet Earth

Bid farewell to the Extraterrestrials and say hello to the Cryptoterrestrials. **NIGEL WATSON** examines the research of the late Mac Tonnies - is he right that so-called 'aliens' are not from outer space at all but have always been living right here on Earth?

THE APPEARANCE OF flying saucers in our skies raises lots of questions. Where do they come from? What are they doing here? Why did they start appearing to us after World War 2? After more than 60 years of study why do they still remain a mystery?

The main view is that UFOs, after all the misidentified and other clutter are eliminated, represent extraterrestrial craft. This so called extraterrestrial hypothesis (ETH) is dominant in the USA, and is strongly supported and spread throughout the world by all forms of media from video games and Hollywood movies to newspapers.

If you criticise the ETH you soon get mobbed by its angry supporters. You have to have courage to try to stand up to their protests that no other theory fits the facts. The late Mac Tonnies was one of the few brave enough to do so and to show that this king of all theories is not exactly naked but dressed in rather ragged clothing.

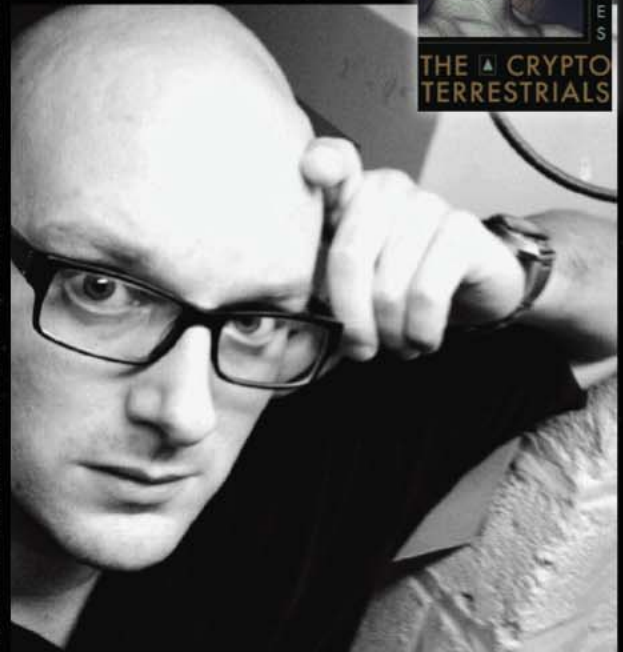
Mac saw that there are many flaws to the ETH and was frustrated by the fact that the old guard of ufology blindly support it at all costs. It has become an enshrined belief system that has to be protected against the attacks of the nasty sceptics or believers who do not toe this party line. One of the basic concerns of 'scientific' ETH ufology is to be treated with respect and acceptance by the scientific community and the world at large. Crystal gazing shamans and New Agers have

been either ignored or accepted through the back door of alien abduction research, where all sorts of weird experiences are openly embraced.

STAGE MANAGEMENT

Mac laid aside all the preconceptions about the origins of UFOs, and in his last book, *The Cryptoterrestrials* he tried to figure out other more radical and up-to-date ways of explaining this phenomenon. His alternative concept of the cryptoterrestrials came from an unusual inspiration. He observed his kittens playing with a laser pointer. The kittens would run and leap all over the

CHALLENGER: The late Mac Tonnies and his posthumously published book which presents his theory regarding a terrestrial origin for UFO activity.



CROWDED PLANET:

The signs of man's activity on Earth are clearly apparent. But do we share our planet with another technologically advanced race? Image from the Nasa Earth Observatory. Visit <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/>

'MAC SAW THAT THERE ARE MANY FLAWS TO THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL HYPOTHESIS AND WAS FRUSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT THE OLD GUARD OF UFOLOGY BLINDLY SUPPORT IT AT ALL COSTS.'

room in pursuit of the pointer's red dot; they had no concern about the origins of the light or who was controlling it. For Mac, the dot represented the UFO and the kittens the ufologists

running after it. Indeed, like Mac's manipulation of the pointer, he felt the UFO phenomenon seems to play with our expectations, taunting us at every turn.

In *The Cryptoterrestrials* Mac notes that UFO sightings and encounters seem intrinsically stage managed. As he puts it: 'Genuine ET visitors would probably have little need for the conspicuous maneuvers and trace evidence that form the backbone of the ETH. In the event of alien visitation, it's likely we'd never see objects resembling recognizable craft - let alone vehicles encumbered with

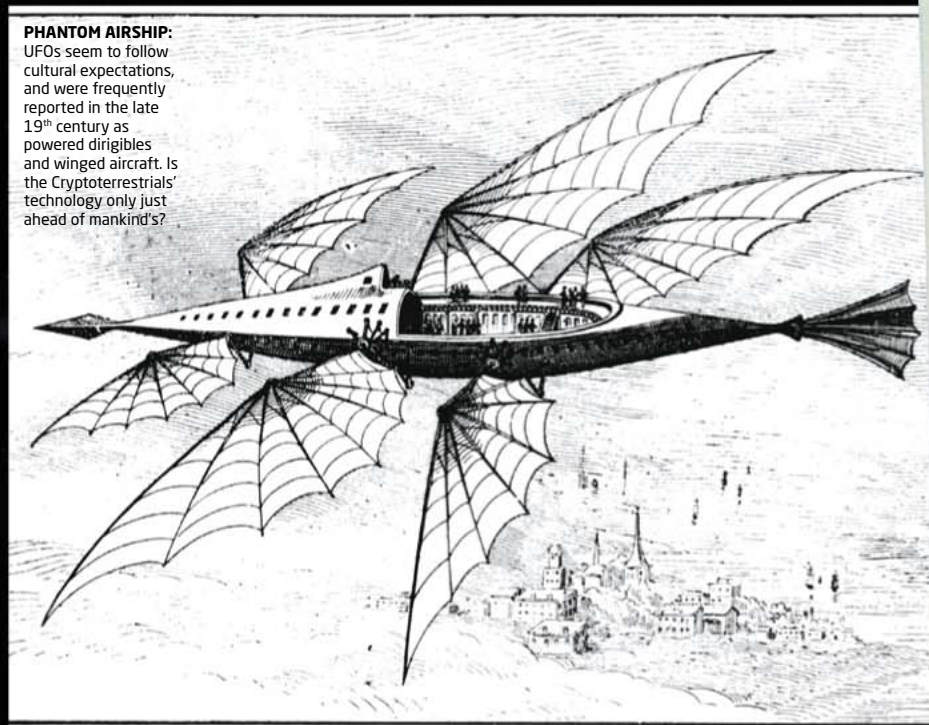
attention-grabbing lights and adorned with portholes.' (p.36)

Considering they are supposed to be secretly collaborating with world governments to abduct people and introduce alien technology to our culture, UFOs are blatant show-offs. They put on fantastic light displays and buzz over our cities. Rather than hide behind clouds or take sensible precautions, they just beg to be seen by as many people as possible.

When people are abducted, their encounters have all the qualities of bad B-movies. Mac cites the classic case of Betty and

PHANTOM AIRSHIP:

UFOs seem to follow cultural expectations, and were frequently reported in the late 19th century as powered dirigibles and winged aircraft. Is the Cryptoterrestrials' technology only just ahead of mankind's?



CULTURAL TRACKING

The aliens, or cryptoterrestrials, always use technology that is only one step more advanced than our own. Phantom airships were seen just as we were in the process of building similar craft, then mystery aircraft were reported in the 1920s and 1930s, followed by Foo Fighters and ghost rockets in the early 1940s. Finally, flying saucers that were assumed to be space ships appeared just as we were in the early stages of manned space exploration.

As Mac Tonnies puts it: 'Aliens, whether perceived as gnomes or fairies or demons or even humans (as in the case of the mysterious airship sightings of the late 19th century), may be forced to appear as they do by the cultural biases and limited expectation of the witness.' (p.65)

This concept of 'cultural tracking' helps explain why the force or forces behind the UFO phenomenon has changed over time. They present themselves in the manner we roughly expect of visitors from another realm - be it from another planet, dimension, hell or fairy knoll. If they do not do this we might not see them at all, and as Mac points out their mission is to be seen.

Alternatively, reports of aliens etc., are very much like the imaginings of science fiction and other media because they are exactly the same - the product of imagination shaped by our expectations.

An excellent discussion of cultural tracking can be found on the *Silly Beliefs* website at: www.sillybeliefs.com/aliens.html

Barney Hill, who were the first to report being examined by aliens inside a UFO. Betty was given a 3-D presentation of a star map that has condemned ufologists to thousands of hours contemplating what star systems and routes it might have depicted. Mac agrees that it was a 'real' experience but there is no proof that the Hills' met aliens inside a spacecraft.

A few years earlier, in 1957, Antonio Villas Boas claimed he had sexual intercourse with a short, fair-skinned female alien inside a UFO that landed on his farm. Before leaving the craft, the alien pointed at her stomach and then at the sky. This implied she would give birth to his baby back on her planet. On this issue, Mac agrees with Jacques Vallee, that a union between a human and a genuine extraterrestrial would not be viable. The female alien must have had some human qualities for the successful delivery of a hybrid baby as a result of this encounter.

SHAVER'S CUTTING EDGE MYSTERY

Mac Tonnie's concept of beings living underground, messing around with our minds using telepathy and mental manipulation, is nothing new. Before the term 'flying saucer' was coined, Richard Sharpe Shaver heard voices telling him about the existence of the Deros and Teros.

The Deros are deranged or detrimental robots, short and nasty and seeking to harm humanity. In opposition to them are the Teros, terrestrial or integrative robots, who try to save us from the evils of the Deros.

The Deros live in underground cities and use projection beams to cause all forms of human calamity, from minor accidents to natural disasters. These beams can also read your mind and fill it with tormenting voices. The Deros also have a penchant for kidnapping people, whom they torture and use as meat.

Shaver's stories about these creatures were published as fact by Raymond Palmer in his *Amazing Stories* pulp science fiction magazine, and collected as a novella titled *I Remember Lumeria*. John Keel believed that if Palmer had not promoted and edited these stories the flying saucer myth may never have been born at all.

These paranoid and schizophrenic fantasies certainly struck a chord, and *Amazing Stories* gained thousands of new readers and a post bag full of letters confirming the existence of the Deros.

REFERENCES

'The Man Who Invented Flying Saucers' by John Keel, at: www.softcom.net/users/falconkam/manwho.html; *I Remember Lemuria* and *The Return of Sathanas* by Richard S. Shaver, 1948, available at: www.sacred-texts.com/ufo/irl/index.htm

INDIGENOUS

From the alien abduction literature it is obvious that the aliens are obsessed with probing our bodies and the creation of hybrid babies. From this Mac deduces that the aliens are suffering from a debilitating genetic syndrome and are harvesting us on a regular basis to either solve or at least control this problem. ☉

'SINCE THEIR BIOLOGY SEEMS MUCH AKIN WITH OUR OWN IT SEEMS PLAUSIBLE THAT INSTEAD OF BEING TRULY ALIEN, THEY ARE IN FACT AN INDIGENOUS SPECIES OF THIS PLANET.'



STAGE MANAGED:
There seems to be something very artificial about the so-called alien autopsies, argues Mac Tonnie. Are they staged simply to put humans off the scent of what is really going on?



IN THE DEPTHS: Mac Tonnies suggests that the Cryptoterrestrials may have bases under the sea, or beneath lakes. One hotspot for UFOs seen emerging from water is the vast Lake Baikal in Russia.

‘THEIR CONCERN ABOUT ATOMIC WARFARE, POLLUTION AND THE ENVIRONMENT WOULD NOT BE SUCH AN URGENT CONCERN FOR SPACE-FARING ALIENS.’

Since their biology seems much akin with our own it seems plausible that instead of being truly alien, they are in fact an indigenous species of this planet. He suggests that due to the ever growing presence of *Homo sapiens*, they have hidden away from us for centuries. Over this period they have used stealth and cunning to keep out of our way, yet because they share our planet, their fate is intrinsically linked with our own.

Using psychological manipulation and technology

that is just a little more advanced than our own, they have managed to elude and trick humanity for centuries. In the past they have been seen as fairies, demons or ghosts, today they present themselves as aliens.

GOING UNDERGROUND

Their concern about atomic warfare, pollution and the environment was presented through the contactees of the 1960s, and in recent years by audio/visual presentations of global doom to abductees. This seems to

underline their need to keep our planet intact – a need that would not be of such urgent concern for actual space-faring aliens.

The big question regarding Mac’s cryptoterrestrial hypothesis (CTH) is where are these beings lurking? If they are flesh and blood creatures like us then they have to live somewhere: Mac suggests they live in underground bases and in cities under the sea. This would explain why many abduction stories describe alien planets or the interior of UFOs or as being like caves or tunnels, and why alien greys have large eyes to see in these darker environments. Also, why so many UFOs are seen over or coming out of bodies of water.

On the one hand Mac claims the cryptoterrestrials could be using neurological technology to inhabit and control our bodies like remote control toys, yet on the other he claims they use low technology devices like balloons to fool us. Of the Roswell crash incident of 1947 he notes that no high technology wreckage was found and that it could have been a cryptoterrestrial surveillance balloon that was



SUBTERRANEAN: Do advanced beings like Richard Shaver's Deros and Teros live in cities in the bowels of the Earth, from which they emerge in aerial craft?



'MAC CONCLUDES THEY COULD BE PART OF A HIVE-LIKE MIND WHOSE ULTIMATE DESIGNS ON HUMANITY ARE EITHER TO HELP OUR EVOLUTION TO A HIGHER LEVEL OR TO ENGINEER OUR EXTINCTION.'

responsible for this case.

Mac makes a relatively good case against the power of the ETH myth but I find his CTH speculation lacks focus and real commitment. He is willing to acknowledge that the cryptoterrestrials could be projections from the collective unconscious; visitors from parallel dimensions; manipulators of John Keels' super-spectrum; residents of alternative realities which can be explored through shamanic procedures; or hybrid creatures. This open-mindedness to virtually every theory going for the origin of the aliens is admirable; he even concedes that some of the cryptoterrestrials could be extraterrestrial in origin! In this manner Mac has his cake and eats it.

Whatever the 'reality' of these beings, Mac concludes they could be part of a hive-like

mind whose ultimate designs on humanity are either to help our evolution to a higher level or to engineer our extinction.

Whether we believe him or not, Mac's short book packs an exciting kaleidoscope of ideas and speculation. It does not deliver a knock-out blow to the ETH but it does give it a good kicking.

Filmmaker Paul Kimball, who was a close friend of Mac, notes that an 'important aspect of Mac's work and way of thinking [was] to encourage people to think again, and to embrace the UFO phenomenon once again as a fascinating mystery worth looking into. He was all about the journey, not the destination.'

REFERENCE

The Cryptoterrestrials by Mac Tonnies, Anomalist Books, 2010.

THE NEW UFOLOGY

The Extraterrestrial Hypothesis took a bashing in the late 1960s and 1970s, with the introduction of New Age ideas and the onslaught of the New Ufology that was vigorously promoted by the British *Magonia* magazine.

The great popularisers of the idea that UFOs are not simply nuts and bolts craft rattling about our skies were John Keel, Jacques Vallee and John Michell. They and the contributors to *Magonia* accepted that the aliens could be projections by some unknown force from our own collective unconscious or external sources (cosmic or otherwise).

The problem with this hypothesis is that it can lead to the road of paranoia - if you believe elemental forces or ultraterrestrials can manipulate reality you can no longer distinguish between what is fact or fantasy or even bother to make any distinction between the two. *Magonia* has gone on to regard the UFO phenomenon in psychosociological terms, rather than as something paranormal or supernatural.

The New Ufology became eclipsed in the 1980s, with the re-discovery of the Roswell and other flying saucer crash cases combined with the acceptance of alien abduction experiences.

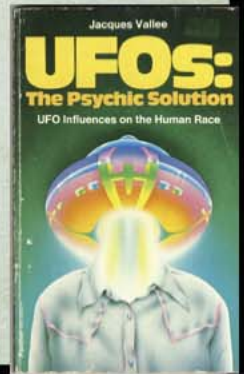
With the appearance of *The Cryptoterrestrials* perhaps the tide is turning away from the ETH again.

REFERENCE

The archives of *Magonia* magazine reside at: <http://magonia.haaan.com/>

OTHER SOLUTIONS:

Jacques Vallee was a pioneer in considering explanations for UFOs that had nothing to do with extraterrestrial activity.



Nigel Watson's books include *The Alien Deception*, *Portraits of Alien Encounters* (1990), and *The Scareship Mystery* (2000). He is a long-time contributor on the subject of UFOs for numerous publications, including *Fortean Times*, *Wired*, *History Today*, *Magonia* and *Flying Saucer Review*. He has degrees in Psychology and Film & Literature and produces the media website Talking Pictures at www.talkingpix.co.uk.

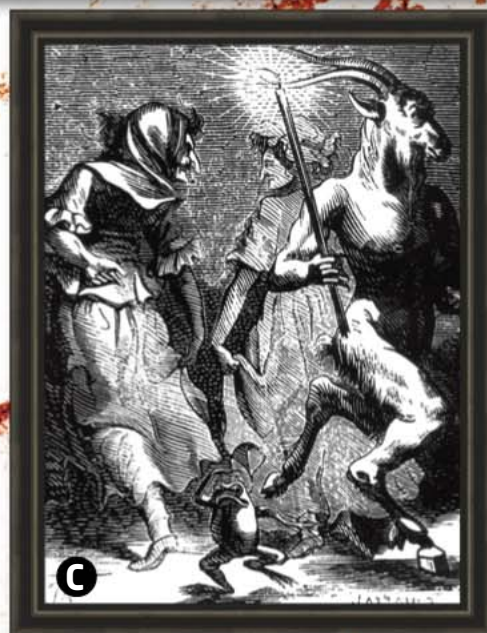
WIN
a copy of
The Cryptoterrestrials
by Mac Tonnies.
Turn to page 81.

PRINTS OF DARKNESS

The Devil has left his mark throughout the British countryside: in the landscape and on holy ground where he has struggled to defeat the godly. **JANET BORD** tracks him down.

THE DEVIL IS A complex character, a creature of many parts, and a master of disguises. Artists have depicted him in his many roles, as a man, an animal, a part-human being, sometimes with horns, with hooves, with bird's claws, with bat's wings – and he is frequently shown as a goat, whose cloven hoof is his identifying feature.

He has left his indelible mark on rocks worldwide, as proof of his existence. One example in England is the basin on Great Rock, Stansfield, Hebden Bridge (West Yorkshire), formed when the Devil stepped across from Stoodley Pike during a wager with God that he could win the souls of the folk of Upper Calderdale. When his hoof slipped from the top of the rock, it skittered down the face of the outcrop and cracked it from top to bottom. ☉

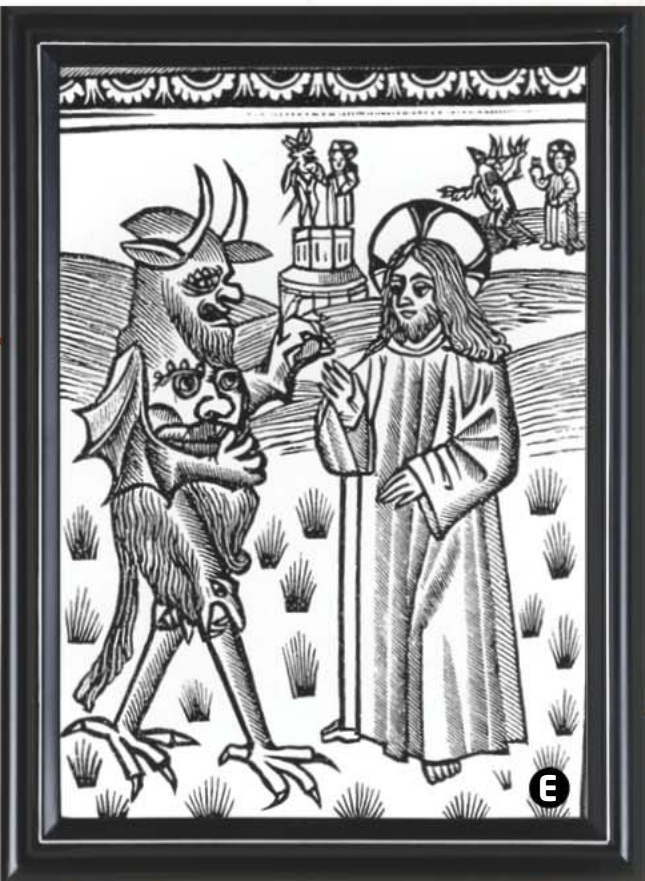


THE DEVIL'S DISGUISES

These illustrations spanning 600 years show how the Devil, and his feet, have been depicted down the centuries.

- A** In a 15th century woodcut, the feet of the Devil dragging away a child appear to have toes with claws.
- B** An early 13th century illumination from a psalter, showing the Devil presenting a demonic pact to Theophilus, apparently shows him with normal human feet.
- C** The Devil dancing with witches at the Sabbat has cloven hooves.
- D** The Devil who appeared to Dr John Faustus, in an 18th century chapbook illustration, had cloven hoofs.
- E** The Devil who met Christ in the desert, shown in a 16th century drawing, has birdlike feet with long, sharp claws.
- F** When he carried away Over Church in Cheshire, the Devil appeared as a bat-winged goat with cloven feet and long pointed toes.

All images are from the Fortean Picture Library.





FORCE OF EVIL:
Coloured wood-print showing the Devil with a group of witches, teaching them how to use waxen images. © Fortean Picture Library

Some folktales refer generally to the Devil's foot-marks or footprints, not specifying hooves, cloven or otherwise, and there are several examples in England, especially in the North, where he seems to have enjoyed leaping across the hills. The Devil's Stone at Birtley (Northumberland) has a flat surface in which are holes said to have been made by the Devil when he leapt across the river to Lee Hall, a distance of about half a mile. However, he didn't make it, and fell into that part of the North Tyne River afterwards known as Leap-Crag Pool, and allegedly drowned.

Some of the Devil's footprints are close to religious sites, because of his continual efforts

to defeat Christianity. In Kent, he left a 15-inch footprint on a stone near the church gate at Newington. Unable to tolerate the sound of the church bells ringing, he stole them one night, put them in a sack, and jumped down, overbalancing as he

landed and impressing his foot into the stone. The bells fell out of the sack into a stream and were never seen again.

The reason the Devil didn't like the sound of the church bells was because their ringing was believed to be able to

ON HOLY GROUND:
The Devil's Footprint in the Frauenkirche, Munich. © Dr Elmar R. Gruber/Fortean Picture Library



'SOME OF THE DEVIL'S FOOTPRINTS ARE CLOSE TO RELIGIOUS SITES, BECAUSE OF HIS CONTINUAL EFFORTS TO DEFEAT CHRISTIANITY.'

HOLY FOOTPRINTS

If we judge the Devil's success in terms of the number of imprints he has left, he is far outnumbered by the saints, whose footprints, finger-prints, hand-prints, knee-prints and yes, bottom prints, are far more numerous in the landscape worldwide than anyone might imagine.

France is particularly rich in saintly impressions, and the photograph shows the author kneeling in the knee-prints on St Noyale's stone prayer-stool close to the elaborate holy well of Les Trois Fontaines at Noyal-Pontivy (Morbihan). Ireland also has many examples of saints' footprints, especially St Patrick, of course. Pilgrims following the Lough Derg pilgrimage place their feet on his footprints on an underwater stone, an experience said to be healing and refreshing.

The holy figures of other religions have also left their marks: there are several Buddha footprint temples in Thailand, while

in northern India Vishnu's footprints are preserved in a temple by the River Ganges at Hardwar. As proof of the story that Jesus Christ lived in India for many years, his footprints were left at Srinagar in Kashmir; his prints can also be seen on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, in Rome, and in Egypt - at Sakha, which actually means 'the foot of Jesus'. The Holy Family stopped there in their Flight into Egypt, and, being thirsty, Jesus placed his foot on a stone and a spring was discovered beneath it. The stone is now kept in a glass case in the Virgin Mary church.

