

Exploring the world of the unexplained

# Paranormal

GHOSTS | UFOs | ESP | PHENOMENA | WEIRD CREATURES | FOLKLORE | PERSHORE | ALIENS

## HELL OF A HISTORY

THE DEVIL'S  
EARLY DAYS

## ALIEN SEX

Exploring  
the closest  
of all close  
encounters

Spirits on  
the Rocks  
IN SYDNEY,  
AUSTRALIA

## Tree fellahs

WILD THINGS  
OF THE WOODS

ALSO

## The UFO cop

X-FILES OF  
POLICE REPORTS

PLUS

Mystery mines  
Haunted lake  
Terror tunnel  
The last gnomes

UNBELIEVABLE!

Bizarre and  
mind-boggling  
apparitions





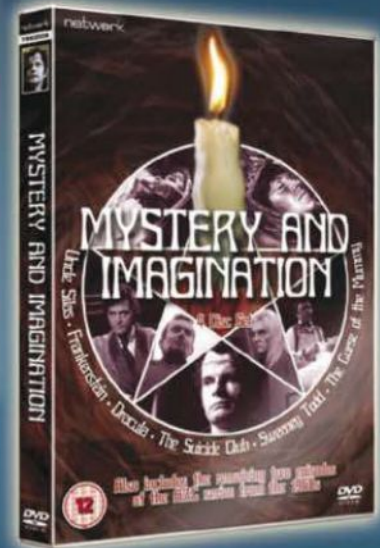
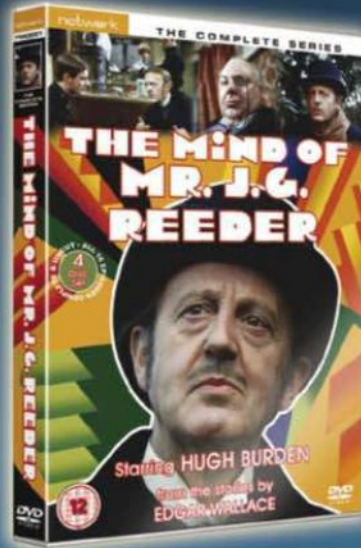
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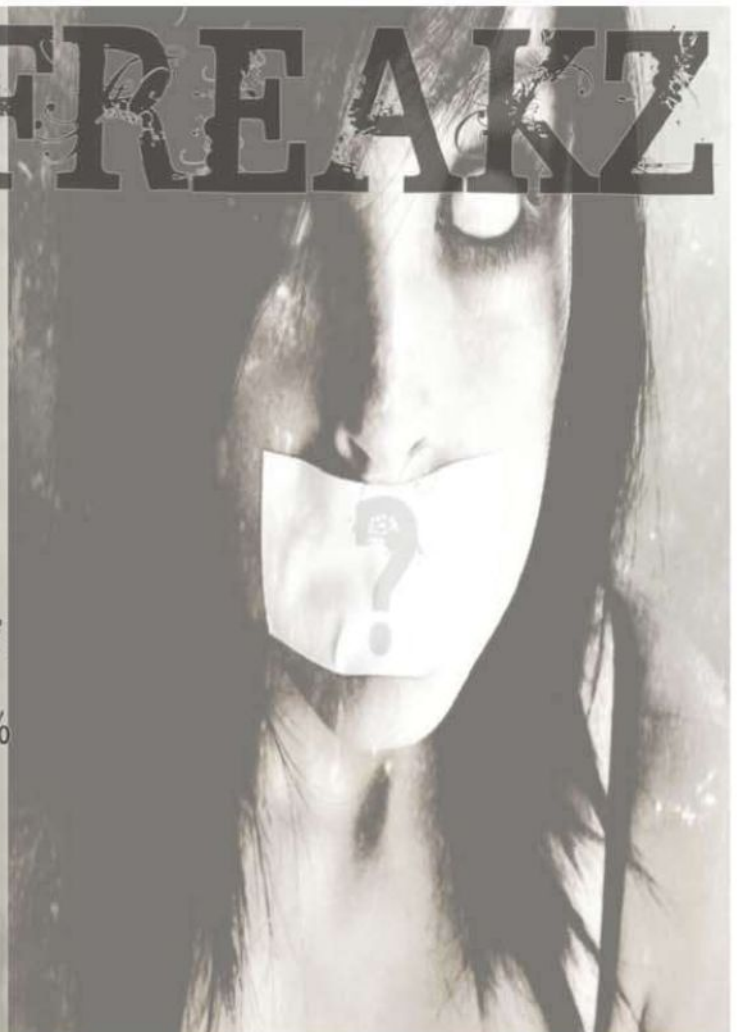
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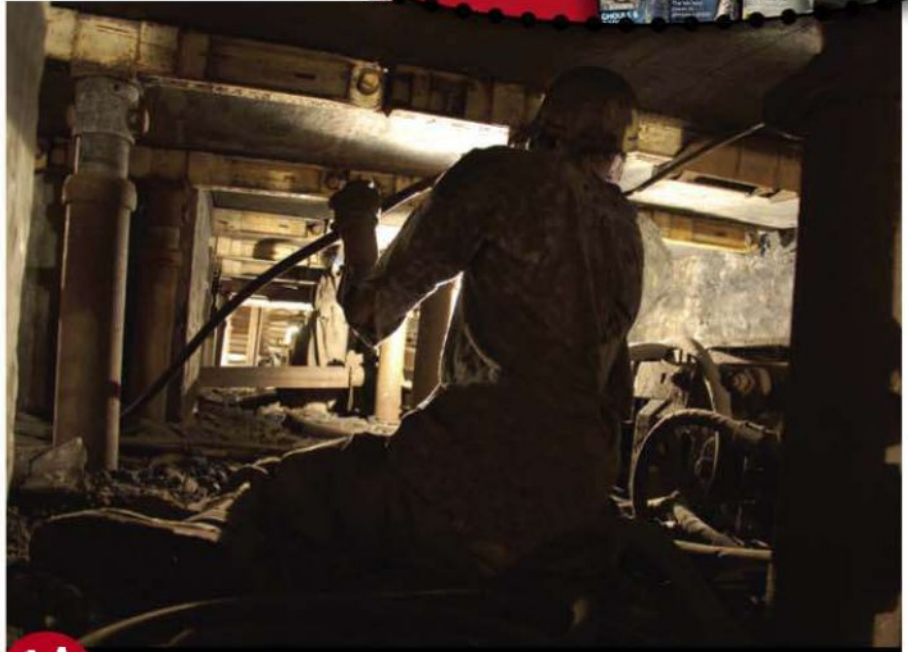
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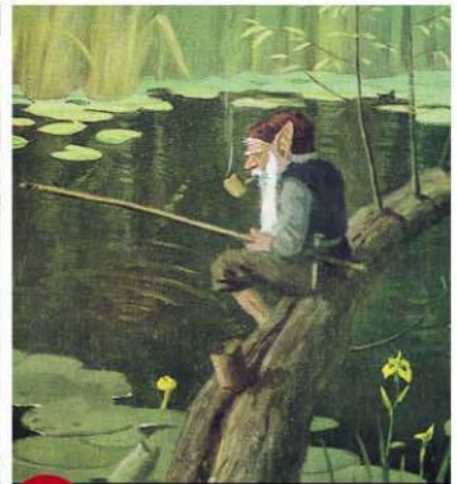
We head north of the Border for a trip round one of Scotland's prettiest counties, but a county which holds many dark secrets. *Written by* JAMIE ANDREW.