Bizarrely, Jesus also left the marks of his ribs inside the tiny medieval chapel of St Govan in Pembrokeshire.



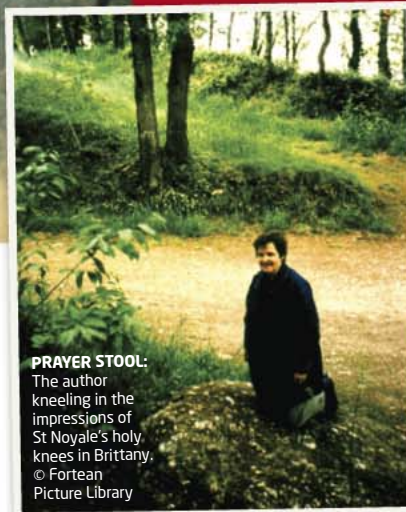
HOLY SOLES: The footprints, said to be those of Jesus, found inside the wooden shrine in the Tomb of Jesus at Srinagar in Kashmir. © Dr Elmar R. Gruber/Forstean Picture Library

dissipate diabolic power. In Wales the Devil fought with St David on the roof of St David's Cathedral (Pembrokeshire), but he was pushed off by the saint and landed on a flat grave-slab in the churchyard, where his footprints can still be seen. (As the grave-slab is relatively recent, this story cannot be much more than 100 years old!)

In Germany the Devil's Footprint can be seen in the stone floor just inside the Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) in Munich: the church's architect had a bet with the Devil that he could build the church so that from one

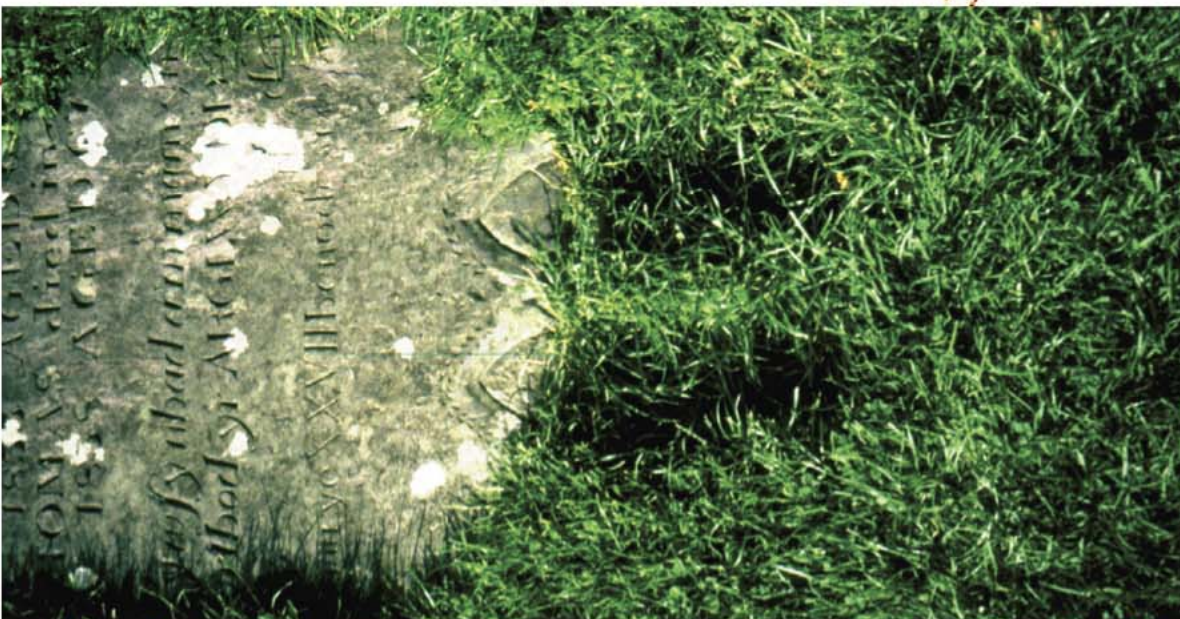
position no windows could be seen. When the Devil realised he had lost the bet, he stamped his foot in rage, at the place in the church from where no windows can be seen.

Although many of the footprints or hoof-marks described in folktales refer to permanent marks on rocks and other solid surfaces, there are also a few accounts of relatively modern tracks which have been ascribed to the Devil. The most famous example has to be the so-called Devil's Hoof-marks which appeared



PRAYER STOOL: The author kneeling in the impressions of St Noyale's holy knees in Brittany. © Forstean Picture Library

'THE DEVIL FOUGHT WITH ST DAVID ON THE ROOF OF ST DAVID'S CATHEDRAL BUT HE WAS PUSHED OFF BY THE SAINT AND LANDED ON A GRAVE-SLAB IN THE CHURCHYARD.'



OVERTHROWN: The two footprint-shaped marks on the grass, ending in two shoe-toes carved on the grave-slab, show where the Devil landed when thrown off the cathedral roof at St Davids. © Forstean Picture Library

THE FOOTPRINTS OF HEROES

Heroes who have taken on a mythical status, and in the process often turned into giants, have also left their mark on the landscape.

Probably the most famous British hero is King Arthur, said to have been born at Tintagel in Cornwall, where his footprint can still be seen on the cliff-top, together with his seat, his cups and saucers, and his bed, elbow chair, or hip bath!

In his role as giant, he was fond of throwing things, and while sitting in Arthur's Chair near Sewingshields in Northumberland he quarrelled with his wife Guinevere and threw a rock at her, which bounced off her comb, and still has the toothmarks of the comb on it.

His horse's hoofprints are almost as numerous as his own footprints, and one in west Wales is identified by a slate marker. The rock Carn March Arthur (Arthur's Horse's Hoof) is not far from the fairy-haunted Llyn Barfog above Aberdyfi (Gwynedd), and an indentation in the rock is the horse's hoof-print, left when Arthur came to the area to kill a monster that lived in the lake, his horse leaping across the Dyfi estuary to reach the lake.

Another Welsh hero was Owain Glyndwr, a 15th century Welsh nobleman who led a rebellion of the Welsh against the English. Several Glyndwr imprints can be found in the Corwen area (Denbighshire), including his footprint at Glyndwr's Seat on a hill above the town, and his dagger above the south chancel door of Corwen church, which struck the door when he threw it down from the hill.

Every country's major mythical heroes have left their mark on the local landscape, including Robin Hood in England, Charlemagne in France, Queen Jinga in Angola, and Admiral Cheng Ho in Penang.

ARTHUR'S MARK: King Arthur's Footprint at his Cornish birthplace, Tintagel. © Paul Broadhurst/Fortean Picture Library



LANDING PLACE: King Arthur's horse's hoofprint impressed into a rock above Aberdyfi, in Gwynedd. © Fortean Picture Library



WELSH HERO: Owain Glyndwr's footprint on a rocky outcrop above Corwen in North Wales. © Fortean Picture Library

overnight in the snow which blanketed Devon on February 8-9, 1855. The tracks were about 4 inches long by 3 inches broad and resembled a donkey's tracks, sometimes apparently cloven and sometimes not. They covered many miles in one night, and were seen in gardens, crossing roofs, passing through hedges and over walls, in fields and on roads, and clearly no one creature could have been responsible for all of them – unless it had supernatural powers or was even the Devil himself.

'THEY WERE TOLD THEY MUST HAVE SEEN THE TRACKS OF THE DEVIL'S COACH WHEELS ... HIS WHEEL-MARKS ARE OFTEN SEEN ON LONELY FROZEN LOCHS.'

A more recent report, from snow-covered Scotland in the mid-20th century, came from author Otta Swire, who was driving with her husband through the frozen Highland landscape when they saw 'marks as of cart wheels, clear and unmistakable in the new-fallen snow which covered the ice' of a small loch close to the road. They stopped the car and got out to investigate: they could see no house or person or footprint in the snowy landscape, especially at the place where the wheel marks began and ended. Later they were told that they must have seen the tracks of the Devil's coach wheels, as he drives across the moors in winter and his wheel-marks are often seen on lonely frozen lochs.

To return to the marks left by the Devil's feet rather than his transport, he was sometimes said to have claws or talons rather than cloven hoofs or human feet. A large stone close to the cathedral in Roskilde in Denmark is known as the Devil's Stone and there are deep grooves on its surface, made by the Devil's

claws when he tried to hold on to the stone to stop himself being thrown out of town.

Numerous religious sites elsewhere in Europe were targeted by the Devil in his efforts to disrupt Christians at their worship, his claw-marks providing proof of his visit, and there are many similar accounts in Britain. For example, at Shrewsbury (Shropshire) in 1533 he is said to have appeared during a storm and left his claw-marks on one of the bells in the steeple of St Alkmund's church. The event is recorded in a chronicle which refers to the 'dyvyll' appearing when the priest was saying Mass, and 'he put the prynt of hys clawes upon the 4th bell', with the result that all the church bells in the town were unable to be rung. (This was clearly some actual event: a lightning strike?)

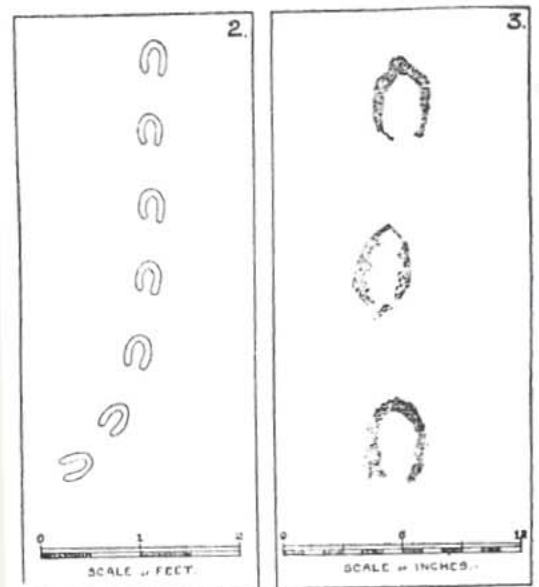
It is not only the Devil's hooves/feet/claws/fingers that have left their mark – other parts of his anatomy too have been recorded, such as his knees, elbows and back. There is a stone

near Rushton Spencer church on the Staffordshire/Cheshire border, known as Satan's Stone, which bears the impression of his buttocks, left there when he rested while attempting to disrupt the building of the church by carrying the stones from the building site to the marsh. He would use his apron to carry the stones and grooves visible in Satan's Stone were said to be the marks of his apron strings. In such stories the Devil has also become a giant: there are numerous stories in folklore of giants and giantesses moving rocks in their aprons and leaving visible marks of their apron strings.

Whatever guise he appears in, whether it is a goatish human consorting with witches, or a giant bestriding the landscape, the Devil always manages to stay one step ahead, rarely seen on the human plane of existence, yet leaving permanent reminders of his eternal presence as he labours ceaselessly to promote evil over goodness. ☉



HOOFING IT: An old drawing of the so-called Devil's Hoof-marks, which appeared in the snow in Devon in February 1855, together with the cover of an old issue of *Fantastic* magazine showing how the Devon footprints might have been made. Unfortunately the artist has not shown the Devil's feet! © Fortean Picture Library



'THE TRACKS COVERED MANY MILES IN ONE NIGHT, AND WERE SEEN IN GARDENS, CROSSING ROOFS, PASSING THROUGH HEDGES AND OVER WALLS.'

BAD IMPRESSION:

The Devil's Stone at Roskilde, Denmark, showing the deep claw marks left by the Devil. © Lars Thomas/Fortean Picture Library



Janet Bord lives in North Wales, where she and her husband Colin run the Fortean Picture Library, the premier collection of images of the weird and unexplained. Singly or with Colin, Janet has written more than 20 books on folklore and mysteries including *'Footprints in Stone'*, published by Heart of Albion (2004).



SNAKES ALIVE?: A specimen described by the Royal Society of Edinburgh was said to prove the existence of a gigantic venomous serpent. But did it?

Monstrous errors

Monsters are real, claims cryptozoologist **RICHARD FREEMAN** – except when they're not. Richard selects a handful of cautionary tales about not just startled members of the public but also respected scientists who allowed their imaginations too free a rein.



THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS: Francisco Goya's famous engraving.

AS A CRYPTOZOOLOGIST I am convinced of the existence of a number of spectacular animals still unknown to science. These species could well be termed 'monsters'. From an early age we are conditioned to think of monsters as fictitious, condemned by the modern world view to haunt only the realms of imagination. I disagree strongly with the prevailing view. Monsters *are* real: they are animals that we don't understand and so fear.

But sometimes human imaginations run away with themselves, creating horrors lurking in shadows that contain nothing. Cases of mistaken identity, poor observation and downright hoaxing have produced a menagerie of monsters that never were.

'SOMETIMES HUMAN IMAGINATIONS RUN AWAY WITH THEMSELVES, CREATING HORRORS LURKING IN SHADOWS THAT CONTAIN NOTHING.'

As Francisco de Goya showed us in his etching 'The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters' some weird beasts have their origins in human folly.

There can be little doubt that a number of large primates are still to be discovered. Upright-walking, hair-covered beasts, unknown apes and relic hominids are recorded from throughout the world. Possibly as many as eight species may be awaiting formal description, including three types of yeti, the orang-pendek, the ●



GOING APE: A 'man-beast' on a rampage turned out to be a macaque monkey that had escaped from a circus.

'MOTORISTS NEAR HAMPSTEAD HEATH REPORTED SEEING AN UPRIGHT WALKING, GREEN, SCALY CREATURE STAGGERING AROUND NEAR THE ROADSIDE.'

yeren, the almasty, sasquatch and the di-di. However, some reports are not what they seem at first.

Around 2004 a panic arose in the outskirts of Mongolia's capital city Ulan-Bator. An 'ape-man', described as a small yeti was terrorizing the suburbs stealing food, attacking people and breaking into houses. A posse was brought together in order to catch the hairy beast. After several days of searching, the mob cornered and caught the ape-man. It turned out to have been a considerably less than man-sized macaque monkey that had escaped from a circus.

Another common and well-known animal was mistaken for a sasquatch recently. On December 16, 2007, Rick Jacobs set up an infrared camera trap to photograph wildlife in the Allegheny National

Forest, Pennsylvania. When he checked the pictures he was amazed to see what he thought to be a gorilla-like animal with sparse hair crouching near a tree. It seemed to be sniffing at an aromatic deer attractant laid down to encourage wildlife. The animal had its face turned away from the camera.

The two shots obtained were widely distributed on the internet and thought by many to show a young sasquatch. In fact, what had actually been photographed was a young bear with mange. Looking at the pictures myself at the time I was amazed that anyone could confuse a mangy bear with an 8 foot bipedal ape! It just goes to show that some people see what they want to.

An even odder story occurred around ten years ago in, of all places, Plymouth, in Devon. Police patrolling the edge of the city found a car upside down in a ditch beside a roundabout. On investigating they found the driver was unhurt and pulled him free. They asked him what had happened and he gave a story that raised their eyebrows. He told them he had crashed when swerving to avoid 'bigfoot'. A hulking, man-like creature, covered



SCI-FI SCARES: The filming of fantasy movies and TV shows like *Doctor Who* have sometimes led to mistaken monster sightings.

in shaggy hair had lurched across the dark road in front of his car. He was adamant it wasn't a deer, as it stood upright on two legs. Thinking he was drunk, the police breathalysed the man to find that he was 100% sober.

The police were left scratching their heads in bafflement for a whole week until they found out that a nearby hotel had been hosting a *Star Wars* convention. One of the attendees, dressed up as Chewbacca, had drunk too much, staggered out of the hotel and across the road in front of the witness's car!

This is not the only time science fiction has been responsible for a monster scare. In December 1968 motorists on the West Heath road near Hampstead Heath reported seeing an upright walking,

green, scaly creature staggering around near the roadside. The thing was quite unlike anything they had seen before, seeming to have both reptilian and insect-like characteristics.

What witnesses had actually seen was an Ice Warrior. During the filming of the *Doctor Who* adventure *The Seeds of Death* the actor in the bulky costume had, despite the time of year, suffered heat stroke and staggered off in a daze scaring the pants of unsuspecting witnesses. With its nearly 50 years of history one wonders how many more *Doctor Who* monsters being filmed on location were mistaken for the real deal?

Giant snakes are among the most fascinating of cryptids. Most cultures have legends of outsized serpents indicating a probable basis in truth. The green anaconda is reputed to reach vast sizes in the rivers, lakes and swamps of tropical South America. Monsters 40, 50 and even over 60 feet long have been consistently reported since colonial times right up to the present day

Imagine how much more horrific a giant snake would be if it were venomous. In 1926 *The Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* published a paper by Professor John Graham Kerr pertaining to the existence of a giant venomous snake in the Gran Chaco region of South America.

Professor Kerr's friend Andrew Pride, a missionary gave him a huge fang he had unearthed along with a mass of bones whilst digging a trench near his mission station. It was dug out of the Gran Chaco silt deposits. It clearly seemed to show the groove down which

the poison flowed and Prof Kerr thought it most closely resembled that of an African species known as the boomslang (*Dispholidus typus*). Scaling up, he calculated its owner would have been 60 feet long!

Kerr named the monster *Bothrodon priddii* and presented the tooth to the Museum of Zoology at the University of Glasgow. He wrote: 'In imagination one may picture the grim scene of one of the great contemporary mammals such as a Megatherium or Mylodon dragging along the vast bulk of this hideous monster until overcome by the poison seeping into its body.'

In 1939, however, Dr W Quenstedt of Berlin's Paleontological Museum examined a cast of the 'fang' sent to him by Kerr and he exposed it as nothing more than a shell – more precisely, one of the prongs of the shell of the spider conch (*Lambis chiagra*), a large marine mollusc of Indonesia. Quite how an Indonesian shell got to South America is another matter! Was it evidence of pre-Columbian trade with the Old World, or was it put there by one of Pride's colleagues as a joke?

Another monster that was for a time accepted by science was a giant flea – yes you read that right, a giant flea! In 1857 the eminent entomologist Professor

'A MISSIONARY GAVE HIM A HUGE FANG HE HAD UNEARTHED WHILST DIGGING A TRENCH NEAR HIS MISSION STATION. SCALING UP, KERR CALCULATED ITS OWNER WOULD HAVE BEEN 60 FEET LONG.'

SHELL OUT: Had Prof Graham Kerr actually mistaken a bit of a conch shell for an enormous fang? Yes, he had.



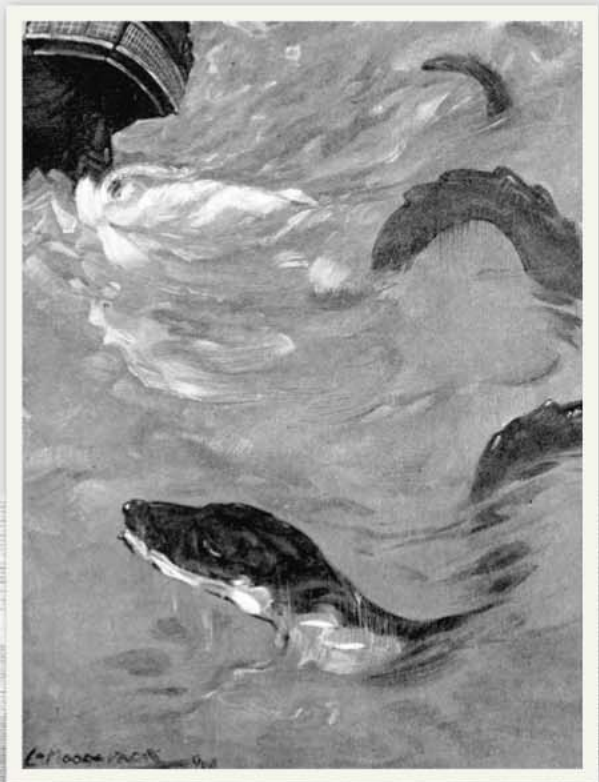
FANG-TASY: Had Prof Graham Kerr found evidence of a gigantic boomslang snake living in the jungles of South America? No, he hadn't.



J. O. Westwood was sent a dead flea that had been found squashed flat in a bed in Gateshead by a Dr Blackhouse. He saw the monster was 20 times larger than the common flea and named it *Pulex Imperator*, the imperial flea. Upon closer examination, however, it was found to be the distorted carcass of a young cockroach. It goes to show that anyone can make a mistake.

Water covers most of the planet and we can be sure undiscovered creatures lurk in the ocean depths. In 1930 it was thought a baby specimen of the elusive sea serpent had fallen into the hands of scientists. An oceanographic expedition led by Johannes Schmidt aboard the ship *Dana* dredged up a strange fish near the Agulhas Bank between Saint Helena and the Cape of Good Hope.

BABY BEAST: Artist's impression of the famous sighting of an enormous eel-like sea monster by the crew of the *Daedalus* in 1848. Nearly a hundred years later, in the same area, oceanographers netted what they thought was an eel larva - but it was six feet long. Was it the young of a genuine sea serpent?



The oddly shaped fish was 6 feet long and was identified as a leptocephalus. These are the larval forms of eels. They bare scant resemblance to the adult form, being laterally flattened and transparent, and are much smaller: depending on the species, an adult eels is 18-30 times longer than the leptocephalus. Dr Anton F Brunn, Director of the University Zoological Museum of Copenhagen, therefore reckoned that the adult of the *Dana* leptocephalus would be an eel 108-180 feet long, a sea monster in every sense of the word!

In fact the *Dana* specimen had been fished up exactly where one of the most famous sea serpent sightings of all had occurred in 1848 when the Captain and crew of the *Daedalus* had reported a giant eel-like beast.

It seemed that the museum had a bona-fide sea serpent pickled in a jar! But it was not to be. The specimen was reclassified some 40 years later as a noticanthiform, an eel-like deep sea fish whose larvae do not differ significantly in size from the adult. Hence the *Dana* specimen would have been no larger as an adult that it would in its larval form.

But to deny the existence of giant eels might well be throwing the leptocephalus out with the bath water. Many sea serpent and lake

monster sightings suggest eels may grow far larger than we think. In fact giant, sterile mutations of the common eel may be the best explanations for lake monsters in Scotland and Ireland.

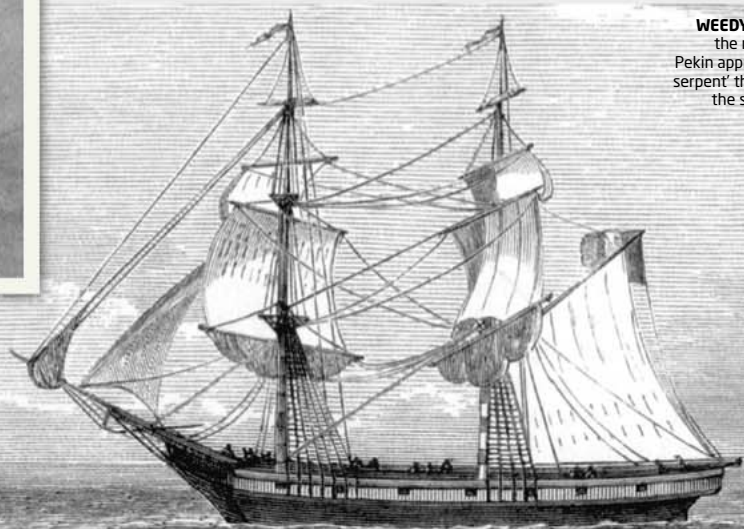
In December 1848 the merchant ship *Pekin* was becalmed in the south Atlantic. Captain Fredrick Smith noticed something odd in the water...

'About half a mile on port beam we saw a very extraordinary looking thing in the water of considerable length. With a telescope we could plainly discern a huge head and neck covered with a shaggy looking kind of mane, which it kept lifting at intervals out of the water. This was seen by all hands and declared to be the great sea serpent.'

A boat was lowered from the ship with the first officer and four men on board in order to capture the beast. The creature remained oddly impassive as a rope was thrown about its neck and it was dragged back to the *Pekin*. Once on deck it was revealed to be a huge, barnacle-encrusted length of seaweed. The motion of the water had made it seem animated.

The next pseudo-sea monster story is highly amusing. On October 12, 1706, a travelling fishmonger dropped a crab on the outskirts of the village of Shapwick in Dorset.

'IT SEEMED THAT THE MUSEUM HAD A BONA-FIDE SEA SERPENT PICKLED IN A JAR! BUT IT WAS NOT TO BE.'



WEEDY: The crew of the merchant ship *Pekin* approach the 'sea serpent' they spotted in the south Atlantic.

'THEY MANAGED TO TELL THE POLICE THAT A "SMALL STRANGE MONSTER WITH A WHITE HEAD" WAS TRYING TO SMASH ITS WAY INTO THEIR HOUSE.'

The villagers, who had never seen a crab before and believed it was some kind of monster, armed themselves with sticks and pitchforks in attempt to drive it away. The fishmonger eventually returned in search of his lost crab saw the commotion caused by the villagers. Amused by their ignorance he casually picked up the crab; put it back in his basket.

There have been comical mistakes in lakes reputed to be haunted by monsters as well. Dr Robert Rines, of the Academy of Applied Science, took a number of underwater photographs of what may have been the Loch Ness Monster between 1972 and 1975. One showed what might be a fin, another a long-necked form. One picture, dubbed the 'gargoyle head' showed what some claim to be a close up of the monster's face, horns mouth and all. But what Rines did not know was that in 1970 the film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* had been shot at the loch. In the film's plot a mini sub is disguised as the monster. A full-sized monster was built for the film with a long neck, horns and a gaping mouth. During filming, the model sprang a leak and sank in Urquhart Bay. It was never retrieved. It seems that the infamous 'gargoyle head' picture was indeed a close-up of a monster but a man-made one!

From colonial times until the mid 19th century sea serpent reports were common during the summer off the eastern coast of the USA. Mass sightings were recorded, as were impeccable witnesses such as Lonson Nash, a Justice of the Peace. The august Linnaean Society took an active interest in the sightings and, assuming the monsters must come ashore to breed and lay eggs, they began a vain search for them. One day at Lollboly Cove two boys caught a black racer, a snake common in the area. Their father killed it and then noticed it had humps running along its back: it looked like a tiny version of the reported sea dragons. He sent the body to the Linnaean Society, who accepted it as a baby sea serpent

ANOTHER FINE NESS:

Photos taken in the depths of Loch Ness in the early 1970s revealed a monstrous gargoyle-like head. Media excitement soon faded when it was remembered that this prop Loch Ness Monster, with its remarkably similar face, had sunk in the loch during the filming of a movie a few years previously and had never been recovered.



and even gave it a Latin name, *Scoliophis atlanticus*.

When zoologist Alexander Lesure correctly identified it as a black racer with a spinal deformity (hence the humps) the Society closed down the investigation amidst red faces, despite the fact that Lesure himself was open-minded to the existence of real sea serpents.

One of the strangest stories of a mistaken monster came about due to a failed scientific experiment. In the 1930s scientists speculated that penguins could be introduced from the Antarctic to the Arctic. They thought that the emperor penguin might fill the same ecological niche once occupied by the great auk (*Pinguinus impennis*) before it was hunted into extinction in 1844.

To this end, a team from the Norwegian Nature Protection Society led by Carl Schoyen released nine emperor penguins (*Aptenodytes forsteri*) in northern Norway. Two years later, in 1938, a separate group released several macaroni penguins (*Eudyptes chrysolophus*) and jackass penguins (*Spheniscus demersus*), into the same region. The experiment



UNHAPPY FEAT: A 4-ft tall Emperor penguin terrified a Norwegian woman when it shuffled onto her farm. She blasted it with her shotgun because she thought it was a troll!

was not a success. The birds were unable to cope with the warmer climate and plethora of land-based predators that were unknown in the Antarctic.

Most died out quickly but some of the emperor penguins lingered on into the 1940s. The one that met the strangest end was an individual which was moulting. A local farmer saw a shaggy coated, upright beast, four feet tall with what looked like a long, pointed nose. The scared woman killed it with a shotgun; apparently she had mistaken it for a troll!

I will round off with my very favourite story of a mistaken monster. It occurred right here in the UK back in the late 1960s. A police station in Surrey received a frantic call from an elderly couple. When the terrified pensioners finally calmed down they managed to tell the police that a 'small strange monster with a white head' was trying to smash its way into their house via the patio window. On investigation a policeman found and captured the terrifying beast that had held the old couple under siege.

It was a hedgehog with a yogurt pot stuck on its head! ☺



Richard Freeman is the zoological director of The Centre for Fortean Zoology, the world's only full-time scientific organization devoted to the study of unknown animals. He has hunted giant snakes in South America and Indo-China, mystery apes in Indonesia, dragons in Africa, relic hominids in Russia and the infamous Mongolian Deathworm.



MY BIGGEST FRIGHT

Welcome to a spooky new feature in which we ask seasoned investigators and other interested parties to describe their scariest experiences. **MIKE HALLOWELL**, the well-known paranormal researcher based in the North-East of England, has kindly agreed to start us off with not one but two truly unnerving experiences – he is unable to choose between them!



HABITAT: The West Boldon fields that are home to the mysterious being known as the Boldon Brag.

CALL FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

INVESTIGATOR: Mike Hollowell on one of his many investigations into the paranormal. All photos © Thunderbird Craft & Media



“THIS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. THE PERSON YOU WANT ME TO PASS A MESSAGE ON TO HAS BEEN DEAD FOR QUITE SOME TIME.”

I'VE BEEN INVESTIGATING paranormal phenomena for over 40 years now, so it won't come as any surprise that I've had a few scary episodes in my time: mind you, not half as many as one might expect. Some researchers seem to have blood-chilling encounters every weekend – or claim to, at least – but I'm not one of them. I can go months without encountering anything even remotely preternatural, but there have been times when I've had experiences that were deeply unsettling to say the least.

As far as I can recall I've seen two ghosts during my career that I can categorically affirm were apparitions of dead people. I knew them both, and also knew (or in one instance found out later) that they were deceased. The first time I wasn't frightened because I didn't know the woman – a neighbour – was actually dead. The second time I saw a relative. I knew the person

was dead, but wasn't frightened because I'd had a good relationship with them when they were alive.

The scariest moment, I think, was when a therapist colleague told me they'd had a telephone call from someone who wanted to arrange a consultation with them. On the phone, the potential client happened to mention that she knew me. The therapist told her that she knew me also. A brief chat ensued, during which the caller told my colleague several things about me; how she'd first met my wife and I, how I'd once helped her with a knotty problem, etc. etc.

Several days later my colleague rang me and told me about the call. She told me the woman's first name – she couldn't remember her surname – and the only person I could think of who fitted her description had died several years previously.

What truly disturbed me was the fact that my colleague asked



IN THE DARK:
Gail Ward and
John TripLOW
gazing into Brag
territory.

her for her telephone number, and she replied: 'Well, that's a bit difficult...but I can give you my friend's mobile number; she can pass a message on to me.'

When my colleague rang the number later, a woman answered and said: 'This doesn't make sense. The person you want me to pass a message on to has been dead for quite some time.'

It turned out she had been a close friend of our dead acquaintance. No matter which way we interpreted the facts, we were forced to the conclusion that our deceased friend had actually rang my therapist colleague and, bizarrely, tried to make an appointment with her for treatment.

The really scary moment, I think, was when it dawned on me that both a living colleague and a dead friend *really had* been talking about me on the telephone. I can't really explain why, but it sent a chill up my spine. My therapist colleague was distinctly unnerved by the incident as well.

Of course, although this incident was disturbing, I hadn't experienced anything directly myself. The conversation had taken place between two other people. It was the fact that I was

the subject of a significant part of the discussion that made me feel so uncomfortable. Why would a dead friend want to ring a living one and talk about *me*?

When it comes to direct experiences, however, my scariest encounters have usually taken place during my investigations into the Boldon Brag. The history of the area where I live is littered with accounts of people who have had strange encounters with the Brag, or Bogey Man; a malign, elemental spirit who disguises himself as an animal or, sometimes, appears in human form with a chilling similarity to the legendary Spring-Heeled Jack. I've carried out a number of on-site investigations in the heart of the Brag's territory.

On one such visit, with my colleagues John TripLOW and Kelly Williams, we heard an unearthly noise – something between a croak and a squawk – emanating from the bushes. (The full account of this encounter will be detailed in a forthcoming article in *Paranormal* magazine.) Just the other day, John and I paid another visit to the site with a colleague, the photographer Gail Ward. We were walking down a deserted pathway, when Gail and I repeatedly heard a rustling noise

'THEN, OUT OF THE BLUE, IT HAPPENED; A LOUD, SCREECHING SOUND SEEMED TO FILL THE AIR.'

emanating from the hedgerow. John didn't hear it, but Gail and I both got the distinct impression that something was in the undergrowth, keeping pace with us.


Then, out of the blue, it happened; a loud, screeching sound seemed to fill the air. It was similar to the one we'd heard on our first visit, only higher-pitched, much louder and far more protracted. It seemed to go on forever. Later, John said that from his perspective the sound seemed to start at ground level and then rise up into the air.

I don't mind admitting that it left John and I feeling really alarmed. It was sinister, menacing and malign. It was like no animal noise we'd ever heard before, and it certainly wasn't a birdcall. If you think I'm over-dramatising things, all I can say is that *you* weren't there and didn't hear it.

To date, I reckon, that must count as my scariest moment, although my next visit to the area may well throw up some new surprises. ☘

Legends of the Thames

Flowing as it does through one of the most historic cities in Europe, it is no surprise to learn that London's river harbours a wealth of ghostly tales. **ROBERT GOODMAN** brings to the surface some of the strangest supernatural encounters experienced on, in and alongside the Thames.



*I am the ghost of Shadwell Stair,
Along the wharves by the water-house,
And through the cavernous slaughter-house,
I am the shadow that walks there.
Wilfred Owen (1893 - 1918)*



LONDON'S RIVER HAS FLOWED from its source at Thames Head, in the Cotswolds, down to the sea at South End since time immemorial. Its ghosts have walked the secluded towpaths and foggy embankments for thousands of years, and there is more lurking on a drizzly London night underneath the bridges, or in the narrow cobbled riverside lanes, than lie in the philosophy of Shakespeare's Horatio.

Let us now take up a map of London and direct our attention along the left bank of the river to Albert Bridge. From here we will start our walk down river towards the 'Pool of London' at Tower Bridge.

THE GHOST WHERRY

We are on the towpath, south side of the river at Albert Bridge where the great London architectural icon of the now empty Battersea power station looms nearby. It is on this stretch of the river that we encounter our first example of paranormal activity. People walking over Albert Bridge or river users passing underneath on a frosty December night claim to have seen 'The ghost Wherry'.

The following story was told to me by an old River Thames waterman I used to know when I myself worked on the river on the pleasure cruisers. I only ever knew him as Alan, but he had worked on the river all his life, first as a stevedore at Tobacco dock, then as a waterman. Alan told me that back in 1870 or thereabouts an old Wherry (or cargo) boat was passing underneath the bridge when for reasons unknown she caught fire. The fire spread rapidly, with the December wind fanning the flames, and the vessel quickly sank into the freezing waters. For many years it was said that flames could be seen on the surface of the water by the bridge, and the cries of the wherryman and his crew heard as the current dragged them down. ☪

WHERRY SCARY: The Albert Bridge near the former Battersea Power Station. Here, it is said, can still be heard the anguished cries of the crew of a wherry as it was consumed by flames more than 100 years ago.

'FOR MANY YEARS IT WAS SAID THAT FLAMES COULD BE SEEN ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER BY THE BRIDGE AND THE CRIES OF THE WHERRYMAN AND HIS CREW HEARD AS THE CURRENT DRAGGED THEM DOWN.'

The next bridge we come to as we move eastwards is Chelsea Bridge. Just to the north of here, at 34 Tite Street, lived Oscar Wilde, whose mother was a leading expert in Irish folklore and who wrote what are considered to be the most authoritative works on the subject. Moving on, we pass the bridge at Vauxhall, where the green-and-white art deco building of MI6 dominates the skyline, and on to Lambeth.

**LAMBETH PALACE:
THE GHOST BARGE**

Reports of a 'Ghost Barge' have been made in this area, always seen on foggy nights, and crewed by misty grey and hooded figures. The barge, difficult to make out as it merges with the fog, is thought to be the one that carried none other than Anne Boleyn on her final journey to the Tower to face execution. It is claimed that the Palace itself on certain nights resounds with her protests as she pleads for her life.

Staying on the south side, we stroll along Albert Embankment, heading east towards Westminster Bridge. Just take a look across the river to your left for the best view of the Houses of Parliament that you will ever see, and at night one of the most beautiful. Had you been here on February 12, 2008, you would have seen more than these wonderful gothic buildings, however. On this day there were literally dozens of reports to both the police and to the Ministry of Defence in nearby Whitehall of a UFO hovering above the grand Victoria tower of the House of

GLOWING: Westminster Palace, better known as the Houses of Parliament, is a beautiful sight illuminated at night. In February, 2008, however, one light too many was seen here - a UFO.



FINAL JOURNEY: Morton's Gate at Lambeth Palace. A ghostly barge - said to be that which carried the unlucky Anne Boleyn to the Tower - has been glimpsed on this stretch of the river.

'THE UFO WAS OVAL IN SHAPE AND HAD FLASHING LIGHTS. IT HOVERED FOR AROUND 90 MINUTES AND WAS SEEN BY HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE.'



Lords. It was oval in shape and had green, red and white flashing lights. The craft hovered for around 90 minutes and was seen by hundreds of people. The Ministry of Defence claim to only investigate where they consider national security to be threatened, and yet this sighting was apparently not investigated.

We must now cross to the north side of the river for our next port of call.

**CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE:
VICTORIA EMBANKMENT**
Cleopatra's Needle is a 68-foot tall ancient Egyptian obelisk which stands on the North bank of the Thames on Victoria Embankment, and opposite the back façade of



ON THE EDGE: Weird cries have been heard emanating from the steps that lead down from Cleopatra's Needle into the Thames. Are they an echo of the cries of the sailors who lost their lives trying to transport the obelisk to London?
© Robert Goodman

the world-famous Savoy Hotel. It was given to Britain to thank us for Nelson's victory at the Battle of the Nile by the then viceroy of Egypt, Mohammad Ali. It was at the Battle of the Nile that Nelson lost his eye. (An eye for a needle then!).

Its journey from Egypt was not however an easy one. Perhaps it carried with it an ancient Egyptian curse, as many sailors were drowned transporting it across the ocean, and Thames watermen met their deaths as the torrent claimed them before it was finally erected at its present location. There have been numerous reports over the last two hundred years of pitiful cries echoing around the steps that lead down to the water from the needle, and some people have apparently been almost overcome

with an irresistible urge to throw themselves into the cold depths from these steps, but have thankfully resisted, and lived to tell the tale.

But the most persistent apparition to grace this area with his appearance is 'The Naked Jumper'. At regular intervals throughout the year the spectre of a man, appearing as if from nowhere, is seen running totally naked towards the Needle. He then leaps over the wall by the statues of the sphinx that guard the monument and into the river. There is no following splash, and no ripples: he quite simply vanishes; until his next jaunt that is.

WATERLOO BRIDGE

The present bridge, which is a short stone's throw from Cleopatra's Needle, is known as

SILENT RUNNER: One of London's most mysterious ghosts is that of a naked man who runs along Victoria Embankment until he reaches the sphinxes at the base of Cleopatra's Needle. From here he leaps into the river, making no splash. The so-called 'Thames Angel' also makes its appearance over this stretch of the river.



MONUMENTAL: Is the ancient Egyptian obelisk known as Cleopatra's Needle cursed?

'THE SPECTRE OF A MAN, APPEARING AS IF FROM NOWHERE, IS SEEN RUNNING TOTALLY NAKED TOWARDS THE NEEDLE.'

the 'Ladies' bridge, as it was built by women construction workers during the Second World War. A night-time walk across this bridge in either direction is one of the most charming, and breathtaking experiences that London has to offer, and it's free.

Here is a tale of two cities. Crossing from south to north, to your left you can see the City of Westminster all lit up. There is Westminster Palace (better known, of course, as the Houses of Parliament) with the clock tower of Big Ben, and the huge Ferris wheel known as The London Eye on the South Bank, with its riverside cafes, the Royal Festival Hall, and the National Theatre. Move our eyes and our awareness to our right, we can see the other City: the City of London, with the majestic dome of St Paul's Cathedral, and the scales of justice above the Old Bailey Central Criminal Courts, together with the modern towers of the city banks and insurance companies. ☪



LONDON BRIDGE: The latest in a series of bridges built on this spot down the centuries. There may have been a bridge here as long as 2,000 years ago and this ancient site has a spooky reputation.

This is the original settlement that Claudius Caesura founded 2,000 years ago: Londinium.

Perhaps it is because this bridge has two vistas of such great beauty that the Thames' very own resident angel chooses this spot to manifest.

THE ANGEL OF THE THAMES

The 'Thames Angel' has been spotted hovering over the water on



HISTORY REPEATING: The old London Bridge was one of the places chosen for felons' heads to be placed on spikes as a warning to others. Oddly enough, the modern bridge also features these monumental spikes - coincidence? © Robert Goodman

'CHILDREN PLAYING ON BOMB SITES, AND BUILDERS REBUILDING AT THE END OF THE WAR, ALL CLAIM TO HAVE EXPERIENCED A HOLY APPARITION ON THE WATER'S SURFACE.'

this part of the river for centuries, and still makes regular appearances to this day. One of the first recorded sightings was by Samuel Pepys who wrote in his diaries of 'what could only be described as an angel'. Known by some as an 'Angel of Promise', appearances tend to come around the time of national disaster or impending danger. The angel at these times bringing comfort, promise and hope for better times: a cousin maybe of the Angels of Mons.

Pepys saw the angel just after the great fire of London in 1666, which was in a sense a blessing in disguise as it killed off the Great Plague that was swiftly wiping out vast sections of the population in London. Curiously enough, even though the fire raged for six days and nights, razing the city to the ground, only six people died in the fire. These six were buried in what is now Jubilee Gardens on the South bank, just a short walk from the angel's favourite spot. That year there were six reported sightings.

The angel was also sighted during World War 1, and also World War 2. Children playing on

bomb sites, and builders rebuilding at the end of the war all claim to have experienced a holy apparition on the water's surface bringing a feeling of 'peace and calm that made us want to dance and sing'.

One of the most recent sightings was in 2006 when the angel was caught by television cameras. TV presenter David Grant was filming on the north side opposite the London Eye for the TV show 'Talent Search'. As the cameras rolled, David stopped in his tracks, gasping for breath at what he had seen hovering on the water's surface. The camera panned across, and filmed what appeared to be a misty shape in the form of a winged angel. This footage can be viewed on various video sharing web sites. It is to be hoped that the angel is bringing us reassurance in our modern troubled times.

In the same year Jemima Waterhouse, a student from the University of Greenwich, was walking by the river along the Embankment early one evening when her attention was drawn to the centre of the river towards Waterloo Bridge. She



WEIRD EXPERIENCE: Builders working on the new London Bridge Experience were unnerved by many strange happenings, including ghostly whispering. © Robert Goodman

‘SHORTLY AFTER THE GRUESOME DISCOVERY, THERE WERE STRANGE OCCURRENCES. SOME CLAIMED TO HAVE HEARD VOICES WHISPERING OUT OF THE DARKNESS.’

containing human skeletal remains. It is thought that these may have been the victims of the great plague of 1665, as the area was used as a plague pit, and may also have been used as a burial ground by nearby Southwark Cathedral.

Shortly after the gruesome discovery, there were strange occurrences. Builders complained of an unearthly atmosphere and a feeling of unease, and some even left the site, refusing to return. Brothers Lee and Danny Scriven have said that tools started going missing, never to turn up again, and light-bulbs blew with a great regularity. Some even claimed to have heard voices whispering out of the darkness, but were never able to catch what was being said.

London Bridge was a site of public execution and among those executed there were William Wallace, Wat Tyler and Guy Fawkes, to name only three. Their heads were then impaled at the Traitors Gate at the Tower. This was the gate through which ‘high ranking’ prisoners would enter the Tower, among them the wives of Henry VIII.

As the old music hall song says: ‘Wiv ‘er ‘ead tucked underneath ‘er arm, she walks the bloody Tower.’

But I would need the same space again to tell all the eerie tales of the Tower of London... ☹



Robert Goodman is an actor who has been seen in movies such as *Gangs of New York*, *Joan of Arc* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. He was born in Northampton and now lives in central London. In between acting roles, Robert has worked as a London tour guide and as a magician in the world-famous Hamleys toy store in London’s Regent Street. In his spare time Robert writes and makes his own short films.

had seen what she described as a ‘Winged Figure’ floating in the air just above the water line. She caught the image on her camera phone, and later said: ‘I felt a strange sense of calm spreading over me. It was comforting and familiar. It’s really hard to put into words, but I guess you could describe it as a peace of mind.’

If you would like to go looking for the Angel of the Thames, then you should take the Underground to Embankment tube station: leave the station via the right-side exit. Now cross the road, and turn to your left, and take a gentle walk towards the next bridge, which is Waterloo Bridge, keeping your eyes on the water towards the middle of the river. Don’t forget your camera.

At Waterloo Bridge we cross back over to the south side, turn left, and walk along ‘Queens Walk’, where you can stop for tea at one of the many eateries to be found here. Past the Tate Modern and the reconstructed Globe Theatre of William Shakespeare (he lived in this area), along the river and through the foot tunnels under Blackfriars Bridge and Southwark Bridge, past the reconstructed Golden Hind and the Original Clink prison museum, through the 1,000 year old Borough Market and on to:

LONDON BRIDGE

London Bridge is on the site of the first bridge to be built across the river, indeed there has probably been a bridge at this very spot for around 2,000 years. In the 16th century the bridge was a small village or town in itself, with houses, shops, churches all actually on the bridge. People were born and died on the bridge, and may have known

nothing about life off of the bridge. The severed heads of traitors were dipped in tar and placed on top of huge spikes at the northern side as a warning to others. Curiously there is today a huge sculptured spike here: no heads though.

The Pool of London is the small stretch of water that lies between London Bridge and Tower Bridge. Here phantom wailing and screams can sometimes be heard coming up from the river bed. It is believed that these are the cries of thousands of Jews who were being expelled from the country by the Crown, as one of the ships they were being transported on sank.

The latest round of spooky events in the area was unearthed quite literally by the BBC, who followed events as they came to light. As excavations were taking place underneath the bridge in order to make way for one of London’s newest tourist attractions, ‘The London Bridge Experience’, a series of old tombs were unearthed

POOL OF LONDON:

The stretch of water between the London and Tower bridges also has an eerie reputation, originating in the cruel expulsion of the Jews in the Middle Ages.

For further reading I would certainly recommend *Thames: Sacred River* by Peter Ackroyd, as well as the many books on ghosts and other mysteries of London that have been published over the years.



Out of the blue

Since 1947, countless UFO sightings have been made by numerous sources all across the world. Among those reports are a significant number that have been filed by arguably the most reliable witnesses there could be – pilots. Both military and civilian pilots have reported exceptional UFO encounters over the decades. **NICK REDFERN** examines some of these 'X-Files of the skies'.