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Those of you who read this column regularly (and I'd guess you're about as rare as some of the phenomena this magazine is devoted to) will know that I'm particularly keen on weird apparitions. You'd think I'd be satisfied with any ghosts: they're unusual and inexplicable enough. But nope. The

weirder the better for me.

I think this is partly because of the amount of research I've carried out into ghost-lore (as opposed to modern ghost sightings), especially in Wales where I live. In former centuries ghostly encounters and people's understanding of ghosts was quite different to the way we perceive them today.

To our rustic forefathers ghosts were goblins. They were bogies, bogeys, bogles, boggarts, bwci, bwganod and other things that went 'boo!'. Although it was true many bogies were recognised as the spirits of dead people which had 'come again', they did not necessarily do so in their own form.

Rather than reappearing as they looked in life - very much the modern assumption regarding ghosts - they were just as likely to appear in half-human, devilish or animal guise, or in different forms on different nights. The ghost of a dishonest tradesman who haunted a lane in Cheshire took no form at all - he was just an unpleasant noise, and became known as 'The Gatley Shouter' (see Unearthed this month). At the very least, one would expect a ghost in ye goode olde days to appear without his head.

An early source of ghost sightings in Wales is an unlikely one - a Nonconformist preacher by the name of Edmund Jones, who had such a fire-and-brimstone way about him that he became known as 'The Old Prophet'. One would expect 'The Old Prophet' to consider a belief in ghosts as somehow blasphemous but the opposite was the case. He claimed to have encountered ghosts himself, and seen the fairies, too. To deny the

existence of such supernatural manifestations was, in his firm opinion, the first step towards denying the existence of God.

The ghost stories presented by Jones are among the best-attested historical cases we have from Wales, in that details of witness, location and date are all present. And yet they are some of the weirdest on record - crawling things, gigantic or misshapen things, fiery things, entirely inexplicable things.

## 'To our rustic forefathers ghosts were goblins. They were bogies, bogeys, bogles, boggarts, bwci, bwganod and other things that went boo!'

When Richard Freeman submitted his article on 'Just Too Weird' ghosts last month, I thought it was so much fun I was determined to have a go at something similar myself ('Just Too Weird Two' begins on page 54). I wanted to make my own selection of really weird ghosts, so the first place I turned to was the works of Edmund Jones. When you read the few cases I've chosen from the dozens he recounts, I think you'll agree with me that South Wales was either the scariest place on the planet in the 18th century or was home to a bunch of people with the craziest imaginations.

What I find instructive about these historical ghost accounts is that they are a reminder not to get too complacent about our attitudes to the supernatural. In the days of our forefathers so much that we categorise in neat compartments would have been lumped together as one. Ghosts, aliens, demons, poltergeists, the Loch Ness Monster - they were all just bogeys once upon a time.

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# Paranormal News

The latest from the world of weird

## Space storm warning

The world could be plunged into chaos in the next few years due to a massive and imminent space storm. That is according to the boffins at Nasa.

**A** once-in-a-lifetime space storm will cause widespread devastation on Earth, Nasa has warned. Solar flares from the huge storm could leave Britain facing power blackouts and the loss of critical communications, the space agency said. They have warned that national power grids could overheat and air travel be severely disrupted while electronic items, navigation devices and major satellites could stop working after the Sun reaches its maximum power in a few years.

The scientists believe the Earth will experience unprecedented levels of magnetic energy from solar flares after the Sun wakes 'from a deep slumber' sometime around 2013.

In a new warning, Nasa said the storm would hit like 'a bolt of lightning' and could cause catastrophic consequences for the world's health, and even national security.

Scientists say it could damage emergency services' systems, hospital equipment, banking systems and air traffic control devices as well as household items such as computers, iPods and Sat Navs.

Due to our reliance on electronic devices, which are sensitive to magnetic energy, the storm could leave a multi-billion pound damage bill and 'potentially devastating' problems for governments worldwide.

'We know it is coming but we don't know how bad it is going to be,' Dr Richard Fisher, the director of Nasa's Heliophysics division, said in an interview with *The Daily Telegraph*. 'It will disrupt communication devices such as satellites and car navigations, air travel, the banking system, our computers, everything that is electronic. It will cause major problems

for the world.

'Large areas will be without electricity power and to repair that damage will be hard as that takes time.'

Dr Fisher added: 'Systems will just not work. The flares change the magnetic field on the Earth that is rapid and like a lightning bolt. That is the solar affect.'

While scientists have previously told of the dangers of the storm, Dr Fisher's comments are the most comprehensive warnings from Nasa to date.

Dr Fisher, 69, said the storm, which will cause the Sun to reach temperatures of more than 10,000 F (5500C), occurred very rarely. Every 22 years the Sun's magnetic energy cycle peaks while the number of sun spots - or flares - hits a maximum level every 11 years.

Dr Fisher, a Nasa scientist for 20 years, said the two events would combine in 2013 to produce huge levels of radiation.

*Paranormal Magazine* can't help wondering whether those careless Mayans were a year out with their doom-laden prophecy. And once the planet's crippled, won't this leave us open to the long-awaited alien invasion? And what will this mean for *Doctor Who*'s 50th anniversary on November 23, 2013? I guess we'll just have to wait and see. But start building your bunker now.

**'It will disrupt communication devices, air travel, the banking system, our computers ... Large areas will be without electricity. It will cause major problems for the world.'**

### Paranormal Shorts



#### TESCO CURSED

Supermarket giants Tesco are defying the curse of Lady Anne Speirs who allegedly put down a hex on anyone who disturbs her family crypt. Undaunted, Tesco still plans to make a new store in Linwood, Renfrewshire, on the very site of Lady Anne's burial place over a century ago.

Five bodies were found in the crypt by a contractor for Tesco. Two were removed until a court order stopped further removals while representations were made by the local community. The curse is last said to have proved effective with the closure of the Rootes car plant in Linwood.

[SOURCE: The Scotsman, June 15]

#### 'SATAN' SLAIN

The Vatican's representative in Turkey was decapitated by his own driver in a 'ritual sacrifice', it has been claimed.

Murat Altun was said to have announced that he had killed the 'great Satan' after allegedly murdering Luigi Padovese. Altun, who is said to have been suffering from mental health problems, allegedly beheaded the 63-year-old Italian bishop at his summer house in a Mediterranean seaside town near Iskenderun in southern Turkey.

He told police he'd had a 'divine revelation' instructing him to kill the bishop, reports claimed. Altun has been charged with murder.

[SOURCE: Telegraph, June 10]

#### LUCKY LEAF

A four-leaf clover was found stuck to a driver who survived a crash which left him impaled on a post.

Raymond Curry, 20, was driving his Vauxhall Corsa when it overturned and rolled through a fence in Cramlington, Northumberland. He was flown to hospital still impaled on the wooden post, which had missed all his vital organs. Doctors later found the clover stuck to his back under his clothes. Two other fence posts had pierced the hatchback car, but missed him by inches.

The four-leaf clover is now mounted on Mr Curry's bedroom wall following the crash on 13 June.

[SOURCE: BBC, June 25]

## Lips sealed over China saucer

A UFO disrupted air traffic over Hangzhou Airport, China, on the 7th of July, according to news reports. The airport was closed down and flights had to be rerouted due to the UFO activity. Official investigations followed and even though the authorities say they have discovered the origin of the UFO they are not yet prepared to disclose this information because there is 'a military connection'.

[SOURCE: People Daily, July 9].



# CALL FOR UFO DISCLOSURE EUROPE-WIDE

**AN EU official is on a mission to get all UFO information released to reveal the truth about possible alien visits to Earth.**

**M**ario Borghezio, leader of the Italian Northern League party, has submitted an official request, urging all 27 states to disclose their UFO files. The declaration has already received 17 signatures.

Borghezio stated: 'Many members of the scientific community have been looking into the issue of UFOs and have denounced the systematic covering up of information on the subject. ... a study of the material collected by the governments of all the member states would have major scientific and technological spinoffs.'

Borghezio's proposal says it is 'essential to set up a scientific centre for the analysis and dissemination of the scientific data gathered to date by various European bodies and governments.'

He has also called for 'public archives on UFOs to be opened up and for records to be declassified by the member states, thus providing the public and the mass media with access to the full range of documentation on the subject.'

UFOs have been discussed in the European Parliament before. In 1990, Belgian politician Elio Di Rupo proposed a European UFO Observation Centre, while in '93 Tullio Regge suggested that the French National Centre for Space Research become the official UFO information clearinghouse.

Borghezio proposed that several angles be addressed, including military secrets, alien civilizations and supertechnologies.

[SOURCE: AOL News, June 22]

## MAD MAPPING

A man with two heads has turned up on Google's ultra-sophisticated online mapping project, Street View. But he is just one of several oddities to turn up on the service.

The two-head man is seen standing outside a house in Hawes, West Yorkshire. He can take his freakish place alongside Horse Boy, a horse-faced being who has turned up twice in Aberdeen. UFOs have also been spotted on the service hovering over London's East End.

The slow-moving camera used by Street View has been blamed for doubling up the stationary man by taking two photos of him seconds after each other.

[SOURCE: Webuser.co.uk, July 12]

## NASTY TERN

Gulls are attacking workers on Carlisle's Kingstown Industrial Estate, in scenes reminiscent of Hitchcock's *The Birds*. Some are described as having three-foot wing spans.

Elsewhere, in Peacehaven, Sussex, gulls are pecking passers-by and attacking pets. Postmen in Paignton, Devon, have refused to carry out their rounds until something is done about the gull attacks. An OAP in Truro, Cornwall, is attacked every time he leaves his front door. Other attacks by gulls protecting their young have been reported in Greenock, Renfrewshire and Llandudno.

In Cardiff jackdaws attacked a young girl, drawing blood.

[SOURCE: News & Star, The Argus, This is Cornwall, The Greenock Telegraph: June]

## HALF COCKED

A man in Fairfield County, Connecticut, was arrested after buying a high-powered rifle to stop an alien invasion.

Dane Eisenman, 57, responded to a classified ad for the rifle about a month earlier and mentioned to the seller what he would be using the weapon 'to kill aliens'. Eisenman told the seller that every 36,000 years, aliens who live under the Sun come to Earth to kill humans, and they were 'coming soon'.

After the sale of the rifle, the man reported Eisenman to police. He was charged with criminal possession of a firearm.

[SOURCE: Hartford Courant, July 4]

## REST IN PEACE

A Dutch man was found dead four years after going to bed and asking his family not to disturb him. The man, who was 50 at the time of his death, lived with four siblings aged between 44 and 71 in the village of Minnertsga.

'He was used to being obeyed and very quick to anger,' a police spokesman said. 'Four years ago he told his brothers and sisters he didn't want to be disturbed and went to his bedroom. Though they frequently passed by the bedroom door, no one dared look in.'

The body was eventually discovered by visiting landlords.

[SOURCE: Herald Sun (Australia), June 24]



# The after-life's a circus

He may have been dead more than a century but it seems that legendary American showman Phineas Taylor Barnum is still entertaining people - from beyond the grave. [SOURCE: AOL News, July 6]

**J**uly 5 marked the 200th anniversary of P T Barnum's birth and, to mark the occasion, the famous showman himself apparently performed at his own party.

Best remembered for promoting celebrated hoaxes and for founding the circus that became the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, his successes made Barnum the first showbiz millionaire.

As he now resides in the spirit world, Barnum was represented physically at the birthday bash by an 1842 Fiji mermaid - a strange specimen the showman himself exhibited - plus several photographs of his performers, and an 1892 copy of his autobiography, *Life of P. T. Barnum*.

Self-styled psychic Gemma Deller, conducted the interview.

'I am like a telephone between this world and the afterlife,' she said in a statement.

Coney Island USA director and Barnum scholar Dick Zigun, who was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where Barnum lived, read questions from the media and verified answers as they came through.

In the days before the event, Zigun told AOL News he was optimistic about the chances of communicating with Barnum's spirit.

'Unlike Houdini, Barnum was a believer. So who knows?' Zigun said. 'It is his circus, it is the 200th birthday, there will be a medium there, and there will be a native son of Bridgeport who is a scholar. We could all get a little chill up the back of our spine. That would be awesome.'

And the showman apparently shared a number of revelations through Deller during the interview: the entire spirit world is a circus, and 'It's fun.'

It was also learnt Barnum continues to attend concerts by one of his earliest attractions, singer Jenny Lind, the Swedish Nightingale.

'You can perform on the other side; she still performs. On the other side you continue to do the things you do,' he told the audience.

*Paranormal Magazine* always takes stories like this with a big pinch of salt, but is rather attracted to P T Barnum's alleged view of the afterlife - providing there aren't any performing animals or scary clowns, of course.



## ORACLE OCTOPUS ON THE BALL

He was one of the stars of the World Cup, outshining the likes of Wayne Rooney and Cristiano Ronaldo. [SOURCES: BBC News, June 25; Guardian, July 12]

But this particular sporting celebrity did have an advantage - apparently he's psychic. Oh, and he also has eight legs.

While he might not be too well suited to a football pitch, Paul the octopus certainly seemed to prove his worth when it came to predicting the results of the games being played in South Africa.

The octopus, born in Weymouth in 2006 but now housed in Germany's Oberhausen Sea Life Aquarium, hit the headlines here in the UK when he correctly predicted that his home side would beat the English.

When consulted, Paul chose a mussel from a jar with the German flag on it ahead of one in a similar jar bearing the cross of St George.

He had earlier predicted that Germany would beat Australia in their opening match, then lose to Serbia, and then beat Ghana - all of which proved true.

Throughout the competition he continued to 'predict' correct outcomes of games, right up to the final when he chose the mussel from the 'Spanish' jar over the one bearing the Dutch flag.

It's not the first time Paul has done well with his football predictions either.

According to his keepers he correctly predicted nearly 70% of Germany's results during the 2008 European Championship.

Paul's celebrity became such that, towards the end of the World Cup, bookies even began laying odds on whether his streak of picking the winner would continue.

Punters gambling on his predictions won up to half a million pounds during the month-long tournament, according to bookmakers William Hill.

Nicknamed the 'oracle octopus', Paul beat his rival Mani - Singapore's psychic parakeet - who incorrectly predicted a win for Holland in the final.

## SCIENTISTS PROBE THE BLACK DOGS ENIGMA

THE stuff of legend or the scourge of our countryside - it seems it may be time to delve deeper into the mystery of ghostly Black Dogs.

[SOURCE: Daily Express, July 4]

Could it be that there's more to these prowling beasts than the tales of Conan Doyle and J K Rowling? In recent years there have been a number of reports of wolf-like Black Dogs roaming our less populated areas. Now zoologists and paranormal experts are calling for an investigation into whether these reports might actually be true.

Speaking to the *Daily Express*, Dr Simon Sherwood, senior lecturer in psychology, director of the Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes at the University of Northampton, said: 'Sightings of Black Dogs are certainly not just legendary accounts from hundreds of years ago. I still receive accounts from people who have been looking for information about similar sightings and have come across my website.'