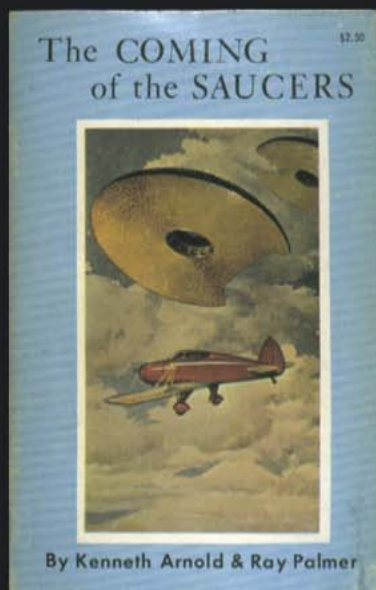


THE ARNOLD AFFAIR: 1947

It was around 3 pm on the afternoon of June 24, 1947, and American pilot Kenneth Arnold was searching for an aircraft that had reportedly slammed into the southwest side of Mount Rainier, a peak on Washington State's sprawling Cascade Mountains.

'I hadn't flown more than two or three minutes on my course when a bright flash reflected on my airplane,' said Arnold. 'It startled me as I thought I was too close to some other aircraft. I looked every place in the sky and couldn't find where the reflection had come from until I looked to the left and the north of Mount Rainier, where I observed a chain of nine peculiar-looking aircraft flying from north to south at approximately 9,500 feet elevation and going, seemingly, in a definite direction of about 170 degrees.'

Arnold added that the mysterious craft were closing in rapidly on Mount Rainier, and admitted to being mystified by their unusual design. In his own words: 'I thought it was very peculiar that I couldn't find their tails but assumed they were some type of jet plane. The more I observed these objects, the more upset I became, as I am accustomed and familiar with most all objects flying whether I am close to the ground or at higher altitudes. The chain of these saucer-like objects [was] at least five miles long. I felt confident after I would land there would be some explanation of what I saw [sic].'



SEMINAL: The book which helped start the flying saucer era, detailing Kenneth Arnold's classic sighting near Mount Rainier.

No concrete explanation for Arnold's experience ever did surface; however, as the United States became an ever-increasing magnet for flying saucers throughout the mid-months of 1947, the US military quickly swung into action, astutely realising that securing an answer to the puzzle was vital. As a result, investigations were initiated, and became solidified under the banner of an official operation termed *Project Sign*. In 1948, *Sign* was elbowed-out of the picture by *Project Grudge*, which, in turn, eventually gave way to *Project Blue Book* – the latter being the US Air Force's most well-known UFO investigative program, which continued until 1969, when it finally closed both its doors and its files.

The USAF conceded that of the 12,618 reports that had been studied between 1947 and 1969, no less than 701 appeared to defy rational investigation. However, the higher echelons of the military were keen to stress that they had never come across even a single shred of evidence suggesting that extraterrestrials had been – or were still – visiting the Earth. Staff confidently assured anyone and everyone who was willing to listen to their claims that if the Air Force had only had more data, they would have surely solved the outstanding 701 reports, too.

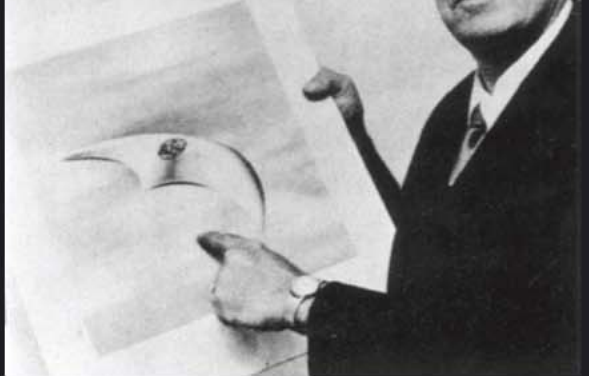
Try telling that to the many and varied pilots who had their own close encounters of the aerial kind in the years that followed the now-historic sighting of Kenneth Arnold.

UFOS OVER ENGLAND: THE 1950S & 60S

Now-declassified British Air Ministry files of 1957 detail an extraordinary, and very close, encounter of the pilot variety. It was 10.22 am on April 29, and a pair of Hawker Hunter aircraft took off from RAF Odiham to engage in a mid-air exercise. At 45,000 feet one of the pilots was confronted by an unidentified aerial object.

The official report on the matter states: 'When over Hayling Island, Mission 28 No. 2 saw a large white object at 10 o'clock slightly above. The object was circular with a white slightly curving tail hanging below. The time was approx 1110. Formation Leader was informed and both pairs turned east onto a northerly heading to look for the object. At first the object was thought to be a parachute but later it was realised that the

FIRST SAUCERS: Pilot Kenneth Arnold with a sketch of one of the UFOs he saw from his airplane. Arnold described them as flying in a strange manner, like saucers sent skipping across the surface of a pond. The term 'flying saucer' was born, even though they weren't saucer-shaped. This didn't stop people subsequently reporting saucer-shaped craft, however. Picture from the Fortean Picture Library



'THE US MILITARY QUICKLY SWUNG INTO ACTION, ASTUTELY REALISING THAT SECURING AN ANSWER TO THE PUZZLE WAS VITAL.'

object must have been larger and at a greater distance because of the slow passing speed.'

A Loose Minute of December 29, 1962, from a Squadron Leader J. G. Mejer of the Air Ministry Operations Centre to Air Intelligence states: 'A civilian pilot, call-sign GASCX, name and company unknown, flying from Renfrew to Manchester, was over Morecambe Bay at 7,000 ft at 1955z on 28th December, 1962, when he saw approx 1,000 ft below him a bright light, three times brighter than a star, travelling East to West at approx. 800 m.p.h. At exactly the same time a motorist, reporting via the Morecambe Police and Crosby Coastguard, said he saw a green flare. He was at LEVENS BRIDGE, Nr. HARROW, looking south. No radar confirmation.'

A NEAR-COLLISION OVER OHIO: 1973

Shortly after 11 pm on the night of October 18, 1973, one of the most notable UFO encounters ever recorded occurred. That the prime witnesses were serving members of the US Army Reserve only added to the credibility of the affair. Having departed from Port Columbus, Ohio, the crew – in a UH-1H helicopter – was headed for its home-base of Cleveland Hopkins Airport. Aboard were Captain ☉

UFOS AND THE CAA: 1979-1994

A public service corporation, the Civil Aviation Authority was established by the British Government in 1972 as a specialist aviation regulator and provider of air traffic services. Following its separation from the National Air Traffic Services in 2001, the CAA is now the UK's independent aviation regulator, with all civil aviation functions (such as economic regulations; airspace policy; safety regulations; and consumer protection) integrated within a single, unified body.

The CAA has declassified into the public domain a number of documents that tell of extraordinary encounters with UFOs, as the following, small selection acutely demonstrates:

- 19 Sep 79 Vicenza - UFO observed passing 200 feet below aircraft. Milan control reported no traffic.
- 11 Jun 80 Vicenza - UFO passed close to aircraft. Object appeared to be like a fighter aircraft drop tank.
- 13 Feb 81 Lyon - Unidentified foreign object seen on aircraft radar. A sizeable oval shaped target appeared on radar centre-line at limit of range tracking at very high speed. No visual sighting made.
- 12 Jun 82 Dinkelsbuehi - Large translucent object 500 feet long at 41,000 feet. ATCC [Air Traffic Control Centre] requested subject aircraft to investigate this object which was found to have the form of a double rectangle surmounted by a globe (egg shape) crowned by a silver cone. Object observed by all on board.
- 21 Jun 82 Brindisi - Unidentified object sighted by pilots. Object passed down left hand side at same height as aircraft (FL230) & 2 miles away. Black shiny doughnut shape about the size of a car. Object was tumbling and judged to be stationary.
- 18 Aug 83 Florence - Unidentified flying object seen by crew. Large black object, balloon shaped with large white spot on it, observed 10 NM SE of Firenze. No attachments to object. SUPP. INFO.: Italian CAA replied no met [meteorological] balloon could possibly have been present at the indicated place or time.
- 24 Aug 84 Ipswich - UK Reportable Accident - A/C [Aircraft] struck object in cruise. Propeller, fuselage, cowling & control runs damaged. The A/C was flying in slight turbulence when a bump was felt. Just before descent the right hand engine control was found to be seized so an asymmetric approach & landing was executed. On inspection it was apparent that the left propeller had struck an unidentified object, propelling it through the cabin roof, with a piece exiting through a window. There were several holes in the fuselage & damage to the engine, aileron & rudder trim cables. Three pieces of foreign metallic object were found, including a small cylindrical magnet. The UFO has not been identified. No information received concerning nature or origin of UFO.
- 26 Oct 84 Reading - Unidentified flying object: bright light 65 Deg Elev, 200 Deg T, duration 7 minutes.
- 20 Dec 84 Herald - Bright white lights arced across A/C track. No range activity in channel. Lights also seen by another A/C.
- 5 Feb 86 5427N 0530W - Bright light passed upwards in front of A/C. A/C was crossing east coast of Ireland on descent. Light travelled towards A/C from a 2.30 position range approx 11/2 miles and passed 1000 feet above travelling right to left 1 mile ahead. Burst of green light observed at peak of its ballistic flight. A/C ht [height] 1450 ft. CAA closure - possibly flare fired at about time of OCC by Aldergrove. Pilot considered this unlikely but no other explanation has emerged.
- 21 Aug 86 Belgrade - Non UK Airmiss missile type object passed 500 ft above on reciprocal track A/C heading 290 MAG at FL 390. Object was black, cigar shaped, without wings. Belgrade radar informed on RTF. CAA closure - foreign authority advised.
- 1 May 1994 - Sighting of unusual object. Member of public reported seeing a black boomerang-shaped object, which appeared to hover over RAF Northolt, above 30,000 feet, before tumbling approx 2000-3000 feet, while rotating through 180 degrees on its axis. No other reports of anything unusual received - possibly A/C in Bovingdon stack seen from odd angle in setting sun.

'USAF CONCEDED THAT OF THE 12,618 REPORTS THAT HAD BEEN STUDIED, NO LESS THAN 701 APPEARED TO DEFY RATIONAL INVESTIGATION.'

Lawrence J. Coyne; Sergeant John Healey, the flight-medic; First Lieutenant Arrigo Jezzi, a chemical engineer; and a computer technician, Sergeant Robert Yanacsek.

All seemed normal as the crew climbed into the air and kept the helicopter at a steady 2,500 feet altitude. That is, until they reached a point approximately ten miles from Mansfield. It was then they noticed a 'single red light' to the west that was moving slowly in a southerly direction. The initial thought was that the object was possibly an F-100 aircraft operating out of Mansfield. Nevertheless, Coyne advised Yanacsek to 'keep an eye on it.'

These were wise words: suddenly, the unidentified light changed its course and, alarmingly, began to head directly for them. Captain Coyne immediately swung into action, putting the helicopter into an emergency descent and dropping at 500 feet per minute. Equally alarming was the fact that radio contact with Mansfield Tower could no longer be established, and both UHF and VHF frequencies were utterly dead, too.

When it seemed that a fatal collision was all but imminent, to the complete astonishment of those on board, the red light came to a halt - hovering menacingly in front of the helicopter and its startled crew. At that moment, and from a much closer proximity, Captain Coyne and his team were able to determine that this was no mere light in the sky. Coyne, Healey, and

Yanacsek agreed that the object before them was nothing less than a substantially-sized, gray-coloured, cigar-shaped vehicle they described as being somewhat 'domed' and with 'a suggestion of windows'.

They could now see that the red light was coming from the bow section of the object. But that was not all that the crew could see. Without warning, a green 'pyramid shaped' shaft of light emanated from the object, passed over the nose of the helicopter, swung up through the windshield, and entered the tinted, upper window panels. Suddenly the interior of the aircraft was bathed in an eerie green light. Several seconds later the object shot off in a westerly direction, heading in the direction of Lake Erie.

But the danger was still not over. To the crew's concern, the altimeter showed an altitude of 3,500 feet and a climbing ascent of 1,000 feet per minute. Yet the stick was still geared for descent. The helicopter reached a height of 3,800 feet before Captain Coyne was able to safely and finally regain normal control. Shortly thereafter, all radio frequencies returned to normal and Coyne proceeded on to Cleveland Hopkins Airport without further problems.

Notably, Columbus, Ohio-based UFO investigators William E. Jones and Warren Nicholson succeeded in locating a group of five people who had been driving south from Mansfield to their rural home at the time in question, and who saw the strange object near the Charles Mill Reservoir. They described it, variously, as being 'like a blimp'; 'as big as a school bus'; and 'sort of pear-shaped'. They also caught sight of the green light that had enveloped the UH-1H: 'It was like rays coming down. The helicopter, the trees, the road, the car - everything turned green.'

While the late UFO skeptic Philip J. Klass opined that the crew had been spooked by nothing more mysterious than a 'fireball of the Orinoid meteor shower', this was never proved and an in-depth study undertaken by investigator Jennie Zeidman for the *Center for*



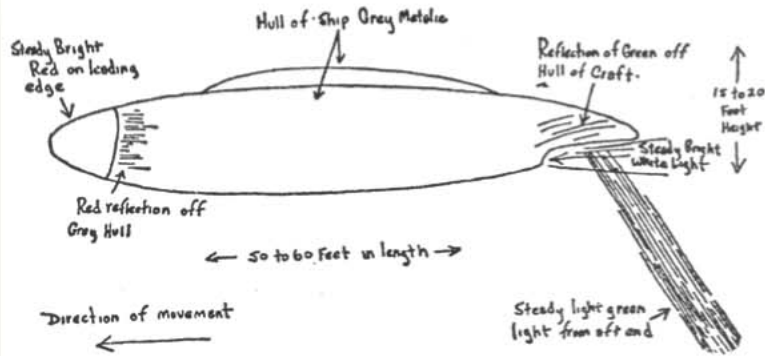
NEAR MISS: A Hawker Hunter engaged in an exercise in the skies above Hampshire had a close encounter with a white, circular UFO which was initially mistaken for a parachute until it was realised that it was much, much bigger.

DRAMATIC

ENCOUNTER: In 1973 a UH-1H helicopter piloted by Captain Lawrence J Coyne was buzzed by a weird object which for a time seemed to hold the chopper in a green beam of light.



EVIDENCE: Captain Coyne's sketch of the aggressive UFO he and his crew encountered over Ohio. Picture from the Fortean Picture Library



'WITHOUT WARNING, THE OBJECT RACED TOWARDS THEM AT "GREAT SPEED" - SOMETHING THAT CAUSED THE PILOT TO TAKE IMMEDIATE, EVASIVE ACTION.'

UFO Studies (CUFOS) summarily ruled out any conventional aircraft as being responsible.

Zeidman concisely and accurately concluded: 'The case has maintained its high strangeness-credibility rating after extended investigation and analysis.'

A WELSH ENCOUNTER: 2008

Shortly before 1 am on June 8, 2008, a South Wales Police helicopter, carrying a crew of three, was over MOD St. Athan, awaiting permission to land and refuel. As they held their position in the skies, the crew's attention was drawn to a 'brightly lit' object above them that was reported as being 'flying saucer shaped'.

Suddenly, without warning, the object raced towards them at 'great speed' - something that caused the pilot to take immediate, evasive action to avoid a potential collision. The object then sped away and the helicopter crew decided to follow. Their pursuit took them over the Bristol Channel until, as they

neared the North Devon Coast, a lack of adequate fuel forced them to abandon the chase.

What may have been the same object was seen later that same day by George Withrington, who happened to be a retired RAF glider pilot from St Mellons, Cardiff. He said the unknown intruder was 'peculiar with lots of flashing lights' and added that: 'I was looking at an aeroplane overhead when I spotted this thing that was in the corner of my eye. It shifted direction very quickly, in the blink of an eye. I looked at it for quite a while. I was watching it for at least 10 minutes. It flew off towards the east, towards Newport.'

Media coverage was intense; which led South Wales Police to state that: 'We can confirm the Air Support Unit sighted an unusual aircraft. This was reported to the relevant authorities for their investigation. The crew are very experienced and responded in a professional manner in relation to what they saw. In today's skies,

there are a wide variety of aircraft which come in a range of different shapes and sizes and in all probability, this sighting has just confirmed that one of these was in the area at the relevant time.'

Two years later, the case remains buried in controversy, with some UFO researchers perceiving the incident as prime evidence that aliens were flying over South Wales on that fateful night. Others, meanwhile, suggest that nothing stranger than Chinese Lanterns and media exaggeration were the cause of all the cosmic fuss.

There's no doubt that UFO reports from qualified and experienced pilots are particularly trustworthy and therefore have considerable importance in the annals of ufology. So, if one day you should be in the fortunate position to see a UFO, remember: you'll be in very good company! ☺

SOURCES: Ufocasebook.com; Ufoskeptical.org; Wikipedia.org; *Mansfield News Journal*, November 4, 1973; Air Ministry documents: AIR 20/9994 and AIR 2/16918; Civil Aviation Authority files made available to Nick Redfern; *The Coming of the Saucers*, Kenneth Arnold & Ray Palmer, Legend Press, 1996 (reprint).



Nick Redfern is the author of many books on UFOs, cryptozoology and the paranormal, and a busy blogger. His most recent books include *There's Something in the Woods and Science Fiction Secrets*. Nick can be contacted at his website: nickredfern.com



Popular Haunts

We journey to the heart of England in the company of **BARBARA WADD**, who is writing a series of books of 'ghost walks' in the Midlands. Barbara introduces an atmospheric country church which can boast not one but two ghosts.



MYSTERIOUS MUSIC:
Wanlip Church, where a ghostly organist still plays. © Barbara Wadd

Parish Church, Wanlip

LEICESTERSHIRE

THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY and St Nicholas, Wanlip, in Leicestershire, dates back to the 14th century. There is a beautiful brass in the floor of the chancel depicting a knight and a lady

'He checked that the church was empty and then locked the door. On returning he heard the organ being played.'

as the founders of the church with an inscription dated 1393.

Should the church be open, its lovely interior is well worth a visit. If not, there's a seat in the churchyard where you can rest while soaking up the atmosphere, which is both historic – and ghostly.

The church has a ghostly organist. John Ward, the church warden, was working in the church tower one day when he heard noises in the church below. He went down but found no one. When this happened a second time he checked that the church was empty and then locked the door, leaving the key in the lock so that no one could

enter. On returning to the tower he then heard the organ being played. He says he switched on his radio at this point!

His wife Julie said that their dogs frequently refuse to go into certain parts of the church or bristle and stare at some places. The boiler room is an area that they particularly dislike. The Ward's two daughters have also asked their parents where the man in the church has gone when neither John nor Julie has seen anyone.

Another ghost story associated with Wanlip occurred on a foggy night in 1989 when Cliff Lewis was driving carefully through the village. Suddenly the figure of a



KING LEAR'S LAKE:
This sculpture in nearby Watermead Park is a moody addition to the local scene. © Flickr.com/WUSHIH0658

young black boy appeared in front of the car. Cliff braked but knew that he must have hit the child. He rushed from his car, fearing the worst, but there was no one to be seen. There wasn't a body lying in the road nor an injured child on the verge. He called out but there was only silence.

The next day he returned to the village. No one had heard of an

accident the night before, but when he described the black boy he received some perplexed looks and was directed to an Egyptian-style tombstone in the churchyard. It lies on the left of the path between the graves of the Cullings family and that of Morton Lester.

Its lettering is worn now but it reads:

'Sacred to the memory of

'Cliff braked but knew that he must have hit the child ... there was no one to be seen.'

Rassalas Morgan, who was born in Macadi in the confines of Abyssinia and died at Wanlip Hall, 25 August 1839 in the 19th year of his age. Rescued from a state of slavery in this life and enabled by God's Grace to become a member of His Church. He rests here in the hope of a greater deliverance hereafter. This stone is raised in remembrance of his blameless life by one whom he loved.'

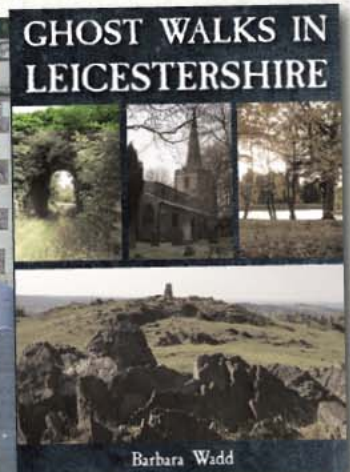
Rassalas is thought to have been one of the first slaves to be freed in Victorian England, although it is not recorded how he came to be employed by the Palmers of Wanlip Hall.

Nor is it known why his ghost should be walking the streets of Wanlip on a foggy November night in 1989.

The Wanlip area is worth a visit for more than just its ghosts. Near the church is Watermead Country Park where you will find King Lear's Lake. The legendary king is said to have built the city of Leicester and to have been buried in an underground chamber beneath the River Soar. A sculpture overlooking the lake depicts the final scene from Shakespeare's *King Lear*. There are also attractive walks nearby along the Grand Union Canal. ☉



MEMORIAL: The tomb of Rassalas Morgan, whose ghost still roams the village of Wanlip. © Barbara Wadd



This is an edited extract from *Ghost Walks in Leicestershire* by Barbara Wadd, published by Derby Books Publishing (ISBN 978-1-85983-776-4). Visit www.dbpublishing.co.uk



DARK ARTS: Do the processes of sympathetic and contagious magic really work?

Sympathy from the Devil

Expert on magical practices, **Dr LEO RUICKBIE**, discusses the two main principles of spell-craft - sympathetic and contagious magic. Do they really work?



Dr Leo Ruickbie has been investigating, writing about and sometimes experiencing the darker side of life - from Black Masses to haunted houses - for over 15 years. This led to his being awarded a PhD from King's College, London, for his research into modern witchcraft and magic. He is also the author of *Witchcraft Out of the Shadows: A Complete History* and *Faustus: The Life and Times of a Renaissance Magician*, with a book on the paranormal due out in 2011. He can be found online at his website www.witchology.com.

FOCAL POINT: A nail fetish from Togo in West Africa. Figures like this are used as a focus for the will, the desire for change reinforced by the emphatic driving in of the nail.



I SAW HIM DO IT. On national TV. Took a Voodoo doll out of his pocket and wrapped a thread round it. His victim was watching him, not quite believing. But when he'd finished, could she move her arms? Legs? No. There she was, rooted like a tree in the forest - the dark, lonely forest he had lured her into. He bound the doll's mouth. Now she couldn't talk, couldn't cry for help, couldn't scream. What was he going to do to her next?

Voodoo? Witchcraft? They would have burnt him at the stake for it a couple of centuries ago. And after a couple of turns on the rack he would have been begging them to do it. Today, he can make a nice living from it. But is it magic? Especially, is it 'sympathetic magic' - a concept we often come across in connection with the workings of Voodoo dolls.

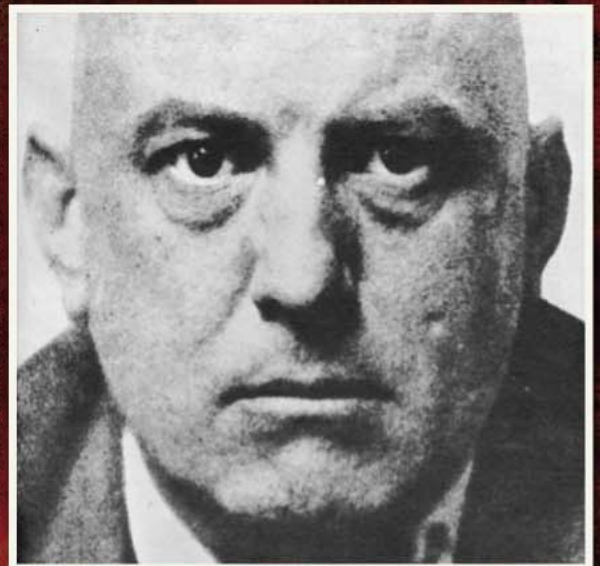
There are many theories as to what magic is. I am sure you are familiar with the most famous of them, Aleister Crowley's. He said that 'Magick' (the 'k' was important, but that's another story) was 'The Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will'. In our example, turning his victim into a zombified slave ready to obey every twist of the doll was certainly in conformity with the magician's will. But it doesn't tell us how it's all supposed to work. Crowley spent another 500 pages in *Magick in Theory and Practice* (1929) talking

about it and telling us how to do it, but he still didn't *explain* it.