'I have probably collected about 50 or 60 accounts from around the world over the past 10 years or so and some of these are recent sightings.'

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## 'I see dead people'

**Next time your child claims to have seen a ghost, don't be so quick to dismiss it, says psychologist - they could be telling the truth.**

**O**S your child's imaginary friend a figment of their young mind or can they see something you can't?

While most psychologists might assume 'the sixth sense' is the product of Hollywood fiction, one psychotherapist is coming round to the idea that some kids may be able to see dead people.

Texan psychotherapist Caron Goode is urging parents not to dismiss the idea when their kids say they've seen a ghost.

The author of a new book on the subject - *Kids Who See Ghosts: How to Guide Them Through Fear* (Weiser Books) - Goode says that while some children do have imaginary friends, there are others who are convinced they are being visited by ghosts.

'Some kids have one experience, and some have a lot,' Goode says. 'Sometimes, these experiences can be attributed to stress, reactions to trauma, distress, fluctuating blood sugar levels or sleep deprivation - even plain daydreaming.'

'It is possible that the kid could just be talking to themselves, but you need to look at the behaviour and see how the child is coping [with] stress.'

Goode offers tips on how to tell whether a child really has seen something or is just pretending. For example, if they immediately run to tell Mum or are afraid to go to sleep, chances are it's not their imagination.

However, Goode says there is cause for debate.

'Some cultures are more accepting of ghosts or spirits than others,' she says. 'Also, the parents' reaction can have an effect. Some parents try to shut their kids down.'

## BOFFIN ARRESTED OVER 'DIGITISED' HOLY WATER

**A South Korean scientist has been arrested after he sold bogus bits of kit which he claimed could turn ordinary tap water into holy water.** [SOURCE: BBC, July 1]

Professor Kim said his 'invention' could digitally decode the healing properties of holy water from the world-famous shrine at Lourdes in France and reproduce them in tap water.

He succeeded in selling thousands of the devices, netting him the equivalent of £870,000 (\$1.3m).

Prof Kim is now facing fraud charges along with his wife, brother-in-law and six other people in on the scam.

'Professor Kim says if the medical properties are changed into digital signals, and radiated onto any water, the water will adapt those properties,' police told the South Korean press. But experts had confirmed this was 'completely impossible, based on no scientific evidence'.

Prof Kim and his team allegedly told customers that different devices cured different illnesses, including diabetes and tumours. The police got involved after people who had bought the devices complained that they did not work.

## CHESTER FIXED AS ARTHUR'S CAMELOT

**A new suggestion has been offered for the site of King Arthur's fabled Camelot - the enormous Roman amphitheatre recently uncovered in Chester.** [SOURCE: Telegraph, July 11]

Researchers believe the Roman city on the Welsh border would have made a perfect stronghold for the legendary King and that the Round Table might be a memory of the circular amphitheatre, where he could gather his followers before campaigns against the invading Anglo-Saxons.

Historians believe regional noblemen would have sat in the front row of a circular meeting place, with lower ranked subjects on stone benches grouped around the outside.

They claim that rather than Camelot being a purpose built castle, it would have been housed in a structure already built and left over by the Romans.

Historian Chris Gidlow said: 'The first accounts of the Round Table show that it was nothing like a dining table but was a venue for upwards of 1,000 people at a time.'

'In the 6th Century, a monk named Gildas, who wrote the earliest account of Arthur's life, referred to the City of Legions and to a martyr's shrine within it. There were only two places with this title. One was St Albans but the location of the other has remained a mystery.'

During the excavations a wooden memorial to Christian martyrs was found within the amphitheatre. For Gidlow this is 'the clincher'.

He said: 'The discovery of the shrine within the amphitheatre means that Chester was the site of Arthur's court and his legendary Round Table.'



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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](mailto:editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk) or visit [www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk](http://www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk)

## GHOSTS



**LAST HANGING:** Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in Britain for murdering her boyfriend David Blakely, is believed to be haunting Penn Churchyard in Buckinghamshire, according to researcher Eddie Brazil.

Other ghosts said to haunt the churchyard are a farmer who died after falling off his horse in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and a lady in white who appears at the East Gate. Across the road at the Crown Public House they have another ghostly lady in white, but her identity is not known. (Source: *Bucks Free Press*: 9<sup>th</sup> July).

**MRS MCREADY:** Andrzej Blonski, the architect leading the redevelopment of the Bristol Old Vic Theatre, claims to have seen theatre manager Sarah Macready who died over 200 years ago. He said: "She was wearing a long, white crinoline dress, had black hair and a pretty face." When he tried to speak to her she vanished. He adds: "The thing that really got me was that she smiled - she was a friend and then she vanished." Mr Blonski claims to have felt her presence on several occasions and often detected the aroma of lavender. On one occasion he was pushed. Other spirits include the ghost of a boy who died in the 1950s and the actress Sarah Siddons. (Source: *BBC Bristol*: 10<sup>th</sup> July).

**VOLUNTEERS ROOM:** Butte County Council Fire Station in California is haunted, according to Captain Scott McLean, with the activity centring on the Volunteers Room. He said: "Yes there is a ghost, all of the people [at the station] have experienced it at one time or another. It just happens. You just work with it." Doors open, objects are moved, strange noises are heard and animals are frightened by a mysterious presence. Fleeting shadowy figures have been seen. Local officials believe the phenomena is caused by wind through the old building which is about to undergo renovation. (Source: *strangeunknown.com* 13<sup>th</sup> June).

**FREAKED OUT:** Paranormal activity has become so intense at the Sun House Restaurant in Bradenton Beach, Florida, that assistant manager Justin Norton now expects something unusual to occur daily. He has heard conversations from empty rooms, seen shadows moving along corridors, and heard odd noises. He said: "After four years, I'm kind of used to it now, but there have been a few times I've been a little freaked out." Other members of staff have experienced locked doors opening, burglar and fire alarms sounding for no apparent reason and "a strange fog in the dining room." Now local writer and paranormal investigator Kim Cool is carrying out an investigation on the premises. (Source: *Herald Tribune*: 18<sup>th</sup> June).

**UNCLE EB:** Scottish adventurer Robert Gordon built Lochinvar Mansion in Pontotoc, Mississippi, in the late 1830s. The family are long gone but one of their servants is still said to haunt the premises even today. Ebenezer, who was affectionately known as Uncle Eb, has been spotted recently walking the grounds, and around the house, as he used to in life while checking the property, and keeping the family safe. The ghostly light of his lantern is also often seen on the property taking the same route. (Source: *All Voices*: June).

**WASHINGTON IRVING:** On the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 14-year-old Rachael Lambert noticed an unusual figure in a photograph that she had taken at Washington Irving's home on the Estate of Tarrytown, Sunnyside, NY. Rachael and her family believe they can see a figure "that looks like the head and upper body of a ghost holding a quill pen." Rachael believes it is the ghost of Washington Irving. The people who currently look after the estate say that they are not aware of any ghosts at the house, but local people have long maintained that Irving's ghost still haunts the premises. (Source: *longislandgothic.com*: 10<sup>th</sup> July).

**HOO HOO HAA:** At least six ghosts haunt the Victorian House Museum in Millersburg, Ohio, according to the Ohio Paranormal Research Group, who have recently conducted an investigation on the premises. They claim they have 11.5 EVP recordings and video footage of a ghost "interacting with one of two plasma balls." Rick Cosner of OPRG said: "The video shows the image of a hand come into the corner of the frame while a single finger touches and attracts the blue rays of light within the ball. Simultaneously, a drawn-out male voice is heard saying, 'Weird.' It is followed by another male voice: 'You know she was hit by that, (presumably lightning).' Another voice is that of a girl saying something like 'hoo hoo haa.'" (Source: *Daily Record.com* 28<sup>th</sup> June).

**LIZARD KING:** The ghost of Jim Morrison is said to have been seen and felt in one of the establishments he used to frequent when he was alive, a Mexican restaurant at 8512 Santa Monica, Blvd, Hollywood. Area Manager Christina Arena of the 'Mexico' said: "You feel it here almost every day, throughout the entire place, but especially near this spot, the restroom," which is now situated where the booth used to be in which Morrison recorded *L.A. Woman* in 1970. Office manager Christine Chilcote said: "Jim Morrison is definitely still here. Funky things happen all the time we can't explain. Lights popping on and off at weird times. But when that bathroom door handle jiggles by itself, that's the weirdest sign. It's totally inexplicable." (Source: *AOL News* 3<sup>rd</sup> July).

**STRANGE OCCURENCES:** A research group calling themselves 'Strange Occurrences' recently spent a night at the Wellington Town Hall in New Zealand and experienced several odd occurrences. One group member reports: "We heard sounds like hard shoes on a hard floor. But when you look outside the theatre, it's carpeted and the doors are pretty near sound-proof. We had a number of events that could be construed as paranormal, however the evidence we were gathering would suggest that there are natural reasons for those events." (Source: *3news.co.nz* 21<sup>st</sup> June).



## UFOS

**TENDRING FLAP:** Several reports of UFOs have recently come in from the skies above Tendring in Essex. Former sceptic John Tarrier spotted "unidentified flying objects" over Jaywick. Sue Alderton in Havering Close, Clacton, shortly after Mr Tarrier's sighting, spotted something strange

and reports: "I noticed three bright orange, glowing, lights to the west - quite big in size. They just appeared and were travelling from east to west. They were quite high up and seemed to be travelling fairly fast. My husband also witnessed this." Mrs Alderton is adamant that they were not Chinese lanterns. (Source: *Clacton and Frinton Gazette*: 6<sup>th</sup> June).

**BLACK SPECK:** A witness spotted a UFO over the skies of Seafeld in West Lothian on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June during a power cut. He reports: "At first it seemed to me like a small aircraft on fire, but it was more like a glow than flames. I ran outside to see it pass over, joined by my wife, I went out just in time to see the glow fade out completely to reveal a black, flat, conical shaped object that took off at an awesome speed towards the north side of Livingston, it was now only a black speck to me, but I saw it turn sharply towards the south and again at phenomenal speed it disappeared." (Source: [www.uk-ufo.co.uk](http://www.uk-ufo.co.uk): June).

**FOLLOWED:** The witness noticed what he first thought was a star at 2.30am in the night sky while at his home in Llansilin, Denbighshire, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June. According to the witness: "[The light] then descended behind trees about 3 miles away. The light itself was white and looked identical to a star, but there were no flashing lights at all. What made it even more interesting, was the fact that following the light about 10 seconds after, was what appeared to be a helicopter or commercial plane. Both objects appeared to have a descending trajectory and I have not seen a commercial plane have a flight path in that direction in the past which makes the sighting all the more puzzling." (Source: [www.uk-ufo.co.uk](http://www.uk-ufo.co.uk): June).

**BALL OF FIRE:** The witnesses were walking along Copnor Road near College Park at 11pm in Portsmouth on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July when they spotted "a ball of fire" in the sky. The light hovered for about 20 seconds before shooting off "at high speed" and "vanishing." One witness added that last year they saw 40 or 50 similar objects in the same area. (Source: [www.uk-ufo.co.uk](http://www.uk-ufo.co.uk): 10<sup>th</sup> July).

**UNIVERSITY LOGO:** The witness was in a location between Erskine and Glasgow Airport on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July at 11pm and reports: "I had just stepped out of my back door when my attention was drawn to an object travelling in an east to west direction. The shape of the object reminded me of the Open University logo with the O part a bright orange and the U part a fainter shade of orange. I moved to the front of the house and watched it continue heading west. This object would have been clearly visible from the runway side of Glasgow Airport." (Source: [www.uk-ufo.co.uk](http://www.uk-ufo.co.uk): 10<sup>th</sup> July).

**SATAN'S BUTTE:** In early June a witness living on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona reports: "I was outside at 9:46pm and looked toward Satan's Butte and saw a spaceship hovering above the Butte [about three miles away]. I ran into the house and grabbed my sister-in-law's camera and my binoculars. I could not get a clear picture but watched the cylindrical sphere with red blinking lights descend into the butte. Two days later the event repeated. I yelled to

my unbelieving wife but by the time she got outside it had already descended." (Source: MUFON: 9<sup>th</sup> June).

**CODED MESSAGE:** A witness spotted flashing UFOs over Flushing, Rhode Island, New York, in late June just after a heavy rain storm. He reported the incident to MUFON and said: "I noticed an odd light in the sky, at first I thought it was a plane but it was stationary. On the left side I saw the tip was blue while the rest was an off-white/yellowish shade. Then colours changed to white and began to flicker in an odd pattern. After a few minutes I noticed a definite pattern - three short flashes, three long flashes, three long flashes, a long flash and a short dash." The witness recognised Morse-code and believed the object was flashing the word 'soon'. (Source: MUFON: 25<sup>th</sup> June).

**LATE ROCKETS:** A "mysterious" light photographed over Wamboral along the central coast of Australia raised speculation of alien visitors or a USA rocket that was five days late. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of June Sharon Smith reported: "It was about 6.45am and it was a quiet morning, no breeze, no noise with the sun just coming up and I saw this bright white light. I called for my son Daniel to come and see. It was there for about 10 minutes and it kept moving quite fast and then it would stop and then it would move again. It just kept climbing up and up and then it went behind the trees and we lost it." (Source: Express and Advocate: 17<sup>th</sup> June).

**INVERTED PLATTER:** Farmers in the Province of Entre Rios, Argentina, spotted a UFO near Rosario at 9pm. The witnesses wish to remain anonymous but say it is not the first time they have seen strange things over the farm. They report: "We saw a light approaching us coming through the middle of the field and not along the road. We could clearly see that it was a vessel shaped like an inverted platter, about 25 or 30 metres wide. It had red, green and gray lights that rotated but made no sound. They saw the object next to a water tank which on previous occasions had been mysteriously emptied." (Source: Diario La Capital : 11<sup>th</sup> June).

**VATICAN CITY:** According to news reports a UFO flap recently took place over Rome, Italy. US Ambassador security guards caught some of the strange objects on video cameras over the Vatican City at 4am on June 7<sup>th</sup>. The guards, who belonged to the 17<sup>th</sup> Anti-aircraft Regiment, reported "three spherical objects hovering in the sky above St Peter's Dome from their vantage point near Gianicolo Hill. They described the objects as being "swift with darting movements in a delta formation". Authorities took the report seriously. (Source: Open Minds: 10<sup>th</sup> June).



## CREATURES

**FIJI MONSTER:** Fishermen from three villages in the Cakaudrove area, Fiji, are refusing to go back to sea until the authorities do something about the sea-monster that has been recently appearing off the shore. Ateca Disukavanua said she was fishing near a cove of mangrove called Dogodogo when she saw a black creature swimming towards her. "At first I thought it was a log but then it moved closer and I was so scared because the water was up to my waist I jumped on top of a mangrove stump," she said. "I hung on to that mangrove tree for about an hour. The creature, which was about three foot long, had flippers

like those of a turtle and had a strange long mouth." (Source: Fiji Times: 29<sup>th</sup> June).