Instead it was one of Crowley's contemporaries, a Scotsman called James George Frazer (later 'Sir'), who came up with quite possibly the most influential explanation of how magic is believed to work. Born in Glasgow in 1854, Frazer left for Cambridge to study the classics and, inspired by Sir Edward Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871), social anthropology. His researches led to the publication of *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion* in several editions and eventually 12 volumes from 1890 to 1915. He admitted himself that the book was 'one of the hothouse plants of the Victorian age... it grew and grew and grew'.

The Golden Bough was a hit, particularly after the 12 massive volumes were edited into one with the slightly snappier subtitle *A Study in Magic and Religion*. It influenced people like A. E. Housman, D. H. Lawrence and T. S. Elliot. Crowley, another Cambridge man, quoted a large

ALEISTER CROWLEY: The arch-magician of the 20th century had no doubts about the efficacy of sympathetic and contagious magic and there are many stories of him using both to revenge himself on his detractors.



'Frazer's general theory was that civilization progresses from magic to religion to science. (yet) Quantum Physics seems to have taken us back to magic.'



'When Crowley made a wax figure of the Master of John's and stabbed it in the leg, the same tutor later fell down some steps and broke his ankle.'

chunk in support of his theories in *Magick*. H. P. Lovecraft mentioned it in 'The Call of Cthulhu' (*Weird Tales*, February 1928). And Francis Ford Coppola slipped a copy of the book into *Apocalypse Now*.

Frazer's general theory was that civilization progresses from magic to religion to science. It was a typical 19th century viewpoint, much out of fashion now, especially as Quantum Physics seems to have taken us back to magic (see the editorial in last April's *Paranormal*).

But what inspired people about Frazer's work was his romantic theory of the Sacred King. The Sacred King represents the solar god as the principle of vegetation who must be seasonally sacrificed to ensure the continuing fertility of the land. Think *Wicker Man*. It was this that Coppola was referring to in the showdown between Martin Sheen's character and the crazed jungle warlord he was sent to assassinate played by Marlon Brando.

In order to get to this idea, Frazer first had to deal with magic. From

his library, Frazer ranged across the known universe of the imagination revealed in classical literature, ethnographies and traveller's accounts of strange peoples in distant lands, in forgotten times, in search of the answer.

He wondered why, among certain North American tribes, a figure drawn in the sand and then stabbed was believed to affect the physical body of the victim. He read of a Malay charm instructing the magician to take something of the victim, nail-pairings, hair and eyebrow clippings, spittle – enough to represent every part of him – to mix these with wax taken from an abandoned beehive and shape it to a human likeness. The magician should then roast the wax figure over a flame for seven nights, saying – and this is a 'Don't try this at home' moment:

'It is not the wax that I am scorching,

It is the liver, heart, and spleen of so-and-so that I scorch.'

Frazer wondered why, in darkest Sussex, only 50 years before, a maid had remonstrated with her mistress against throwing away the baby-teeth of the children. The maid had believed that they would be gnawed by wild beasts and that the harm done to the teeth would strike their former owners. As proof, she pointed to the example of poor old Master Simmons, who, it was said, had grown a pig's tooth in his upper jaw because his mother had thrown one of his baby-teeth into the pigs' trough.

The answer to all this, Frazer decided, was sympathy. Not the sort of sympathy you got from your mother when, as a child, you fell over and grazed your knee. More, shall we say, sympathy from the Devil. Or, as Frazer put it, 'that things act on each other at a distance through a secret sympathy,' hence his general term 'sympathetic magic'.

Sympathetic magic, he said, operated according to either (or both) of two principles: the Law of Similarity and the Law of Contagion. According to the Law of Similarity, the magician believes he can produce an effect by imitating it, hence stabbing figures in the sand. He also called this homoeopathic magic, that like affects like, and you should bear that in mind next time you reach for the homoeopathic remedies in Boots. According to the Law of Contagion, the magician, or Sussex maid, believes that things that have once been in contact with each other remain in contact even when separated.

Frazer had really only formalised an existing terminology of 'sympathy'. During the reigns of James I and Charles I a certain magical remedy called the 'powder of sympathy' was much in vogue. Sir Francis Bacon published a recipe for it in 1627, reporting that 'the Anointing of the Weapon, that maketh the Wound wil heale the Wound it selfe'. As it involved such rare treats as 'the Mosse upon the Skull of a dead Man' and 'the Fats of a Boare, and a Beare, killed in the Art of Generation' we might suppose that it was not to be found on every street corner.

In his *Confessions*, Crowley neatly summed up Frazer's theory: 'Magic he defines as science which does

ONCE BELONGING: A tooth has been taken from the person at whom the magic will be directed. The principle of contagious magic is that something that has once belonged to a person retains a connection that can be utilized.



not work'. Frazer's theory was not so very different from that of his hero Edward Tylor. Tylor had earlier argued that magic was an error in thinking where an imagined connection between things was mistaken as a real one. This has been the general interpretation ever since.

Frazer was far from sympathetic himself when he said that these complex principles (he used more and longer words to make them so) were readily familiar 'to the crude intelligence not only of the savage, but of ignorant and dull-witted people everywhere'. Frazer was surely wrong to attribute the idea of sympathetic magic solely to 'the savage' and simple-minded.

Sigmund Freud – 'that creature Freud', as Frazer said of him – called it 'magical thinking' and his observations led him to believe that it was a universal developmental stage exhibited by children ('savages') and retained by certain types of neurotics ('paying patients'). He didn't believe it worked either. He left all that sort of stuff to Carl Jung.

But, of course, if you start out with the preconception that magic doesn't work, then your theory is going to reflect that and you naturally have to account for it in human failing – ignorance, stupidity and wearing nappies. Even in 1900 the great pioneering psychologist William James was surprised that Frazer had not considered, indeed knew nothing about, psychical research. When Crowley – according to the well-known story told by Dennis Wheatley – made a wax figure of the Master of John's (not Frazer) and stabbed it in the leg, he didn't think he was ignorant or stupid when the same tutor later fell down some steps and broke his ankle. He thought magic worked, at least he did with regard to his better documented experiments. And he's not alone.

When a group of psychologists from Harvard and Princeton got together to try some fiendish experiments on unwitting students – presumably neither savage nor stupid – they made some surprising discoveries. They got the Voodoo dolls out, made the subjects watch basketball (twice) and American football. In all four studies they found that the students believed their magical actions (sticking pins in the doll) or thoughts had influenced the target (a confederate of the scientists or a real-life scenario). The students

believed they had paranormal powers, but not the psychologists, of course (see Emily Pronin, et al., 'Everyday Magical Powers', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2006, 91.2, pp. 218-231).

Like Tylor and Frazer more than a hundred years before them, the psychologists also talked about 'common cognitive errors', 'apparent mental causation' and even cited *The Golden Bough*. But again their premise was that magic doesn't work and their experimental design reflected this. It could be argued that what they had done was prove you can trick people into thinking magically. Certainly, modern magicians would not accept that this was a theory of 'magic'.

Rather than attack Frazer's two Laws, magic-users instead elaborate on what 'magic' is, usually making it more ethereal or concrete by turns. For Crowley,

'In all four studies they found the students believed their magical actions or thoughts had influenced the target.'

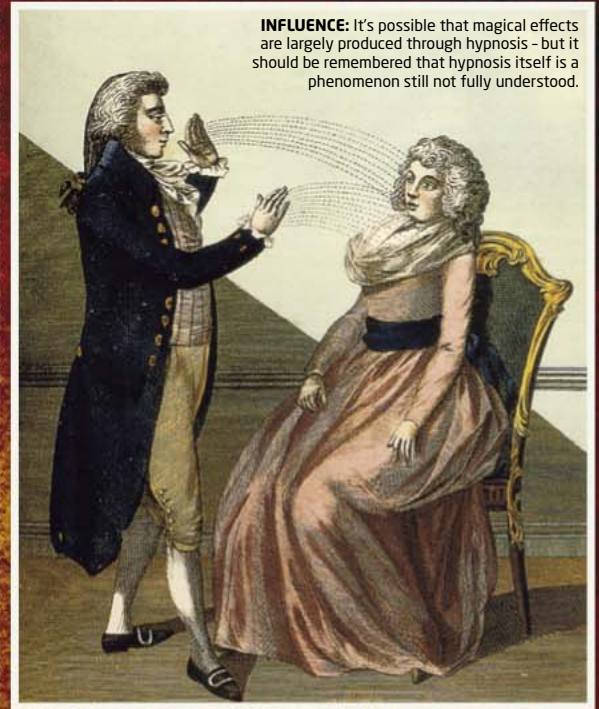
the importance of Will was linked to a supernatural entity he termed the Holy Guardian Angel which functioned like destiny, or even God, and could only be contacted through intense magical rituals. But Crowley also gave the writing of *Magick* itself as an example of magic because it fulfilled his mystical Will.

One academic I know of structured her book on modern witchcraft as a ritual, arguing that it was a 'magical act of evocation', and included the text of a ritual she had performed to get a job. Neither of them operated with the 'magic is science that doesn't work' idea. The academic got the job she wanted. For them magic touches both spirituality and practicality, giving the broadest possible leeway for interpretation.

Some of today's anthropologists seek to explain magic with recourse to other difficult-to-explain things, like 'knowledge', or 'consciousness', but this is a category confusion, like talking about toffee apples when one means mashed potatoes, and not an explanation.

And what of our example at the beginning of this story? Sympathetic magic or magical thinking?

The magician said the doll had no soul, so he took something of



INFLUENCE: It's possible that magical effects are largely produced through hypnosis – but it should be remembered that hypnosis itself is a phenomenon still not fully understood.

the woman's to provide it: a ring. He said they were now linked (contagious magic). He then proceeded to bind the doll. Doll affects doll (homoeopathic magic). But when he released her – a pity, but with so many witnesses tuned in what else could he do? – he showed, to her surprise, that he hadn't taken her ring. It was still on her finger. No Law of Contagion was invoked. No link had been made. But she still believed and behaved as though the man could control her with the Voodoo doll.

Even Frazer conceded that 'imagination acts upon man as really as does gravitation, and may kill him as certainly as a dose of prussic acid'. Was he actually admitting that magic could, in effect, work?

If you haven't guessed, the man at the beginning of this story was Derren Brown. Now you roll your eyes. NLP. Hypnosis. The modern Svengali. It all seems so clear. It was all a trick. But was it really? Remember when Stephen Fry said 'I'd like to burn him at the stake and watch his witch's heart bubble'?

I have an unused Voodoo doll right here. Why don't you follow me into the woods so that we can try our own little experiment. No? ☺



VOODOO QUEENS AND ZOMBIE ARMIES

BRAD STEIGER, who has just published a new book on 'Real Zombies', examines the dark underworld of voodoo magic in New Orleans.

WHO COULD HAVE PREDICTED the enormous popularity of the zombie in today's culture when film director George Romero brought a relatively unknown monster into contemporary consciousness with his motion picture *The Night of the Living Dead* (1968)? The zombie as Romero envisioned it certainly isn't as attractive, buff, and sensual as the vampire. Nor does it have the appeal of the cursed individual who could transform himself into a werewolf and rip his victims to shreds.

Regardless of the zombie's lack of sex appeal or rugged appearance, large numbers of our population have passionately embraced the zombie – a love affair that has extended far beyond films.

On Halloween 2008, 1,227 of the pseudo-undead filled the Old Market Square in Nottinghamshire to set a new world record for dancing while being dressed up as zombies. The previous record for zombie choreography had been set in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, on October 28, 2007, with 1,028 participants. BBC News quoted Margaret Robinson, one of the organizers of the Nottingham zombie event, as saying she was 'covered in blood and very happy to be so'.

In the great majority of current motion pictures, books, games and other media expressions, those who become zombies are initially the victims of biological warfare, a mysterious virus or some other kind of pandemic that first kills them, then resurrects them with the uncontrollable desire to chomp on all humans who remain uninfected.

ZOMBIES ARE REAL

Contrary to Hollywood's canon, a *real* zombie is not the victim of biological warfare, a blast of radiation from a space vehicle, or an unknown virus that escaped a

secret laboratory. A real zombie is a reanimated corpse that has been brought back to life to serve as slave labour for a Voodoo Priest or High Priestess.

As Lisa Lee Harp Waugh, a noted writer on Voodoo, put it: 'A Zombie is a soulless human corpse, still dead, but taken from the grave and endowed by sorcery with a mechanical semblance of life. It is a dead body, which is made to walk and act and move as if it were alive.'

Lisa Lee said that some Southern USA zombie-making-rituals consist of digging up a fresh corpse from its tomb or deep grave.

'The body is then fed strange potions and whispered to in strange chants,' she explained. 'Many individuals who have witnessed the evil deed say that it is disturbing to

view. Imagine the strange image as candles flair, and mosquitoes bite hard into your skin. Then the spell comes to a conclusion as the zombie corpse comes to life.

'At that moment the Voodoo Queen takes him into what seems to be a deep kiss – and bites off his tongue to make him her eternal slave.'

In Haiti the deceased are often buried face downward by relatives so the corpse cannot hear the summons of the sorcerer. Some even take the precaution of providing their dearly departed with a weapon, such as a machete, with which to ward off the sorcerer. There are accounts from those who have discovered friends or relatives, supposedly long-dead, labouring in the fields of some sorcerer. ☉

'A REAL ZOMBIE IS A REANIMATED CORPSE THAT HAS BEEN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE TO SERVE AS SLAVE LABOUR FOR A VOODOO PRIEST OR HIGH PRIESTESS.'



RELIGIONS CLASH: St Louis' Cathedral in New Orleans. Voodoo rituals were regularly carried out in the vicinity of the cathedral, much to the annoyance of the clergy.



mass, and it was because of this that the Church brought pressure upon the city's government to forbid any religion that was not Roman Catholic to be practiced within the city limits.

At about the same time Congo Square, now known as Armstrong Park, was chosen by the early Voodoo worshippers as the place to hold their rituals, which the *Times Picayune* described as 'serpent worship' amidst 'uncontrolled orgies' (February 1932).

The most famous Voodoo Doctor in New Orleans in the first half of the 19th century was the enigmatic Dr John, who has blended so completely with his legend that it is difficult at times to determine if he was a real flesh-and-blood person or something superhuman.

According to certain accounts of the day, Dr John was a true Voodoo King of enormous power who had been a prince in Senegal before coming to New Orleans. Others state that Dr John's full name was John Montenet and that he was a freeman of colour who wielded great influence in the city. It is said that he owned extensive property, was married to several beautiful wives, kept a harem of

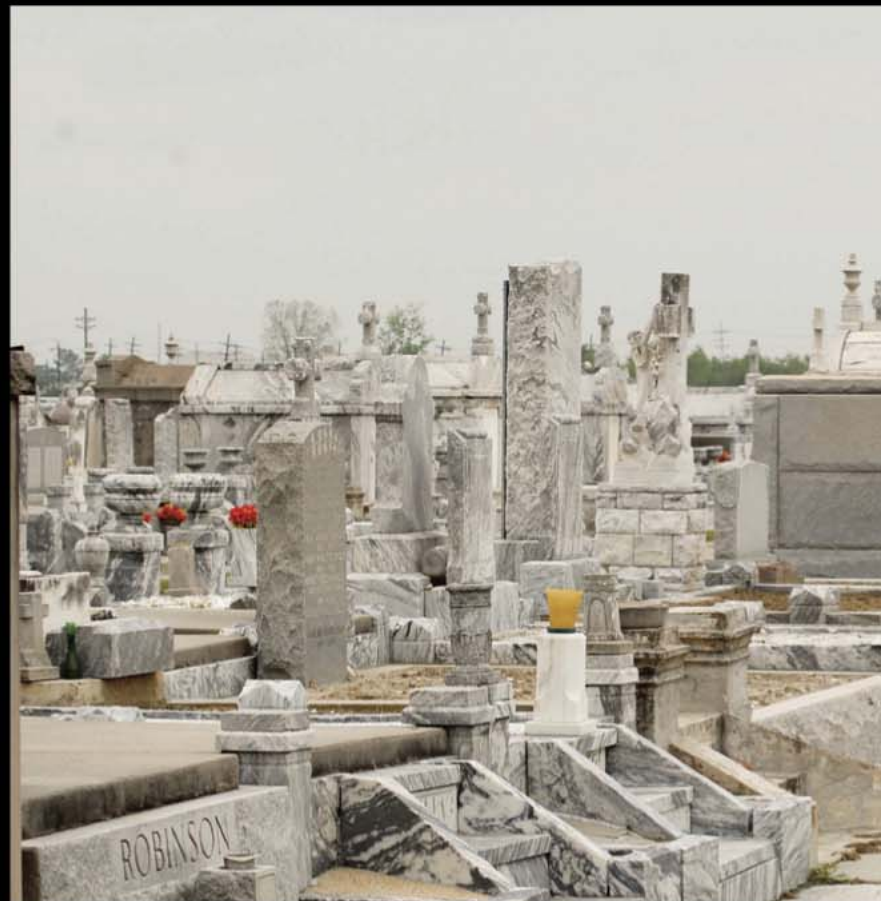
RAW MATERIAL: The zombie is a corpse revived to do the bidding of its master or mistress. Researcher Lisa Lee Harp Waugh says she has spoken to people who watched as a 'voodoo queen' brought a corpse back to a semblance of life.

DR JOHN AND THE VOODOO QUEENS

The first Voodoo Queen in New Orleans of whom there is any record was Sanite DeDe, a young woman from Santo Domingo who may have arrived as a slave sometime in the early 1800s. Once in New Orleans, she bought her freedom through the power of her secret hexes and Hoodoo Voodoo.

By around 1815, she was holding rituals in her brick-lined courtyard on Dumaine and Chartres Streets, in walking distance from the St Louis Cathedral. The rhythmic beat of the drums could be heard inside the great church during

"THE SPELL COMES TO A CONCLUSION AS THE CORPSE COMES TO LIFE. AT THAT MOMENT THE VOODOO QUEEN TAKES HIM INTO WHAT SEEMS TO BE A DEEP KISS - AND BITES OFF HIS TONGUE TO MAKE HIM HER ETERNAL SLAVE."



THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW

lovely mistresses and fathered as many as 60 children.

Dr John was said to be able to predict the future, cure illnesses, cast spells and create zombies to serve him as labourers and sex slaves. Even more incredible, Dr John was rumoured to have the power to 'zombify' instantly those unfortunate individuals who angered him or who appealed to his sexual desires.

Dr John ruled New Orleans with Sanite DeDe until he began to mentor a captivating young woman named Marie Laveau, who supported herself as a hairdresser while gaining a widespread reputation as a Voodoo practitioner. Marie Laveau succeeded Sanite DeDe as the ruling Voodoo Queen of New Orleans in about 1830. No one in the hierarchy of Voodoo priests and priestesses disputed Laveau's assuming the position of authority, for it had become known among her peers as well as among the common folk and the aristocracy of New Orleans that she was extraordinarily gifted with powers of sorcery.

Many researchers believe that real Zombification came to America through the teachings of Marie LaVeau, others that it

PLACE OF THE DEAD: This long established cemetery in New Orleans is said to still be a focal point for voodoo rituals today.



Vodun/Vodoun/Voodoo is an assortment of African beliefs and rites that may go back as far as 6,000-10,000 years. Today there are more than 80 million people worldwide who practice Voodoo, mainly in Haiti and where Haitian emigrants have settled, such as in Benin, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Togo and various cities in the United States, primarily New Orleans. In South America there are many religions similar to Voodoo, such as Umbanda, Quimbanda, or Candomble.

Voodoo means 'spirit' in the language of the West African Yoruba people. Voodoo as a religion observes elements from an African tribal cosmology that may go back as far as ten thousand years, blended with the teachings, saints and rituals of Roman Catholicism.

Early slaves, who were abducted from their homes and families on Africa's West Coast, brought their gods and religious practices with them to Haiti and other West Indian islands. Plantation owners were compelled by order of the French colonial authorities to baptize their slaves in the Catholic religion. The slaves suffered no conflict of theology. They accepted the white man's 'water' and adopted Catholic saints into the older-African family of nature gods and goddesses.

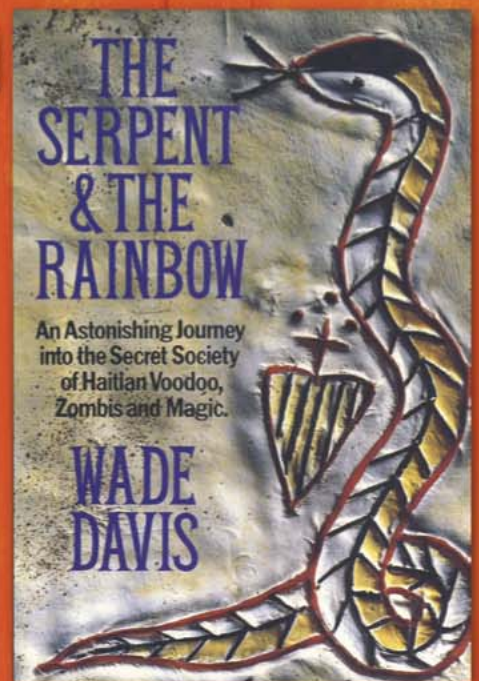
A male priest of Voodoo is called a hungan or hungan; his female counterpart a mambo. The place where one practices Voodoo is a series of buildings called a humfort or hounfou. A 'congregation' is called a hunsi or hounsis, and the hungan cures, divines and cares for them through the good graces of a loa, his guiding spirit.

The worship of the supernatural loa is the central purpose of Voodoo. They are the old gods of Africa, the local spirits of Haiti, who occupy a position to the fore of God, Christ, the Virgin, and the Saints.

From the beginning, the Haitian Voodoo priests adamantly refused to accept the Church's position that the loa are the 'fallen angels' who rebelled against God. The loa do good and guide and protect humankind, the hungans argue. They, like the saints of Roman Catholicism, were once men and women who lived exemplary lives and who now are given a specific responsibility to carry out and to assist human spirituality. Certainly there are those priests, the bokors, who perform acts of evil sorcery, the left-hand path of Voodoo, but rarely will a hungan resort to such practices. Never, say these adherents, should the path of Voodoo be followed for the sake of power over another.

The loa communicates with its faithful ones by possessing their bodies during a trance or by appearing to them in dreams. The possession usually takes place during ritual dancing in the humfort. Each participant eventually undergoes a personality change and adapts a trait of his or her particular loa. The adherents of Vodun refer to this phenomenon of the invasion of the body by a supernatural agency as that of the loa mounting its 'horse'.

There is a great difference, the hungan maintains, between possession by a loa and possession by an evil spirit. An evil spirit would bring chaos to the dancing and



THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW: The classic work on surviving voodoo customs and zombification by Dr Wade Davis, published in 1986. It was the inspiration for a film by Wes Craven.

perhaps great harm to the one possessed. The traditional dances of Voodoo are conducted on a serious plane with rhythm and suppleness but not with the orgiastic sensuality depicted in motion pictures about Voodoo or in the displays performed for the tourist trade.

All Voodoo ceremonies must be climaxed with sacrifice to the loa. Chickens are most commonly offered to the loa, although the wealthy may offer a goat or a bull. The possessed usually drinks of the blood that is collected in a vessel, thereby satisfying the hunger of the loa. After the ceremony, the sacrificed animal is usually cooked and eaten.

Voodoo is inspired by the worship of the python god, Damballah, who created the world. He stretched out his 7,000 coils to form the stars in the heavens and to mould the hills and valleys of Earth. Rising through the mist was a lovely rainbow, Ayida Wedo. Damballah fell instantly in love with her beauty, and the serpent and the rainbow became one: Damballah Wedo.

Damballah Wedo, a loa (spirit) of peace and purity, speaks only to humans by possessing a follower of Voodoo, Santeria, Macumba or one of the other African-inspired religions. This possession most often takes place during the dancing that follows other ritual observances. Damballah's image is that of a very large snake.

Anyone may join the religion but 99% of its priesthoods are passed from generation to generation.



SPELLS FOR SALE: In a market in Togo a stall sells animal parts for use in voodoo and related magical rituals.



A DISTURBING CONCEPT

The concept of the dead rising to eat the living is a particularly disturbing one to individuals who were reared in one of the traditional monotheistic religions and who were told from their early childhood that one day the graves would open and the dead would rise to face a day of judgment.

Many of those who imagined Judgement Day when they were very young were left with a dread of cemeteries and the additional fear that the event could happen at any time without warning. How many children envisioned terrible scenes of decaying corpses and skeletons pushing aside rotting coffins and reaching up through the graveyard dirt?

Now, in a vast number of contemporary films, it seems as though the zombie is a harbinger of the Apocalypse, heralding Armageddon. To make matters worse, in these dramatic presentations there appears no sign of help from the promised legions of Angels who are supposed to arrive like the Heavenly cavalry and save humanity from total destruction.

IN THE MOVIES: Zombies – and to a lesser extent the rituals believed to reanimate them – have become a staple of horror films since the 1930s. These two scenes come from Hammer's *Plague of the Zombies*, released in 1966.

was her teacher and mentor Dr John who first taught Marie. Another theory is that the Great Texan Voodoo Queen Black Cat Mama Couteaux was the ultimate 'zombifier'.

Black Cat Mama Couteaux, according to Lisa Lee Harp Waugh, was the ultimate Voodoo Hoodoo Queen in Marshall, Texas.

'The stories of her in the state are often told as far away as Abilene and Fort Worth,' she said. 'The woman was said to have been married to her zombie lover. The Dead Mamba husband zombie is said to be still around, guarding the treasures she amassed.'

Writers on the history of Voodoo such as Harp Waugh, Karen Beals and the noted New Orleans artist Richard Pustanio have claimed many Voodoo and Hoodoo Kings and Queens became wealthy during the Civil War in the 1860s by reanimating fallen Confederate and Union soldiers and selling them as zombie slaves. Young and beautiful Creole women were also turned into zombies and were in much demand by wealthy white men, they say.

It's said the sorcerers ground up corpses and zombie fingers and toes to make special Zombie Brand powders that only the very rich could afford and only the very evil would want to employ.

THE RULING QUEEN

Queen Bianca has been the reigning Voodoo Queen of New Orleans

since 1983 when she received the title from Liga Foley, her aunt by marriage who claimed to be a granddaughter of Marie Laveau.

Queen Bianca has presided over the secret Sosyete (society) that the Laveaus originally founded, carrying on the legacy of true New Orleans Voodoo. Bianca has said that the Grande Sosyete did not die with Marie Laveau I or Marie II, it just went underground; therefore, only the inner circle of followers

and devotees know of its secrets, rites and ritual locations.

Each year – sometimes twice a year – Queen Bianca will host a ritual in which the Monkey and Cock Statues created in honor of Marie Laveau are blessed and charged. In this ritual, which always takes place outdoors in a highly secret location, Queen Bianca will invoke the spirit of Marie Laveau, becoming possessed by the powerful Voodoo Queen.

"BLACK CAT MAMA COUTEAUX WAS SAID TO HAVE MARRIED HER ZOMBIE LOVER ... HE IS SAID TO BE STILL AROUND, GUARDING THE TREASURES SHE AMASSED."

FULL CIRCLE: A woman in Benin, her face stained with ashes, dances in a frenzy during a voodoo ritual. Benin is one of the African countries where Haitian emigrants have settled, bringing the religion back to the continent in which it has its roots.





ZOMBIE PROTECTION

Some voodoo traditions maintain that the only way people can protect themselves from a zombie is to feed it some salt. 'Yes, it can destroy a zombie,' confirms Lisa Lee Harp Waugh, 'but if given to them in moderation, it tends to keep a zombie frozen for a few years until its services are once again needed.'

'A full dose of pure white salt - and that's about a full teaspoon today - would put an end to an animated corpse in a minute or less. They usually fall to the ground with violent convulsions and all the fluid drains from their bodies.'



burial in the Haitian style. He has a white, frequently skull-like face (or actually has a skull for a face). He is the head of the Guédé (also Ghede) family of loa, those gods concerned with death and resurrection.

Many call Baron Samedi the ruling loa or god of New Orleans. He and his bride, The Great Maman Brigitte are sometimes referred to as the King and Queen of The Zombies. Voodooists believe that only through his power can a soul be forced from a living body and placed between life and death.

On Halloween night, Baron Samedi stands at the crossroads, where the souls of dead humans pass on their way to the gate to Guinee, the astral counterpart of the ancient homeland in Africa.

The old red-bricked, crumbling, white-washed Tomb of Marie Laveau is the spot where many say the Eternal Voodoo Queen still grants wishes from beyond the grave. However, some say, she will grant your wish only if you promise to come back to the tomb no later than one year and a day. If you do not show at the allotted time then you might just find that you have lost that all you gained.

Even worse is Marie's curse that if you do not hold to your agreement the one you love most will become a real zombie when he or she dies. ☹

FIGHTING ON: Legends abound of dead soldiers reanimated by voodoo kings and queens to continue fighting during the American Civil War. This gruesome picture originally illustrated Ambrose Bierce's macabre short story of the Civil War, *A Tough Tussle*.

'THE OLD, CRUMBLING, TOMB OF MARIE LAVEAU IS THE SPOT WHERE MANY SAY THE ETERNAL VOODOO QUEEN STILL GRANTS WISHES FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE.'

Through Bianca, her modern day counterpart, Marie Laveau is able to be present with her devotees and personally blesses the Monkey and Cock Statues, which protect the followers from evil and any curses directed against them during the course of a year.

During this ritual, which is usually said to take place around April 30 or May 1, other offerings preferred by Marie Laveau are also presented and accepted by her spirit through the powerful Queen Bianca.

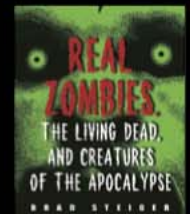
BARON SAMEDI

Finally, no discussion of Voodoo would be complete without mentioning Baron Samedi is the most infamous and frightening of the loa spirits. The Baron is the infamous master of the dead who escorts souls from the graveyard to the underworld. However, the Baron does not concern himself only with the dead - he can also enter the realm of the living and force people to do his terrible bidding.

Baron Samedi (Baron Saturday, also Bawon Samedi or Bawon Sanmdi) is one of the loa of Haitian Voodoo. Samedi is usually depicted with a white top hat, black tuxedo, dark glasses, and cotton plugs in the nostrils, as if to resemble a corpse dressed and prepared for



VOODOO QUEEN: The current Queen of Voodoo in New Orleans is Queen Bianca. This illustration of her is by New Orleans artist Richard Pustiano.



For five decades award-winning writer **Brad Steiger** has been devoted to exploring and examining unusual, hidden, secret and otherwise strange occurrences. A former high school teacher and college instructor, Brad published his first articles on the unexplained in 1956. Since then he has written more than 2,000 articles with paranormal themes and is the author of more than 170 titles, including *Real Ghosts*, *Real Vampires*, *Mysteries of Time and Space*, and the popular *Miracles* series with his wife Sherry. His latest book, *Real Zombies: The Living Dead and Creatures of the Apocalypse*, has just been published by Visible Ink.



Unearthed

A couple of months ago Mark Greener, in his article 'Signs and Wonders', reviewed the explosion of paranormal reports which took place during the 17th century. CATE LUDLOW, who has previously brought us extracts from the *Terrific Register* 'penny dreadful', recently acquired an extraordinary tome from this period, *A Mirrour or Looking-glass Both For Saints and Sinners* by English clergyman Samuel Clark. Clark (1599-1683) signed the ministers' protest against the execution of Charles I, and personally welcomed Charles II on his return. He spent his idle hours copying out interesting sections from 'the best histories', which, along with first-hand accounts of paranormal events sent to him by friends, formed the basis of his enormous *A Mirrour or Looking-glass*. Cate selects a few of the best stories for our entertainment, if not (as Clark intended) our edification!

A Mirrour for Saints and Sinners

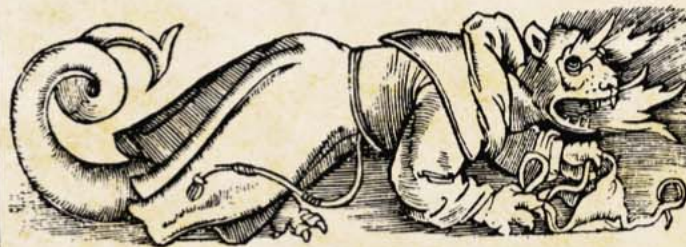
Martin Luther vs the Divel

On a time as Luther was walking in his garden, the Divel appeared to him in the likeness of a black Boar; but Luther sleighting [pretending not to see him], and not regarding him, he vanished away.

Luther tells us that when he was lodged in the Castle of Wartzburg [where he translated the New Testament into German], in a chamber far from any company, he was many time molested by noises made by the Divel in his chamber, and on his staires: but I (saith he) encountered him with that sentence, *Thou shalt put all things under his feet*: and so I laid me down, and slept in safety.

A young man at Wittenberg in Saxony, being kept short by his father, was tempted by the Divel to yield himself body and soul to him upon condition to have his wishes satisfied, and his wants supplied, which he (pinched with want) assented to, and confirmed it with a bond written in his own blood. But presently after, he began to decay in his bodily health, and whereupon being brought to Luther, and by him examined, he at length uttered the whole matter to him: which when Luther heard, he assembled the congregation together, and all of them joyned together, and prayed for him, whereby the Divel at last was forced to bring the bond, and to throw it in the window amongst them, bidding the young man *to take it againe to him*.

REFORMER: Martin Luther defeats 'the monkish devil' in an anti-Papist tract.



The House of the Divel

Master White of Dorchester, being a member of the Assembly of Divines, was appointed Minster for Lambeth; but for the present could get no convenient house to dwell in, but one that was possessed by the Divel. This he took; and not long after, his maid sitting up late, the Divel appeared to her, whereupon in a great fright she ran up to tell her Master; he bid her to go to bed, saying she was well served for staying up so late. Presently after the Divel appeared to Master White himself, standing at his beds feet: to whom Master White said, *If thou hast nothing else to do, thou mayest stand there still; and I will betake myself to my rest*: and accordingly composing himself to sleep, the Divel vanished.

'Upon these furious barkings against God ... this wretched man was turned into a black dog, and howling, he ran to the dead cattel, and began to feed upon them.'

Black Dogs

In the month of March, Anno Christi 1632, there lived in the borders of Muscovia [Russia] a Noble man, by office a gatherer of tribute, or taxes, by the name of Alberus Pericofcious: his manner was, when poor men could not presently pay their Taxes, to distraine upon their cattel, and drive them to his owne home. Now it came to pass that this Nobleman being from home, lost all of his unjust gains in one night: all his cattel, both what he had taken by violence, and what he had brought with his money, suddenly dying: this wicked man, coming home, was first told by his servant, then by his wife, what a fearful judgement of God was befallen him.

Hereupon the blasphemous wretch began to rage, discharged his gun against heaven, breaking forth into these blasphemous speeches: *Let him that killed my cattel, devour them; If thou wouldst not let me eat them, eat them thy self.* Upon these furious barkings against God, there fell some drops of blood: and this wretched man was turned into a black dog, and howling, he ran to the dead cattel, and began to feed upon them: and for I ought to know (says mine author who presently after wrote this story) is yet feeding upon them. His wife great with childe, being astonished and terrified with the strangeness of God's judgements, shortly after died. This story is related by Cluverus (an Author worthy of credit) who professes that he had it not only by hearsay, but by eye-witnesses who saw it.

Crescentius, the Pope's Legate at the Council of Trent, as he was upon a time writing Letters till mid-night to the Pope; being about to rise to refresh himself, there came in a great black Dog, with flaming eyes, and eares hanging almost to the ground, which came to the Table where he sat, and then vanished; the Cardinal affrighted, called in his servants, caused them to look about the Chamber for the Dog, and when they could not finde him, he immediately fell sick, and in his sicknesse was always calling upon those about him to drive away the Dog that climbed upon his bed, and so continued till he died.

Anno Christi 1530, there was at Nuremburg a Popish Priest that studied the black Art, who



PRETTY NASTY: The Devil appears to a young woman, mocking her vanity.

'A wicked Magician murdered above one hundred and fifty Infants with whose blood he wrote books filled with horrid conjurations.'

coveting riches, the Divil shewed him through a cristal treasures hidden in a part of the City: thither therefore did the Priest go with a companion, and having digged a hollow pit, he perceived in the bottome a Coffe with a great black dog lying on it, which whilst he beheld, the earth fell upon him, and crushed him to death.

Some unlikely magicians

There was in Denmark one Otto, a great magician, and a great Pirat, who used to passe the seas without the help of a ship, or any other vessel, and by his Divilish arts to raise stormes, and drown his enemies; but at last being over matched by one that was more expert in that Art than himself, he was by him drowned in the seas.

There was a conjurer in Saltzburg, who attempted to gather together all the Serpents thereabouts into a Ditch, and to feed them there; but as he was practising of it, the Divil drew him into the ditch amongst them where he perished miserably.

The Governor of Mafcon, a great Magician, as he was at dinner with some company, was snatched away by the Divil, hoisted up into the air, and carried three times around the town to the great astonishment of the inhabitants, to whom he cried for help, but all in vaine.

Anno Christi 1437, in the reign of Charles the Seventh, King of France, Sir Giles of Britane, high-constable of France, was a wicked Magician, having murdered above one hundred and fifty Infants, and women great with child, with whose blood he wrote books filled with horrid

conjurations, which being proved against him, he was adjudged to be hanged, and burnt to death, which was accordingly executed.

The Lord of Orne in Lorraine, when Noblemen, or Gentlemen came to visit him, used (as they thought) to serve them very honourably with all sorts of dainty dishes, and viands, but when they departed, they found their stomachs empty, having eaten nothing. One time a lord's servant, having forgotten something behind him, went back, and suddenly entering the Hall, found a Munkie beating the Lord of the house that had seated them: others reported that he hath beene seene through the chink of a door lying on his belly along upon a Table, and a Munkie scourging him very strongly, to whom he would say, *Let me alone, wilt thou always thus torment me?* At last he fell into so great misery and beggary that he was fain to get into a Hospital at Paris, where he ended his wretched life.

Gothic horrors

George Scherter being for Religion condemned first to be beheaded, and then burnt, he told the people that he would give them a sign that he died a true Christian; and when his head was cut off his body, falling upon the belly, lay still whilst one might leisurely eat an egg, and then turned itself softly upon the back, and crossed the right leg, and right arme over the left, whereby many of the spectators were induced to believe the Gospel.

Robert Smith, a godly martyr being at the stake ready to be burned, exhorted the people to think well of his cause, not doubting but that his body dying in that quarrel, should rise again to life; and told them that God would shew them some token thereof; and accordingly when

he was half burnt, all black with fire and clustered together on a lump like a black coale, all men thinking him dead, he suddenly rose upright, lifting up the stumps of his arms, and clapping the same together, declaring a rejoicing heart, and so bending down again, he slept in the Lord.

Prodigies of birth

One Peter a Christian cafar at Sofala, his wife dying in travel of a daughter, nourished the child with the milk of his own breasts a whole year, at the end whereof the child dyed of the worms, and then the milk dyed up in his breasts.

A poore woman in Holland being great with child, and neere unto the time of her delivery, for the space of fifteen days before the same, the child in her womb was

'When he was half burnt, all black with fire, all men thinking him dead, he suddenly rose upright, lifting up the stumps of his arms, declaring a rejoicing heart.'

heard almost continually to cry, and lament: the which many worthy persons for the greater approbation of the truth went daily to heare, and have testified the same.

The Lady Margerit of Holland Countesse of Hausberg was miraculously delivered of three hundred sixty four children at one birth.

Strange prodigies

Anno Christi 688: It rained blood seven daies together through all Britain, and the milk, cheese, and butter turned to blood.

Anno Christi 1096. In the Reign of William the Conqueror a Well of blood sprang out of the ground for fifteen daies together at Finchhampsted in Barkshire.

Anno Christi 1176. In the Isle of Wight it rained blood, the shower continuing for the space of two houres together, to the great wonder, and astonishment of the beholders.

1204: At Oreford in Suffolk a fish was taken by the fisherman at sea, in shape resembling a wild man... In all his limbs and members hee resembled a man,



CONSULTATION:
Noblemen visit a
magician in his lair.

had hair in all the usual parts of his body, only his head was bald. The knight caused meat to be placed before him, which he greedily devoured, and did eat fish raw, or sod: that which was raw he pressed with his hand, till he had squeezed out all the moisture: He uttered not any speech, though to try him, they hung him up by his heels, and grievously tormented him.

About Brazil are many Meermen, and Meer-Women, that have long hair and are very beautiful.

Anno Christi 1586. It rained locusts in Thracia: and Ducks and Geese in Croatia, as Leonclavius testifies, who was an eye-witness of it. The Locusts fell in such multitudes that they devoured all the country, and on the contrary, the Geese and Ducks fed and nourished many.

Anno Christi 1638. October 21. It being the Sabbath day in the parish church of Withycomb in Devonshire, there fell out in the time of the Divine Service a strange darkness increasing more and more, so that the people could not see to read their Bibles, and suddenly a mighty and fearful thundering was heard, the sound whereof was like the report of many great Canons, which was accompanied with terrible strange lightning, which amazed and astonished those who heard, and saw it: the darkness was still increasing till they could not see one another.

Presently there came such an extraordinary flaming lightning as filled the Church with fire, and smooke, stinking loathsome like to brimstone: Some saw at first a Ball of fire come in at the window, and passe through the Church, which so affrighted the congregation, that most of them fell down, some on their faces, and some on one another, crying out of burning, and scalding: all giving themselves up for dead.

Master George Lyde, the Minister of the Parish, being in his feat or pulpit, though being much astonished, yet through God's mercy had no hurt, yet was a sad spectator of the hurt and sufferings of others. The lightning seized on his wife: burnt her ruffe, smock, and other clothes, to the burning of her body in many parts in a pitiful way. And one Mistress Ditford sitting in the pew with her was also much scalded: But her



UP IN FLAMES: A freak lightning storm killed many of the congregation assembled on Sunday in the church at Withycomb in Devon.

'At the same instant another man had his head cloven, his skull rent in three places, and his braines thrown upon the ground whole.'

maid, and childe sitting in the pew door had no harm.

Another woman attempting to run out of the church had her clothes set on fire, and was not only strangely scorched, and burnt, but had the flesh on her back torn almost to the very bones. Another woman had the flesh so torn, and her body so grievously burnt, that she died the same night.

One Master Hill, a Gentleman of note in the parish, sitting in his seat by the chancel, had his head suddenly smitten against the wall, through the violence whereof he died that night, no other hurt being found about his body: his son sitting by him had no harm.

At the same instant another man that was Warrenner to Sir Richard Reynolds, had his head cloven, his skull rent in three places, and his braines thrown upon the ground whole: The haire of his head through the violence of the blow stuck to a pillar that was near to him.

Some seats in the body of the church were turned upside down, yet they which sat in them had little or no hurt. One man as he was going out of the chancel door, and his dog running before him, the dog was whirled about

towards the door, and fell down stark dead; at the sight whereof the Master stepped back, and God preserved him alive.

The Church itself was much torn, and defaced with the thunder and the lightning: a beam also being burnt in the middle, fell down between the Minster and the Clerk, and hurt neither. A great and weighty stone near the foundation of the church was torn, and removed out of its place: The steeple was also much rent... There was also thrown stones down from the Tower of the Steeple as thick as if an hundred men had been there throwing them: also a pinnacle of the Tower being torne down, beat through the church.

The pillar against which the Pulpit stood, being newly whited, was turned black, and Sulphary. A man that stood in the Chancell, with his face towards the Belfree, observed as it were dust or lime rising in the lower end of the church: which suddenly (as with a puffe of winde) was whirled up, and driven into his eyes so that he could not see in twelve houres after; yet he had no other hurt. The lightning being passed, they people stood in a terrible maze [and then] went forth from the church. ☉



Mysterious Monmouthshire



The great fantasy writer Arthur Machen described Monmouthshire in South-East Wales as a 'strangely beautiful country ... full of mystery'. Ghost hunter **ROSS ANDREWS** introduces some of the most haunted locations in the county and those of the neighbouring Forest of Dean.



DURING MY RESEARCH for my books and articles I discovered a large number of hauntings in Monmouthshire, spreading into the extensive Forest of Dean area. So here is a selection of the more accessible haunted sites you can investigate for yourself.

THE KING'S HEAD, MONMOUTH

A member of staff told me about the time that she was in the cellar when a clear voice spoke in her ear, telling her to 'Get out!'. I asked her if she followed the ghostly command.

'Of course, what would you have done?' she replied.

As a seasoned pro at this ghost hunting business, I would like to

have assured her I would have stood calmly pulling out video cameras, switching on night vision and started asking questions, but like most of us I would probably have run out of there in search of the nearest shop where I could buy a new pair of clean trousers.

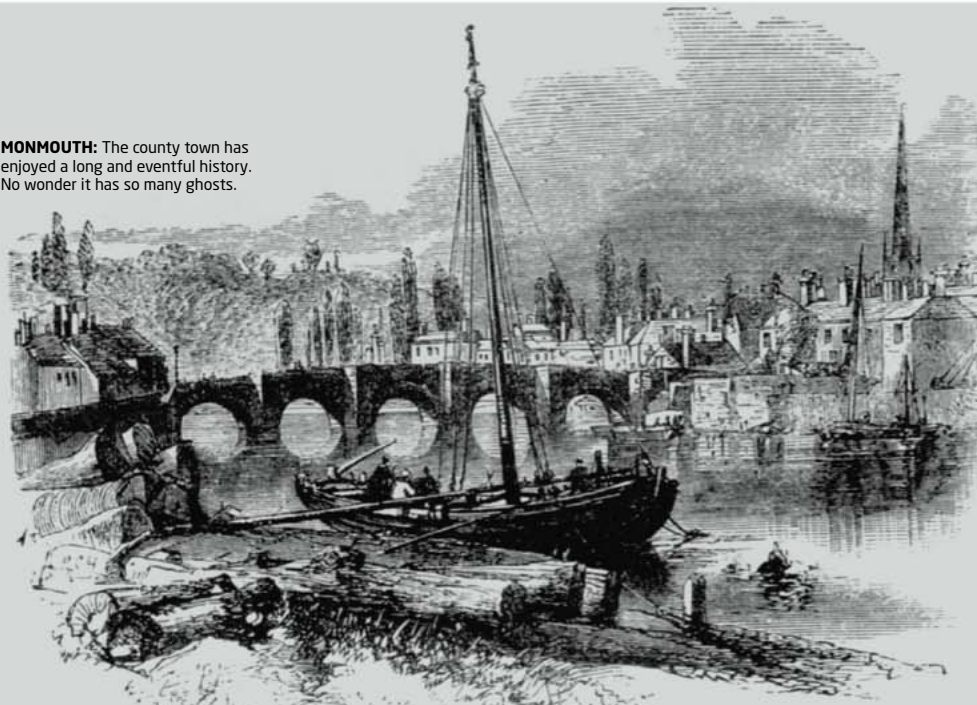
One piece of advice I was also given by this member of staff was that if you want to see a ghost the best place to be is in room 206; it seems this room is often occupied even when there is no one 'living' in there. A woman who seems to be holding a baby has been seen by many previous guests. On one occasion a guest came up to the bar and said she had been in the room when a figure appeared at the end of the bed.