**ALIEN IMP:** A strange creature was observed "dancing" on power lines in Nueva Palmira, Uruguay, in early June; several witnesses reported seeing the creature to the police. It was described as being 25 cms in height, was able to change colours, "looked like a doll" and was frightened by torch beams. The police and local officials attended the scene and saw the creature for themselves. The being ran along high powered beams, and all attempts at photographing it came out distorted. A local journalist reported: "The phenomenon lasted until around 4 am, when the figure contracted slowly until it vanished. A pearl-coloured 'goo' was left behind as the only tangible evidence." (Source: La Republica: 10<sup>th</sup> June).

**UK INVASION:** A three-foot tall vulture has been spotted in Bridgend. Simon Keenor said: "I said straight away, 'That's a vulture! We were only 20 yards from it. There must have been 20 or 30 crows mobbing it before it landed.'" More than a dozen deadly Redback spiders have been found in the docks in Preston. Raccoon dogs have recently been found in Scotland, Berkshire and Northumberland. A family of wallabies have been photographed in St Breward. They have also been seen in the West Country, Warwickshire and Derbyshire. A family of chipmunks was spotted crossing a road in Leeds, and a snapping turtle was found in Kent. (Source: The Telegraph, The Metro, Wales on Line: June).

**EERIE FAIRY:** On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June a witness claims to have seen "a weird winged creature" near his home in Lake Eerie, New York State. He said: "My dog started barking and I saw a peculiar winged creature flying from out of the woods across the front of the house. The creature's wings were about three inches across. The wings were transparent and rounded at the ends. The wings were not fluttering like a butterfly or vibrating like a dragonfly, which are two common insects in my yard. The creature was gliding, with perhaps a slight vibration. I felt elated seeing this creature. It was nothing I had ever seen before." (Source: MUFON: June).

**TEXAS LION:** Witnesses inundated the Marshall Police Department with reports of a "massive African lion" loose in the area. The police searched the area but found no trace of the animal. The "300lb lion" was spotted near the Amtrak train station causing worried bystanders to take shelter. One witness said: "I know the difference between a mountain lion and an African lion, and this was an African lion." Marshall Police did confirm there were several sightings of the big cat. But, so far, there have been no reports of anyone who has lost or misplaced an African lion. (Source: kiltv.com 9<sup>th</sup> June).

**BACK YARD ALIEN:** On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June Mr Beehat, a farmer in Alberta, Canada heard "unusual" noises in his back yard and was shocked to see an "alien" knock over a chair in his back garden. Mr Beehat said: "The footage we captured shows a tall creature with a strange manner of walking. It had quite large hands with three fingers each and appeared to almost go completely invisible at times. One of the strangest features of this being was it's almost metallic-looking skin. The footage can be seen at <http://www.allnewsweb.com/page1199999385.php> (Source: allnewsweb June).

**KNOBBY:** A Bigfoot named Knobby was seen in Carpenters Knob in North Carolina on the

5<sup>th</sup> of June by local man Timothy Peeler who describes himself as a "mountain man". He said the creature had dark hair and a gray beard that extended all the way down his belly, was ten feet tall and had six fingers. He says he "rough talked" the creature with "beautiful hair" and ran him off. Police arrived at the property at 3am and filed a suspicious persons report. (Source: Post Chronicle: 16<sup>th</sup> June).

**MUDDY PRINTS:** A large, "muddy and mysterious footprint" has set speculation alight that Bigfoot visited the intersection of Highway 18 and George Hildebran School Road in the southern part of Burke County, North Carolina. It was found by farmer Pork Lowman, who said the print measured 15 centimetres across, and does not resemble a bear or a cat. "It's out here in no-man's land, and that's what really got me," Lowman said. Photographs, video, still pictures and a casting was made of the print, and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission was contacted; their official did not believe the print was made by an animal either. (Source: WSOCTV: 19<sup>th</sup> June).

**NAKED HAIRY WOMAN:** Breaking news of apparent evidence confirming the existence of Bigfoot is currently being reported on Overnight AM in an undisclosed North American location. The witness has apparently "had his life turned upside down by the family of four" Bigfoot creatures who bed down in his backyard to "avoid being bitten by mosquitoes." A local police officer reported seeing "a naked hairy woman eating from a dumpster." Among the alleged evidence are photographs; radio show host Lan Lamphere said on the show that he had contacted the BFRO and that Darcy Stoffregen of Maple Ridge, British Columbia was investigating the incident. (Source: Overnightam.com July).

**LOST LEPRECHAUN:** Police in Boulder Colorado received several calls from shoppers at the King Soopers Parking lot about a "Leprechaun causing mayhem." The creature (or man dressed up in a suit) was jumping in and out of traffic pretending to shoot motorists with his fingers outside the store at 30th St. and Arapahoe Avenue in the middle of the afternoon. When police attended the scene they found no trace. Police Sgt Fred Gerhardt said: "Boulder Police had not ever received a complaint about a Leprechaun before this." Meanwhile in Fruita, Colorado, a woman claims to have spotted a vampire in the middle of a dirt road which caused her to throw her SUV into reverse and crash into a canal. (KDVR 1<sup>st</sup> July).

**GOBLIN ATTACKS 2:** After April's report of a young boy attacked by a goblin in Zimbabwe, the rural Makende clinic was forced to shut down for two weeks after nurses claimed they were also "attacked by goblins." A teacher at Makende primary school said school children were also victims of daily attacks. No details of the attacks are given but villagers said: "The goblins' attacks came at a time when nurses were busy with a malaria programme aimed at reducing malaria related deaths, which are prevalent in the area. Villager Edmore Mukapa of Kadziro area said: "We were not expecting goblins to attack nurses who are trying hard to reduce malaria outbreak here. It's unfortunate for us." (Source: radiovop: 8th July).

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# Deep in the dark

Since the days of Homer, the lower depths have been seen as the abode of spirits. Mining is such a dangerous business and so many people have lost their lives in the pursuit of minerals deep below the ground, that it's no wonder so many mines should have gained a haunted reputation. **JONATHAN TAPSELL** heads into the underworld.

**IT ALL STARTED WITH** excavations for flint - mining began with Stone Age man. Later, during the Bronze Age, mining as an industry really began in earnest when mankind needed precious metals to smelt and produce tools from. Later fuel and other products were needed and by medieval times mining was seen as a major commercial enterprise with the rise of metallurgy using water-powered mills.

During the industrial revolution of the late 1700's consumption of coal increased resulting in enormous pits, with workings often descending 1000 ft below ground and extending tunnels of equal length, sometimes underneath the sea. This occupation had reached heights of bravery, skill and endurance that set miners apart from their friends and family above the surface. They spent half their waking life in a strange underworld inhabited by ghosts, goblins and prophetic visitations.

Cornish miners had a centuries-old superstition dating back to their Celtic roots called Knockers, leprechaun-like creatures who played tricks on those working underground. Often Knockers were described as being green in colour and standing around two feet high. At best the Knockers

stole tools or moved objects around in fun, at worst they were said to be at the root cause of serious accidents and disasters.

When the California gold rush began in the 1820's many Cornish miners abandoned tin mining to make a new life in the States and took the myth of the Knockers with them. To this day Western American miners speak of the Knockers. In North America

they are also known as Tommy Knockers [see for example last month's article on the Canadian mining town of Cobalt].

It is thought that the idea of the knockers comes from the knocking sound produced by timbers creaking just before a tunnel collapse. Later this idea evolved to include the knockings of dead miners warning the living of impending doom. Some mines were actually closed due to

**DOWN BELOW:** Miners work in a strange, dark underworld with the constant presence of danger - it's natural that so much superstition became attached to the profession. In the past miners could become obsessed by omens and strange visitations in the dark.