THE QUEEN'S HEAD, MONMOUTH

The Queens Head was apparently used as a resting place for Oliver Cromwell. He seems to have liked his pubs as I have frequented many a pub as a ghost hunter and been told the same thing all over the country. Here, however, we have a twist to the usual tale, as it appears that an attempt was made to assassinate him here. The Cavalier obviously failed in the attempt, and it seems he was chased into the bar and shot.

Now, it is not only this Cavalier who haunts here, but a Cromwellian soldier as well, so perhaps they are locked in an eternal battle. There have been many a report of ghosts on the premises and some say ●

MONMOUTH: The county town has enjoyed a long and eventful history. No wonder it has so many ghosts.



'NO ONE KNOWS IF SHE FELL OR WAS PUSHED, BUT HER GHOST HAS BEEN SEEN SINCE, AND IS SUPPOSEDLY THE REASON THE ELEVATORS MOVE AFTER DARK.'

it's believed to be the third most haunted inn in Wales. I do like the humility of this claim: normally places claim to be the most haunted, but they have set the bar slightly lower for themselves.

WATERY LANE, MONMOUTH

I have heard of a few instances of this phantom. It seems as though a stream once ran down Watery Lane, which I think we can assume gave the place its name, and the ghost is thought to be that of someone who drowned here. A dark figure is seen floating around this area.

SHIRE HALL COURT, MONMOUTH

I was told a story that had been reported a few years ago about a caretaker who reported seeing a black cloak and a pair of legs that seemed to disappear behind a pillar.

He went to check out who was there but found no one. Doors have also closed themselves, and the smell of perfume is often experienced. Mediums have claimed the building was haunted by a judge.

SPYTTY PARK, NEWPORT

There are several tales of people seeing what look like nuns here. One typical story I was told about was about four friends watching what they took to be three nuns drifting across the field in front of them. They claim the nuns moved in a perfectly straight line then made a 90° turn before they vanished.

UNIVERSITY OF WALES COLLEGE, CAERLEON CAMPUS, NEWPORT

This ghost even has a name: Bertha Ramsey. She was a rather tall matron from the campus who was

found dead at the foot of a staircase in 1962. No one knows if she fell or was pushed, but her ghost has been seen since, and is supposedly the reason the elevators move after dark. She is not the only ghost here, however, as a Roman centurion has been sighted ever since the building was erected, as it was apparently disturbing a Roman burial site.

RAGLAN CASTLE

You can get into the castle for as little as £3, and here I learnt of several accounts of a 'bardic' figure that has been seen around the site. He seems to beckon people into where the library area would have been. I have also heard tales of a librarian haunting the premises. There is a story dating back to Civil War times of how this librarian hid the books so that they were not destroyed if the castle was captured. Perhaps he has forgotten where he hid them and is searching for an elusive copy of Harry Potter.

THE LAMB AND FOX

This is a tiny pub on top of The Blorange (the mountain on the way to Abergavenny and also the only word that I know of that rhymes with 'orange') but it is rarely open, so call up beforehand if you want to visit. As a member of the Cheltenham-based Parasoc paranormal group, I had the chance to investigate this building, where we had been told reports of some poltergeist activity, items disappearing and reappearing at various places and the sound of people walking into the toilets near the door.

I myself experienced this ghost, hearing the outer door open while I was in the gents. When I walked back into the main building I noticed everyone was still there, and I was told that no one had gone out.

Sometimes voices are also heard in the empty toilets, and people have been pushed by unseen hands. We also heard what we thought was the landlord's dog jump onto the

BLAENAVON: The historic ironworks, including restored workers' cottages, make a fascinating visit and you may encounter a ghostly presence or two. © Ross Andrews





RAGLAN CASTLE:
This glorious old ruin is haunted by a 'bardic' figure and a mysterious presence dating from the 17th century.

bench next to us. We had the lights off at the time but looking back on the camera confirmed there was no dog in the room: we could all clearly hear the sound of it, yet the dog was actually in another room at the time.

Carry on over the mountain into Blaenavon. As you come down the hillside you will see a large ironworks to your right. Park in the free car park and head into the free museum.

BLAENAVON IRONWORKS

This has to be my favourite venue so far on this list. The site is fantastic, the staff are very friendly and it is completely free. There are three rows of workers cottages that have been decorated in various states to represent their historical status, and it is in these buildings that strange noises are heard and doors move of their own accord. A young girl has been seen in the ruins of what was once a building on the lower area of the site, next to the main iron works.

The staff there also sent me to the top of the hill to hear a story about the possible source of one of the ghosts there, a girl who

tragically fell and fractured her skull. She has been seen and sensed by various mediums who have visited the site. I went into some of the cottages myself and felt a very eerie sensation; as I walked up the narrow stairs to the floor above, I felt as though someone was watching me, rather annoyed at my intrusion into their home.

Head back over the Blorange to Abergavenny, into the car park (free on every day bar Tuesday) and into the Kings Arms.

THE KING'S ARMS, ABERGAVENNY

We are told of a figure that walks down the stairs and passes through the lounge area, this is a rather old building and I am told it contains more ghost stories but unfortunately the landlord didn't have time to tell me them so I hope to return to learn a lot more.

THE SKIRRID MOUNTAIN INN

Now here is one for the *Most Haunted* fans, as they have been here and it is said that this pub is indeed the most haunted in the whole of Wales.

'THE CAMERA CONFIRMED THERE WAS NO DOG IN THE ROOM, YET WE COULD ALL CLEARLY HEAR THE SOUND OF IT.'

I have yet to find the second most haunted pub – but I am working on it. The Skirrid claims to have a celebrity ghost in the form of Judge Jeffreys. To be honest I have heard of this figure haunting a few venues, but if you are going to have a ghost, a celebrity one is always good to have. Jeffries did, however, hang a lot of people here, and over 180 have been hanged over the period of the 12th to 17th century.

Fanny Price, however, is the most likely ghost to be experienced here. Fanny was apparently a barmaid that worked here in the 17th century, and she is buried in the graveyard a few hundred yards away from the pub. Many visitors believe they have seen her around the bar areas and upper rooms. ●

ST BRIAVEL'S CASTLE: Now a hostel, this sketch dates from the 1860s when it was still a family home. The author has experienced paranormal activity here and the staff receive hundreds of reports of spooky happenings every year from visitors.



'ONE OF THE BEDS IS NOTORIOUS AS THE "SCARY BED". WHILST YOU ARE SLEEPING SOMETHING COMES ALONG AND PULLS THE SHEETS OFF.'

Coins and glasses have been moved by unseen hands from the bar, strange lights, noises and footsteps have been heard with apparently no means of them happening. There are often reports of the sensation of being watched and indeed faces have been seen staring in through windows, only to disappear before the eyes of the investigators. Ghost hunters have reported the sensation of being choked by an invisible rope, and it is

claimed that some people even have the rope marks to prove it.

I was told of an interesting custom that apparently still goes on here. On a shelf by the stone fireplace there is a tankard, and legend has it that in the past a landlord once poured out a drink for the Devil. The following morning the drink had apparently disappeared, as if it had been drunk by an unknown entity. So if you want a sly drink without paying for it, turn up dressed as Satan and ask for 'The Devil's Brew' and see if you have any luck!

We continue this tour via the Forest of Dean and stay in what is definitely in my experience the most haunted location in all of the UK: St. Briavel's Castle.

ST BRIAVEL'S CASTLE, FOREST OF DEAN

For about £25 you can stay in this haunted castle for the night and get breakfast in the morning, as it is now a Youth Hostel. If you go off season you may even get the building to yourselves. I have personally experienced many different hauntings there. I have been the only person in the castle but heard footsteps and furniture being dragged around in empty rooms. I have also seen figures in corridors that I know to be empty and one of my fellow ghost hunters saw a dog he assumed was real walking around the building, and took some convincing it was actually a ghost.

St Briavel's castle gets hundreds of reports a year of paranormal activity. Some rooms are more haunted than others: in my experience the Hanging Room, state apartments, Prison, and Guard

Room are your best chances of experiencing the paranormal, but some of the scariest encounters are in the Oubliette, where many guests have left because of the female screams that seem to occur there.

Not only that but one of the beds is notorious as the 'scary bed'. It seems that whilst you are sleeping something comes along and pulls the sheets off the bed. Several guests have even left in the middle of the night too scared to come back in to pack their bags. The staff had to pack for them, then take their bags out to them whilst they were crying out in the car park. The castle runs many ghost nights over the year, and countless groups are going there again and again as its fame spreads around the ghost-hunting community.

Even if you do not wish to stay the night, head into the grounds, as figures have been seen walking around, horses have been heard to trot pass, unseen people will knock on the castle gates, and poltergeists throw stones. If you are lucky you will see one of the less frequent but more impressive ghosts, that of a knight in armour walking around near the old fireplace in a now ruined part of the castle. If you do see anything paranormal please tell the castle staff, as they now keep a ghost diary due to the excessive amounts of activity.

So there we have it, a nice list for the paranormal tourist to get their teeth into. If you managed to investigate, I would love to hear from you all so that I can collate all the ghost stories into one place, for the best thing that we can do as paranormal investigators is collect data and stories. Happy spook spotting to you all! ☺



Ross Andrews' latest book, *Paranormal Forest of Dean* has just been published by Amberley Books. He is also the author of *Paranormal Cheltenham (and Prestbury)*, also published by Amberley. Ross runs his own ghost hunting experience company Ghost Night and organises ghost walks in Cheltenham from July onwards. He can be contacted through his site www.ghostnight.org.



SKIRRID INN: Said to be the oldest inn in Wales and often championed as the most haunted. Its reported ghosts are legion. © Ross Andrews



KING'S ARMS: This pub in Abergavenny has a reputation for a great deal of haunted activity which the author intends to fully research. © Ross Andrews

strange goings-on

Paranormal Magazine will be pleased to publish summaries of notable investigations by regional paranormal groups. Please contact the editor in the first instance with a short summary of 'where, when and what happened' by emailing: editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk

Our Weird history

CHRIS WILLIAMS recounts how he and a team of colleagues launched a successful conference in the UFO hotspot of Warminster last year, then whets our appetites for the forthcoming **Weird 10**.

It was a warm and breezy summer's day in August 2008 when my good friend Kevin Goodman and I began to discuss the concept of holding a conference in Warminster. The town became the focal point of much UFO related activity 45 years earlier, with activity that had captured the imagination of the public and researchers alike.

'The Thing' and characters like Arthur Shuttlewood had almost been consigned to UFO history and we both believed that nearly half a century after the initial events of December 1964 it was time to bring Warminster back to the fore.

In a twisty and narrow alleyway in Warminster we found a pleasant café, where the concept of the conference began to take shape. By the time our lunch arrived, we had agreed that in August 2009 we would put on a combined paranormal and UFO event. We also put in place strong ethics that still are at the core of the Weird group today, that of putting on quality events for a fair price, transparency in operation and a non-judgemental stance on belief and subjects.

The first event of its kind in Wiltshire needed a good name and through many

iterations and variations we finally settled on **Weird 09**.

We were not experienced in putting on a two-day conference, especially one in an atmospheric Victorian theatre. We didn't know who our speakers were going to be and we had no idea how many people would turn up. As the months rapidly rolled by the conference began to take shape, speakers accepted our invites and we recruited our team of ten volunteers who would act as the crew.

THE WEIRD 09 CONFERENCE

At 8.15am on the morning of the conference there were no long lines of people waiting outside and even as the clock moved slowly towards opening time a queue didn't form. I took the key and unlocked the main doors and flung them open. The foyer filled with a cool breeze that blew in from the High Street and was immediately followed by a single person. Like teenagers holding a party and unsure of who would turn up, we looked at each other and hoped that this one person wasn't going to be the sum of our attendees.

We needn't have worried, over the next 30 minutes people streamed into the

theatre. At 9.15 we took a collective deep breath and for the next 48 hours worked as a close-knit team to put on the event.

I am still amazed even today how well the event was received by everyone on that warm bank holiday weekend last August. The theatre was packed and all the speakers were friendly and helped make the conference the success that it was. The event was hosted by Ross Hemsworth, who effortlessly kept the conference on track. It was fast-paced with ten live speakers and two pre-recordings.

We were proud of ourselves and we had been rewarded, not in any monetary terms, but in the support showed by the speakers and our audience. It made us resolve to put on another conference in 2010.

WEIRD 10 CONFERENCE

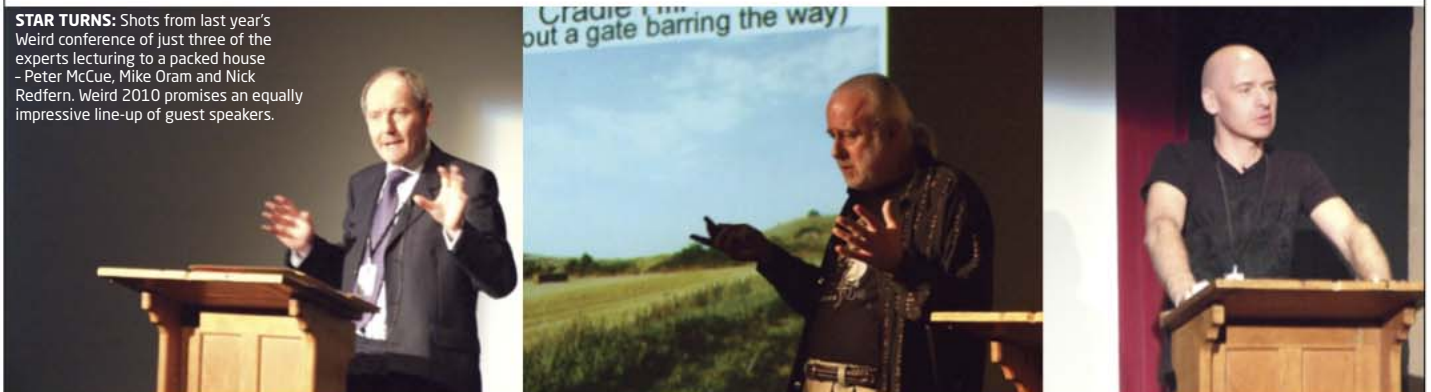
The speakers lined up for the August 2010 conference are well known to everyone. They include Dr Ciaran O'Keefe, Dr David Clarke, Andy Collins, Nick Pope, Philip Mantel, Brian Allan, Andy Roberts, Wal Thornhill, Kevin Goodman and ASSAP. This year the event is being hosted by Malcolm Robinson and we are pleased to have attracted the sponsorship of the latest UFO magazine to launch in the UK - *UFO Matrix*.

As well as lectures, **Weird 10** will see a speaker and researcher Question and Answer session on the Saturday afternoon. Additional researchers will be joining our speakers to take questions on any subject from the audience.

The event is going to be energetic and will feature the band The Programme Initiative, who will be playing the theatre on the Saturday evening, finishing just in time for everyone to join in the annual UFO Warminster skywatch. ☼

'WE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND HOPED THAT THIS ONE PERSON WASN'T GOING TO BE THE SUM OF OUR ATTENDEES. WE NEEDN'T HAVE WORRIED, OVER THE NEXT 30 MINUTES PEOPLE STREAMED INTO THE THEATRE.'

STAR TURNS: Shots from last year's **Weird** conference of just three of the experts lecturing to a packed house - Peter McCue, Mike Oram and Nick Redfern. **Weird 2010** promises an equally impressive line-up of guest speakers.



experiences

Do you have a story to share? Here at Paranormal, we are always interested to hear of our readers' true life experiences of the supernatural. Email your story to: editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk or write to The Editor, Paranormal Magazine, Jazz Publishing, The Old School, Higher Kinnerton, Chester CH4 9AJ.

What happened to my uncle?

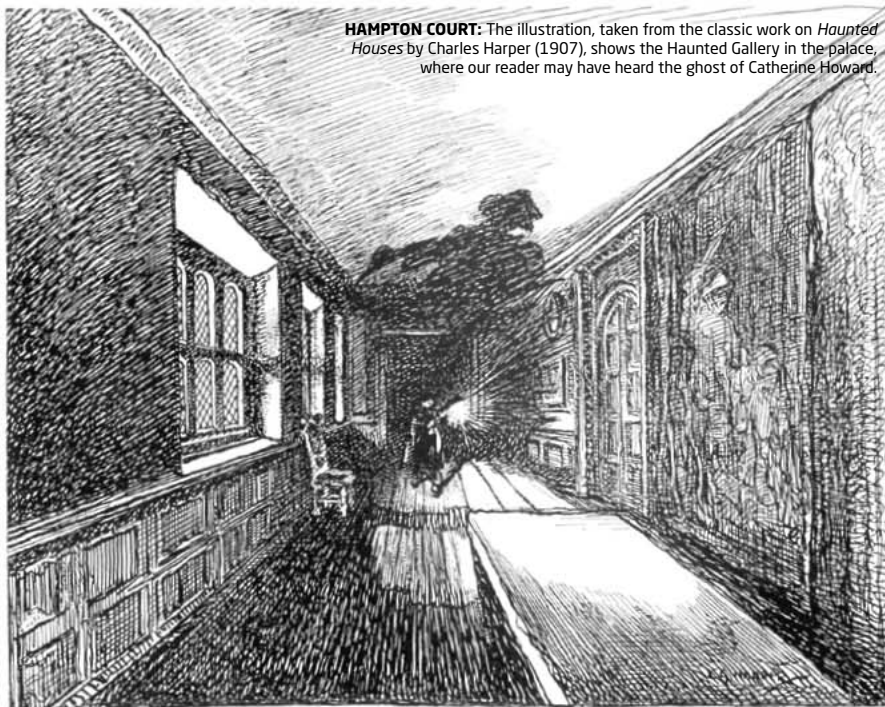
As a young child my grandparents lived way up in the mountains of Ohio, Pennsylvania. Every summer my mom would take us for a visit. As the evening was getting late most of the family went off to bed. My Grandmother, Uncle and I stayed up late on the front porch watching the stars. A bright light glowed over the cow pasture about 200 yards from us. My Uncle ran up to see if something landed. I followed leisurely behind him until my Grandmother snatched me up and ran me back into the house.

From the front door I could see whatever it was had landed. Funny thing was there was no noise, just a bright light. My Grandmother was calling out for my Uncle to get back. The craft shot up into the air at an alarming speed. I ran out the door, watching it get higher and higher in the sky, until it blended into the stars. We went over towards the pasture to see if there were any marks on the ground and also to find my Uncle. He was gone.

'We went over towards the pasture to see if there were any marks on the ground and also to find my Uncle. He was gone.'

After a few days of bewildering thoughts and no answers, along came my Uncle wandering up the dirt road. He was dehydrated and confused. He claimed the craft had taken him and he woke up on a military base some four miles away in a hospital bed. When he woke he ran out scared and no-one followed him. To this day we have no idea what really happened to him or where he was. All I know is that after this night he was never the same. My Uncle's ability to draw in detail was incredible. But something about him also changed, he no longer wanted to be around people and sat in his room for many years.

Sam Satullo, via email



HAMPTON COURT: The illustration, taken from the classic work on *Haunted Houses* by Charles Harper (1907), shows the Haunted Gallery in the palace, where our reader may have heard the ghost of Catherine Howard.

Screaming queen

While visiting Hampton Court Palace in 1977, my friend and I were amongst a lot of other tourists in the gallery above the chapel. I heard a noise that sounded either like a child or lady screaming, but kind of in the distance. It seemed a strange thing to hear in such a formal, royal atmosphere and I looked around, but the strangers around me made no reaction, as if they hadn't heard it.

My friend, however, did. We both looked at each other, asking, 'What was that?' Then it happened again. It wasn't until later that we found out that was the 'haunted gallery' where Catherine Howard had been dragged, screaming, when being taken to the Tower.

Linda Reed, via email

Open wide for a big surprise

I awoke in the middle of the night and realised a shape was behind the curtain (and window). Before long I heard the window being forced open, then I saw the curtains being slowly pulled open. After a while the windows and curtains were wide open and I saw a horrifying faceless demon like thing on the sill.

The faceless thing leaped at me and I closed my eyes and pulled the covers over my face. I opened my eyes under

the covers and realised I had been asleep and the whole thing was a dream.

I then pulled the covers off of my head and was disturbed to see the curtains and windows wide open (like in the dream), despite the fact that I have a habit of making sure they're shut every night and even IF I had forgotten to close them that night they wouldn't have been wide open, neither would have the curtains.

Adam Randall, via email

The strange au pair

This experience was about 12 years ago. I was living in Cumbria. My next door neighbour was a single dad and hired au pairs from Europe, mainly from the Czech Republic. One au pair that came to work for him wrote for a German magazine, 2000 I believe it was called. She did not speak very good English, but we managed basic communication.

She did not call strange objects in the sky UFOs. She preferred the term 'contacts'. She took me out into the back garden one clear night and pointed up into the sky at what looked like a star to me. She said: 'If it moves left it's friendly, if it moves right it's not friendly.'

I looked down at the ground for a second, stumbling on a rock, and when I looked back up into the sky the star or contact had disappeared. I was very sceptical, as you would be, and thought there would be a rational explanation to

what I saw. But on another occasion she wanted to try an experiment on me and my partner.

She asked us both to drink half a pint of salt water (we pretended we had done as neither of us could stomach doing that) and turn down the lights in the living room. She sat in front of me. With my hands on my knees, she asked me to concentrate on her eyes. For about two minutes which seemed like an eternity my eyes would not blink and they started to water and strain. Her face seemed to change shape, her jaw widened and her eyes went massive and tilted dark brown, not too dissimilar from eyes we're all familiar with, those of the Grey Aliens. But for me it was the shape of her face widening underneath her nose. The best way of describing it was Desperate Dan from the comics.

Straight after that I went to sit on another sofa and my partner had a go. Afterwards when the au pair went back next door, I asked my partner to draw what she saw on a piece of paper and I would do the same. We both drew the same shape.

This was a weird experience and something I can't explain. I cannot help wondering if we had both forced down the half pint of salt water if we would have seen more or something different. She was definitely strange. Does anyone have an explanation for this? Maybe we were hypnotised, I don't know.

Andy Foster, via email

The thing in the woods

A few years ago me and a friend were camping in Cornwall. We heard some strange noises and footsteps around our tent but thought nothing of it. About five months after this, we again went camping but this time in the Forest of Dean. We had a couple of nights with similar experiences when we decided to have a forest walk at night.

After entering the forest, a strange noise could be heard almost like a turkey, as funny as it sounds. We then walked further into the forest to see a white figure moving in and around the trees – we fled.

We returned on several occasions and the same thing happened each time: this tall, white slender figure grew closer. Now everytime we go camping or out in the woods we see the same thing. Is it an alien or is it a ghost or is this a thing that only me and my friends who have seen it are imagining?

Jacob Harris, via email

Mysterious object

I have only ever experienced one paranormal sighting, and it was on the way home from a level 1 course I attended in Hinchingsbrooke [Cambridgeshire]. It was about 10 pm and I was in the car with my mum.

I was looking out the window and saw one of those red aeroplane lights, and next to it something was reflecting off of it. It's so hard to explain, but something was next to the highest light, making the red light reflect onto it. It was an object, but I couldn't explain it to show my mum. And she was driving which made it harder for her to see as well. I haven't seen anything since, but hope to!

Charlie, via email

RESPONSES

Unfair to Hecate

I have always enjoyed your magazine and have never had to write in before, but as a follower of Hecate I feel as though I have to protest at the way she is portrayed in your article 'If you go down to the woods today' [by Robert Goodman in issue 47].