**PRAYING IT SAFE**

Today miners in the Caribbean and Central and South America who follow the former slaves' religion of Santeria make votive offerings to the God Oggun, the West African Patron Saint of metal workers and miners.

The recent earthquakes in Haiti have been blamed on the anger of Oggun, with some justification. According to seismologists, the large mining operations for gold, diamonds and other precious materials are believed to have triggered the massive quake which has so far displaced 400,000 people and killed claimed nearly 250,000 souls. Understandably, many Haitian miners have honoured Oggun to appease his anger.

Anyone facing the trials and tribulations of such perilous underground work can see that a healthy respect for the deities is a sensible thing: for peace-of-mind, if nothing else. At the Toi Gold mine on the Izu Peninsula, Japan, one can see a Torii shrine dedicated to the Gods there. Taosits in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, worship Sin Sze Ye, a guardian deity for the local Chinese miners. An American Miners Union traditionally meets in the local church, as prayer and work, life and death, are deeply entwined in this most hazardous of trades.

**PROTECTOR:**

The statue of a saint looks over the entrance to the workings in a Polish salt mine.



the fear of the terrifying Knockers said to inhabit them!

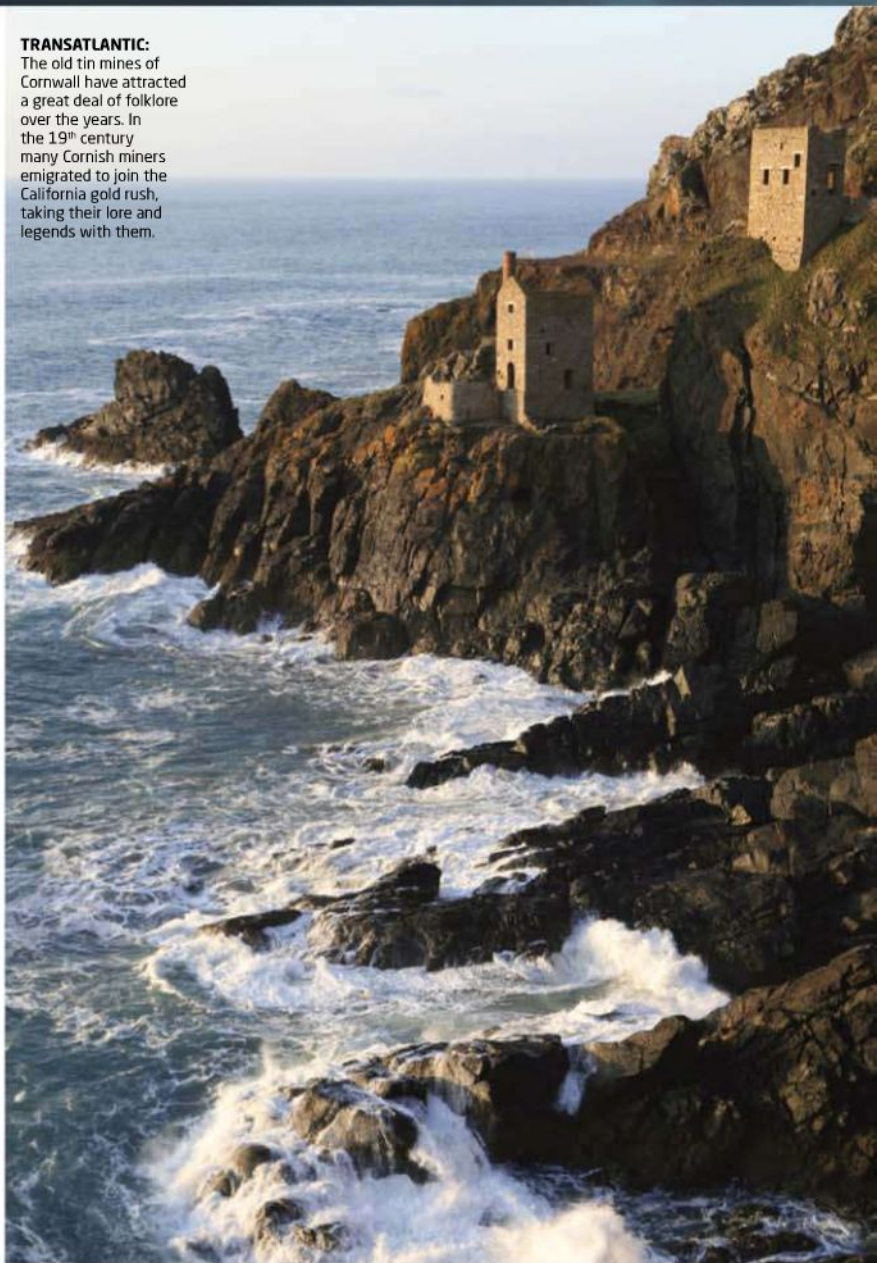
Because so many disasters took place in the mining industry, it is inevitable that ghostly happenings should follow some of these fatal accidents. Gas explosions, cave-ins, flooding and poisonous fumes have contributed to a large loss of life in the dark depths below. Mining folk have become very superstitious about portents of doom – and who can blame them?

Morfa Colliery in South Wales became known as the 'pit of ghosts'. In 1860, just prior to a massive explosion which claimed 40 lives, it is said that a spate of paranormal incidents occurred that made the workforce believe a disaster was imminent. After the explosion an apparition of a spectral hound would appear just before accidents and became known as 'the red dog of Morfa'. The creature, once seen, would disappear into thin air.

Other unusual disasters continued to plague the pit – in 1870 while a shaft was being laid, another 29 men lost their lives in an unexplained explosion. Twenty years later 89 men and boys were claimed by Morfa and at the inquest into this disaster witnesses recalled smelling

**TRANSATLANTIC:**

The old tin mines of Cornwall have attracted a great deal of folklore over the years. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century many Cornish miners emigrated to join the California gold rush, taking their lore and legends with them.



**'He held up his lamp to illuminate the features of his supposed colleague only to find it was the face of a miner who had died a few days earlier.'**

roses and hearing disembodied voices just before the explosion. The court was not convinced of a supernatural explanation and the cause of the accident was attributed to shot-firing triggering the massive explosion. Morfa closed in 1913.

Lundhill, near Barnsley in Yorkshire, is said to be haunted by the spirits of several men killed in a disaster which took place in the 1850's. Cotgrave Pit, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, once had a faceless ghost that walked through walls. The haunting caused so much

upset at the pit that at least one worker refused to return to his post because of it.

The ancient Dolaucothi gold mine in Mid Wales was worked by the Romans, and is believed to be haunted by a ghost dating from this period. A psychic named Edward McNaught-Davis believes he caught footage of this roaming Roman while touring Dolaucothi in August 2000. According to McNaught-Davis ghosts need external energy to materialise and he believed his ghost was using the side lights of

the tunnel to aid its materialisation.

Another account of a lone ghost at work underground comes from Derbyshire, at the Williamthorpe Colliery in the 1960's. A worker walking down a shaft encountered a figure of a man. Believing it to be a fellow worker, he held up his lamp to illuminate the features of his supposed colleague only to find it was the face of a man named Marren – a miner from the same pit who had died a few days earlier while working underground. So distraught was this miner that he handed in his notice and refused to ever step foot in the mine again.

Another weird experience was reported by two electricians who had been inspecting pumping equipment in a section of the mine. As they completed their tests, one asked the other: 'Is it pumping right?' Before his colleague could answer, a voice piped up: 'Yes it is.' At first the electricians assumed they were the targets of a practical joke but on further inspection found that they were completely

alone in that area of the mine.