To imply that the sacrifice of dogs is a modern occurrence is inflammatory. There is no evidence of animal sacrifice past the 3rd century. Furthermore, it has been suggested that Hecate suppers were a form of charity for the poor, showing that followers were (and are) concerned not with cursing their fellow man but looking after them. Past philosophers who have written about Hecate revered life to the extent that they were vegetarians. (*Hecate Liminal Rites*, Sorita d'Este & David Rankine, Avalonia, 2009, p.46-47.)

Also you seem to have confused Hecate with Demeter in your article – it being Demeter that controls the harvest, not Hecate. Lastly Hecate is the goddess of sailors, midwives and witches, not the sort of people inclined to want to 'torment men and drive them mad!'

I would suggest that 'The Friends of Hecate' are not true worshippers at all but probably misguided Satanists that have not taken the time to research exactly who Hecate actually is and have been content to believe the 'demonisation' of her by the early church.

Miss Ruth Gladden, via email

EDITOR'S NOTE: Both Robert Goodman and myself agree that the Friends of Hecate were undoubtedly a misguided bunch, who both misunderstood and misrepresented the goddess they claimed to serve. No offence to true followers of Hecate was intended. ☘

STAR LETTER

Is that the monk?

Am I the only reader of your May 2010 edition to have noticed, in the piece by David Scanlan on 'Spooky Sussex' at pp 68-72, that the 'ghost of a brown-clad monk standing at the foot of a staircase' (said, on page 72, to have confronted David while he was investigating Michelham Priory) actually appears, in brown and standing at the foot of a staircase, in the very photo of Michelham Priory that accompanies the article (see page 72, bottom left of the photograph)?!!

Is this a joke, a trick of the light, a coincidence or what?? Is David himself aware of the apparition, so to speak, and what, if anything, does the negative reveal?

Gary Walker, Salisbury, Wiltshire

EDITOR'S NOTE: Yes, Mr Walker, you are the only reader to spot this. I missed it, too, and so did David Scanlan, who responds: 'I am completely amazed that this had been missed. I can guarantee that this has not been added to... it was taken with a simple point and shoot digital camera, about 3.2 mp, perhaps lower, on the 26th May 2004 at 19.18. I can assure you that this photo has not been tampered with by me nor anyone else within the Hampshire Ghost Club.'

David thinks the figure may be a life-size cut-out set up at the Priory for illustrative purposes. If this turns out to be to the case, we'll let you know. In the meantime, if you'd like to let us have your full address, Mr Walker, we'll be glad to send you a *Paranormal Magazine* mug as a reward for your sharp eye.



Books



Strangely Strange and Oddly Normal

Written by: **Andy Roberts**
Published by: **Anomalist Books**
Price: **£12.50**
Reviewed by: **Nick Redfern**

Jon Downes, my good mate at the Centre for Fortean Zoology has launched an ambitious project to publish anthologies of the work of a whole range of writers within the Fortean world (myself included), something that will allow readers to see a great deal of the early and obscure writings of the author in question, as well as some of their latter-day output, too.

And, the first volume, *Strangely Strange But Oddly Normal*, is an anthology of writings by Andy Roberts. My first exposure to Andy's writing came in 1987 when, while working in Harlow, Essex, I found a used copy of Andy's *Cat Flaps* (a study of Britain's 'Big-Cat' mystery) in a second-hand book-shop, and which I remember reading late one night in my tiny, cramped room, while the infamous hurricane of October of that year buffeted just about everything around me.

Next, for me at least, was Andy's *UFO Brigantia*: a witty, informative and entertaining mag that Andy published nigh-on 20 years ago and that probably brought him just about as many enemies as friends. But, hell, Andy didn't care. And rightly so.

Anyway, rather than waffle on any longer about the halcyon days of British Forteanism, I'll get to *Strangely Strange*, which begins with a fascinating Introduction that details how Andy came to enter the realm of weird shit, and then propels us firmly into the man's world, his writings, beliefs and life. And, a wild, fun, informative and witty intro it is, too.

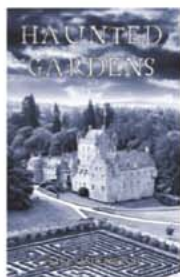
The good thing about the book is that it doesn't just focus on one topic, but delves into everything from the LSD culture to Foo Fighters; from the Big Gray Man of Ben Macdhui to animal-mutilations; from the writings of English fantasy author Alan Garner to the works of John Keel. And much more, too. There's a rich variety of articles and papers negotiating decades and topics.

And, it wouldn't be an Andy Roberts anthology without the inclusion of a piece from *The Armchair Ufologist*, the most entertaining UFO rag of the 1990s,

a gossip-style newsletter that focused on what those in Ufology were doing to each other.

In *Strangely Strange*, we get treated to Andy's review of a notorious party that followed the annual LAPIS gig in Lytham St Anne's in 1999. This is a priceless piece that - if you weren't there in person - deserves to be read by one and all. You'll never look at Ufology the same way again!

This is an excellent first-volume in what is destined to become a great series.



Haunted Gardens

Written by: **Peter Underwood**
Published by: **Amberley**
Price: **£14.99**
Reviewed by: **Richard Holland**

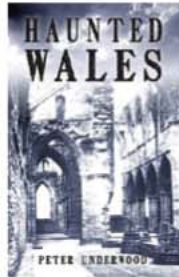
After countless books on haunted locations being written over the past century and more, I'd have thought it all but impossible to come up with a new theme. Trust veteran ghost hunter Peter Underwood to manage it - *Haunted Gardens* seems an obvious idea now that Mr Underwood has presented it, and one wonders why no one has thought of it before.

Certainly, judging by Mr Underwood's book, it is not through lack of material. After more than 60 years experience visiting haunted houses, the author has discovered that many ghosts like to stretch their legs with a turn around a garden.

And what a range of gardens there are: from the grand and ornamental, like those at Versailles, scene of a famous time slip incident, and the celebrated Lost Gardens of Heligan, to the more modest grounds and lawns of old manor houses, vicarages and hotels.

The ghosts are no less varied and include those of several celebrities, among them Lawrence of Arabia and - a new one me, this - Edgar Allan Poe. Most of the gardens are in the UK but Mr Underwood casts his net worldwide, incorporating spooky stories from the USA, Mexico and the Caribbean, among other countries.

All in all, a pleasing addition to the bookshelf with an interesting twist that keeps *Haunted Gardens* feeling fresh throughout.



Haunted Wales

Written by: **Peter Underwood**
Published by: **Amberley**
Price: **£12.99**
Reviewed by: **Richard Holland**

A word of warning regarding the second of these recent releases by Peter Underwood, however - *Haunted Wales* is simply a reissue of his *Ghost of Wales*, originally published by Christopher Davies in 1978, and then again in 1980 as a Sphere paperback. It is virtually a facsimile reprint, with only a few tweaks made to the copy here and there (eg 'This photo was taken before the house was restored') to acknowledge the reprint status. It certainly doesn't announce this fact anywhere on the cover, only in small type on the copyright page.

Not that this isn't a worthy reprint - as with most of Mr Underwood's books there is a great deal of interesting material here, much of it unique to this volume. What does gail me, though, more so than the misleading change of title, is that no attempt has been made to reassign the haunted locations to the current counties of Wales, which were dramatically altered way back in 1996, ie almost 20 years after *Ghosts of Wales* first saw print.

This can only lead to confusion and frustration on the part of the reader. Betwys-y-coed, for example, as well as being misspelt in the book, has also been wrongly assigned to the county of Gwynedd, whereas it is now in the county of Conwy. And why should Carmarthen, now comfortably reinstated as the county town of a redrawn Carmarthenshire, still find itself languishing in the vast, redundant county of Dyfed? It would be one thing if the historical counties of Wales had been used, but unfortunately *Haunted Wales* features local government authorities that were created in 1974 and abandoned 22 years later. In reissuing a book, especially under a new title, this strikes me as a neglectful oversight.

That moan over, I would reaffirm that, provided you don't already have a copy of *Ghosts of Wales* and have a road atlas handy, there are lots of good stories in *Haunted Wales*, many of them personally collected by Mr Underwood himself or taken from contemporary newspaper reports. It would have been handy if the author had more clearly acknowledged his sources (one always likes to know if it's an Elliott O'Donnell, for example!), however, and I feel bound to say that my own researches revealed that the two Aberconwy tales are both from an 1835 history which makes no mention of any ghostly activity here ascribed to them.

A worthy reprint lazily presented.



DVDs/Blu-Ray



Avatar

Directed by: **James Cameron**
Price: **£34.99 (Blu-ray)**
Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

The biggest box-office cinema release of all time lands on our home entertainment systems to quickly become the biggest Blu-ray/ DVD release of all time. But does the much-hyped *Avatar* deliver in quality what it makes in money? Possibly not... but it is certainly an amazing ride.

Avatar is the story of an ex-marine, Jake Sully, who arrives on the alien world Pandora amidst growing tensions between the native Na'vi and the colonial forces who plan to mine the rich and exotic ecosystem. Sully, in the form of his nine-foot 'avatar', starts to rethink his ideas when his experience of this world and its creatures grows.

With a plot reminiscent of *Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest*, *Avatar* may not be the most original of tales, but what the film lacks in story freshness is more than made up for in the creation of what can only be described as an experience. The new age filming techniques and quality of the 3D demanded to be seen on the big screen (and if possible an Imax), but now arriving on Blu-ray, every inch of this beautifully and sensitively created world is still entirely seductive.

Setting aside the hyperbole that has gone hand-in-hand with *Avatar* since the immense advertising campaign began, the most impressive thing on display here is James Cameron's vision. Firstly, everything that you see over the three-hour film interacts and affects everything else in an environment that is all at once beautiful, delicate and deadly. Secondly, like *Titanic* and *The Terminator* previously, this looks to be a game-changing film that will revolutionise the design of the 'Event Movie' as we know it.

This may be more of a visual feast than an interesting character piece, but for fans of Sci-fi and fantasy, this must be watched.





Where the Wild Things Are

Directed by: **Spike Jonze**
 Price: **£15.99**
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Post-modernist auteur Spike Jonze (*Being John Malkovich*) brings Maurice Sendak's classic children's book to life in a live action portrayal of the problems faced in childhood... and being a little monster.

Nine-year-old Max runs away from home and sails across the sea to become king of the land Where the Wild Things Are. King Max rules a wondrous realm of gigantic fuzzy monsters - but being king may not be as carefree as it looks!

There is great difficulty faced when adapting a beloved children's classic for the big screen. Firstly, the majority of the audience will have already granted this tale a nostalgic place on a literary pedestal. Then you have the task of pulling a feature length narrative from a 48-page book, mostly made up of illustrations. Thankfully then for fans, Jonze has taken the simple, almost uneventful plot and has ventured into an intriguing world of childish imagination mixed with melancholic meaning.

Special mention must be granted to the vocal acting in the film. With the exception of the intro scene with Max's family that sets the backdrop for his escapism escapades, the majority of the characters are monsters. However, amazingly the vocal talents of James Gandolfini, Catherine O'Hara, Forest Whitaker et al, adds a level of gravitas essential to ground and develop the relationships we see.

While this may be a little too slow at times, anyone holding a nostalgic place in his or her heart for Sendak's book will love this. It's time to let the wild rumpus roar!



The Road

Directed by: **John Hillcoat**
 Price: **£19.99**
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Based on the Cormac McCarthy novel of the same title, *The Road* is a bleak and unrelenting post-apocalyptic thriller set in an American wasteland.

Adapted from the acclaimed novel, this stars Viggo Mortensen who must, along with his son, traverse the wilderness battling starvation, cannibals and almost constant misery to reach the hope of a warmer south.

The Road is the third major film adaptation of McCarthy's work thus far, and is by far the most difficult of his novels to come to terms with and the most difficult to see adapted for screen. In the novel the dialogue is scant and restrained; the setting, arduous and barren; and the outlook, little more than an apprehensive hope. No film version could ever come close to bringing out the level of emotion in McCarthy's prose, but Hillcoat has come pretty close.

The landscape is truly stunning in its downtrodden appearance, reinforced strongly by the heartfelt score from Nick Cave. Never has the end of the world been so effective than in this chilling portrayal, void of the song and dance explanation of which we have become accustomed. There is no sign of release beyond the horrible choice presented when you fear the living and envy the dead.

The Road is grim, gritty and certainly not for everyone. But as a study of loneliness and the failing of human intimacy, it is portrayed to the audience with intelligence and respect for the source material.



Games



METRO 2033

Format **XBOX 360, PC/DVD (tested)**
 Publisher: **THQ**
 Developer: **4A Games**
 Reviewed by: **Gary S. Darcy**

Remember the tunnel scene in the first *Terminator*, the unspoken tension of what awaits on the surface seeping into the confines of the underground sanctuary? While *Terminator 4* may have missed it altogether, *Metro 2033* does a good job of evoking the same kind of atmosphere.

The game is based on the book by Dmitry Glukhovsky and takes place in a similar post apocalyptic irradiated Moscow for Los Angeles and irradiated mutants for metal terminators). For the majority of the game you can forget about what lies on the surface as the game's thumping heart is buried firmly underground. It's a workman-like FPS and as such brings nothing outstanding to the bare bones of running and shooting.

But where the game really comes into its own, is in creating a tense claustrophobic atmosphere of condemned tunnels. *Metro 2033* looks amazing, and although the bulk is played out in underground tunnels, levels never feel repetitive or dull thanks to the excellent lighting and rich environmental detail.

The actual game-play is a mixed bag with some dithering AI, a bartering system that feels tagged on and a less than coherent narrative. However the game engine has a solid feel and the bulk of the weapons are satisfying if lacking a little punch.

Some might accuse *Metro 2033* of being all smoke and mirrors, but when the illusion looks this good, who cares?



A Farewell to Dragons

Format: **PC/DVD**
 Publisher: **EXCALIBUR**
 Developer: **Kranx/Arise**
 Reviewed by: **Gary S. Darcy**

A Farewell to Dragons is a derivative RPG based on a derivative book by Russian authors Sergey Lukyanenko and Nikolay Perumov.

The story begins in the present day with our well-spoken hero finding a wounded girl, Telle, outside the front door. Victor, our hero doctor, takes her in and after tending her wounds spends the night at her bedside. In the morning the pair get whisked off to another world where our hero wakes up at the side of a lake and the text-driven adventure begins.

Set primarily in Middle World - yes Middle World! - Victor and his new sidekick face all manner of awful AI and laugh-out-loud text-driven dialogue, including wild boars that bump into invisible barriers and soldiers who frequently fire crossbows while facing in the wrong direction.

The graphics are serviceable and animations are smooth, however many of the characters have problems with their upper limbs, which appear stapled to their sides. The game offers a variety of settings, including some steam punk elements and there is a decent amount of stats, perks and character customisation options.

There are plenty of pickups obtained from fallen enemies and looting crates and barrels reminiscent of a *Baldur's Gate* or *Diablo*. However, the collision detection is such that characters often break open crates from a distance without even touching them. This leads to a feeling of disconnection similarly evident in the interaction with the world's inhabitants, leaving the player with a sense of intruding in, rather than engaging with, the game world.

A Farewell to Dragons fails on so many levels, but its main flaw is not easily forgiven in the realm of the RPG: it fails to engage.



Book, DVD & Game reviews from back issues can be found online at:
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WIN

Final date for all competition entries is **Friday, June 25.**

Competitions

The Cryptoterrestrials by Mac Tonnies

UFO expert Nigel Watson's article 'They Came From Planet Earth' is inspired by this groundbreaking book in which the author, who tragically died last year, expounds the view that so-called aliens might actually be sharing our planet with us.



The Cryptoterrestrials stresses that the extraterrestrials hypothesis isn't the only one as regards UFO activity.

Tonnies believed that there is good reason to suppose that UFOs and alien abductions might be perpetrated by a technologically advanced race of beings who hide away from mankind except when they need to use us to improve their genetic stock.

A fuller account of Mac Tonnies' fascinating theory can be found in Nigel's article on page 24.

Anomalist books has kindly donated FIVE copies of *The Cryptoterrestrials* by Mac Tonnies to give away. For your chance to win one, log on to paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions and be prepared to answer this question:

Which planet are the Cryptoterrestrials supposed to inhabit?



CellSensor EMF meter

Tom's Gadgets is the best-known UK supplier of equipment to ghost-hunters and other paranormal investigators. Tom, a regular advertiser with *Paranormal Magazine* (see inside back cover this month) has kindly donated as a prize one of his stock's star items, a CellSensor EMF Meter.

The CellSensor EMF Meter is used by ghost-hunters around the world. The meter is designed to pick up certain Electro-Magnetic Frequencies which many investigators believe reveal the existence of ghostly activity.

For your chance to win the CellSensor EMF Meter from Tom's Gadgets, just log on to paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions and be prepared to answer this question:

What does E.M.F. stand for?



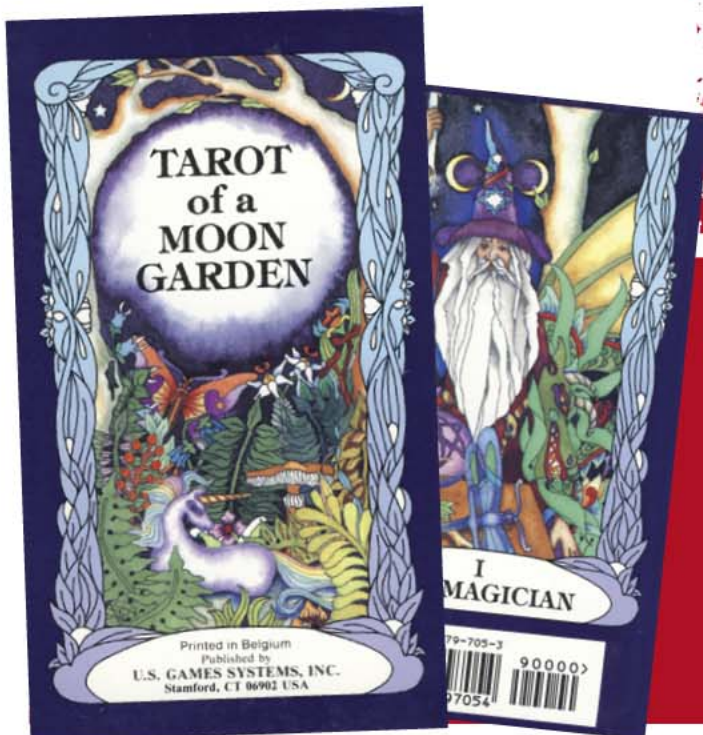
Tarot of a Moon Garden set designed by Karen Marie Sweikhardt

Thanks to the kind people at Moonrust New Age Shop, we have THREE prizes of a delightful pack of tarot cards to give away.

The Tarot of a Moon Garden set has been designed by noted artist Karen Marie Sweikhardt in a charming and whimsical style. Karen's full-colour designs on the 78-card Tarot deck feature an enchanted garden with exotic flowers, birds and butterflies, unicorns, castles, magical people and hot air balloons.

The pack comes with a booklet of instructions. For your chance to win a Tarot of a Moon Garden pack, log on to paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions and be prepared to answer this question:

How many cards are there in a Tarot card deck?



You may also enter by post. Please write your answer, with your full name and contact details, onto a postcard or sealed-down envelope and send it to:
Competitions, Paranormal Magazine, Jazz Publishing, The Old School, Higher Kinnerton, Chester CH4 9AJ.



HERBIDACIOUS!

MODERN MEDICINE'S DEBT TO FOLK MAGIC

By Mark Greener



Mark Greener is an award-winning freelance journalist specialising in health and bioscience. Mark is a former research scientist who has written widely on his life-long passion: cryptobiology. He's the author of nine books, including *Foods That Heal* (2005), and his features have appeared in magazines worldwide. He lives between Cambridge and Ely and keeps a sharp look-out for the Fen Tiger but has sadly never even seen a footprint.

In 1960, archaeologists discovered a Neanderthal skeleton buried in caves in Shanidar, Iraq. Several plants used by modern herbalists, including cornflower, yarrow and groundsel, surrounded the remains. The plants weren't there by accident. They probably formed part of the Neanderthals' pharmacy.

Some, myself included, believe the plants mark the burial of a shaman or healer. Indeed, the name yarrow derives from the Anglo-Saxon for healer.

Our ancestors' use of medicinal plants probably predates the Neanderthals. Chimpanzees and gorillas deliberately 'self-medicate' with plants active against an intestinal parasite, often using the same herbs as local healers [*Journal of Medical Primatology* 2008;37:188-95]. So, it seems reasonable to suppose that pre-Neanderthal humanoids used medicinal plants.

Over millennia, these plants became part of the traditional medicine eventually included in Northern European witchcraft. Many doctors treat 'alternative' medicine with derision. Yet four in every five people worldwide still depend on plants for at least part of their healthcare. And traditional healers slowly accumulated a wealth of knowledge that sometimes trumps conventional medicine.

For example, the tsetse fly infects around 12,000 people annually in sub-Saharan Africa with the parasite *Trypanosoma brucei*, causing sleeping sickness. One of the most widely used conventional drugs – melarsoprol – 'can melt plastic syringes, causes caustic burns, is extremely painful when injected, and kills about 5% of patients' [*Lancet* 2010;375:93]. Recently scientists found that five plants traditionally used in Tanzania to treat sleeping sickness are effective against this devastating disease [*Phytotherapy Research* doi: 10.1002/ptr.3066].

Bolivian traditional healers used Evanta (*Galipea longiflora*) to treat kala-azar and other difficult-to-treat diseases caused by a parasite called *Leishmania*. Scientists recently confirmed that *G longiflora* kills *Leishmania* and, possibly,

controls the chronic inflammation caused by the parasite [*Scandinavian Journal of Immunology* 2000;69:251-8].

Closer to home, folk magic uses St John's wort to ward off evil spirits – some cases of which we'd call depression today. Herbalists also used St John's wort to treat, among other conditions, wounds, burns, rheumatism, haemorrhoids, gastroenteritis, snakebite, ulcers, sprains, diarrhoea and hysteria [*Alternative Medicine Review* 1998;3:18-26].

In many studies, St John's wort is as effective for depression as prescription antidepressants – and often causes fewer side effects [*Forschende Komplementärmedizin* 2009;16:146-55]. Doctors in Germany and several other European countries prescribe mistletoe, the archetypal druidic herb, for malignancies – including breast and gynaecological cancers [*Journal of Experimental & Clinical Cancer Research* 2009;28:79]. These are powerful herbs; so unless you know what you're doing consult a qualified medical herbalist.

Pharmaceutical companies quickly profited from plants' potential. For example, metformin, one of the most important diabetes drugs, is a chemical modification of substances in the French lilac (*Galega officinalis*). Medieval healers used *G officinalis* to relieve the frequent, profuse urination accompanying diabetes [*Journal of Clinical Investigation* 2001;108:1105-1107]. And in 1763, the English chaplain Edward Stone found that willow bark alleviated ague, a fever linked to malaria, which was rife in England at the time. Aspirin is a chemically modified, less toxic version of the active ingredient in willow bark.

Despite the high-profile breakthroughs in genetics and molecular biology, researchers still rifle through herbal traditions to find new treatments that they can extract, modify and market. Governments need to ensure that local people gain an adequate return from the immense profits that can emerge from bio-prospecting. Notwithstanding such ethical issues, it's rather satisfying that herbs suggested by witches and wise women trump some modern medicines.

'OVER MILLENNIA, THESE PLANTS BECAME PART OF THE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE EVENTUALLY INCLUDED IN WITCHCRAFT. FOUR IN EVERY FIVE PEOPLE WORLDWIDE STILL DEPEND ON PLANTS FOR AT LEAST PART OF THEIR HEALTHCARE.'

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