One of the eerier tales to emerge from British mines is recorded from Leigh, Lancashire, where dozens of pairs of eyes are reported to peer out through bushes at passers-by. The eyes are said to belong to the 368 people killed in a mining disaster at Pretoria Pit. Not only that, but the mine is also the haunt of a ghostly horse which makes its presence known to employees on their way to work.

Due to the vast fortunes potentially involved in prospecting for new seams of gold and diamonds, a rich vein of folklore has sprung up around the mining industry, with a number of lost or semi-mythical mines allegedly waiting to be rediscovered. The most famous of these is the 'Lost Dutchman Gold Mine', located somewhere in the Superstition Mountains near Phoenix, Arizona. According to legend the gold mine is either cursed or guarded by spirits who would prefer its location to remain a secret. Many

## 'Dozens of pairs of eyes are reported to peer out through bushes. They are said to belong to the 368 people killed in a mining disaster.'

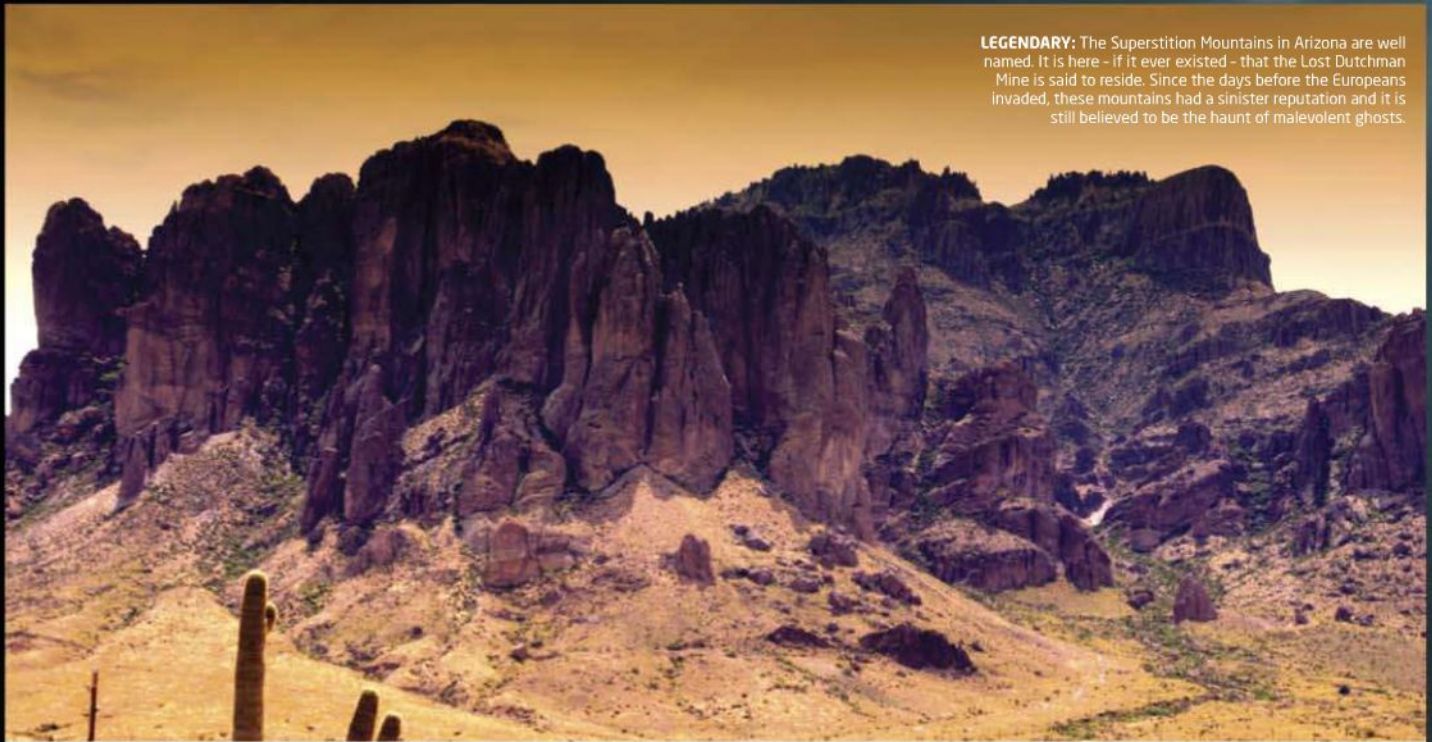
contradictory stories surround the alleged lost mine; romantic tales of Apache gold, a discovery made by a German prospector called Jacob Walz (often corrupted to Walzt, Weitz, Weiss, Welz, Wells etc); and a more conspiratorial tale about a vein of gold so pure that when it was discovered by two American soldiers in 1850 they were killed and the deposit sealed off.

Further grim speculation was sparked off in the 1930's when treasure hunter Adolph Ruth was apparently found shot dead after surveying the Superstition Mountains. Reports include ghost sightings and treasure hunters who have disappeared without trace after visiting Superstition Mountain.

Another legend has it that a ●

**GHOST TOWN:** Bodie, an abandoned mining town in California that originally sprung up during the gold rush of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is one of the best preserved of the 'ghost towns', many of which deserve this appellation for more than one reason.





**LEGENDARY:** The Superstition Mountains in Arizona are well named. It is here – if it ever existed – that the Lost Dutchman Mine is said to reside. Since the days before the Europeans invaded, these mountains had a sinister reputation and it is still believed to be the haunt of malevolent ghosts.

Spanish Conquistador called Francisco Vasquez de Coronado came across the Superstition Mountains on a journey up from Mexico. Folklore has it that the Apache tribesmen told Coronado that the mountain held much gold but they declined to help him locate the precious metal, stating that their God of Thunder would kill anyone foolish enough to try and mine it there. The Apache revered the spot and said it was sacred ground.

Coronado ignored their advice and began to survey the area but found each day more and more of his men vanished mysteriously. Any man who strayed even a few feet from the rest of the group disappeared. It was Coronado who dubbed the mountain 'Monte Superstition', for he regarded it as a haunted, evil and cursed place. Having claimed hundreds of lives

**'Coronado ignored their advice and began to survey the area but each day more and more of his men vanished mysteriously. Any man who strayed even a few feet from the rest of the group disappeared.'**

through violence and treachery, Superstition Mountain is said to harbour several spectral guardians, including old Jacob Walz himself.

Walz is said to have been infamous for cheating and stealing from his fellow prospectors and rumoured to have killed anyone foolish enough to follow him when he was out prospecting. Walz is believed to be one of the few who has located the Lost Dutchman Mine mine. As a German, or Deutschman, he was known as a 'Dutchman' and ever since the semi-mythical mine has been known by this name. On

his deathbed, Walz made over the remainder of his fortune, \$15,000, to a black woman whom he is said to have confided in. Not only did he reveal the mine's location to her but he also confessed to killing his own nephew who he believed may have discovered its secret.

The third tale of the Dutchman's Mine related to two soldiers who are said to have come across the gold seam in about 1870. After presenting their findings to a Mercantile Trading store owner called Mason, they said they had stumbled upon its entrance after chasing a deer into a canyon on the mountain. The small bag of gold in their possession was only a little of what could be found there, they claimed. But the two soldiers later vanished in the desolate country of Superstition Mountain – two more victims of the Apache Thunder God?

Unfortunately for modern prospectors, even those brave enough to risk its sinister reputation, the area is currently protected under Federal Law to preserve its ecosystems. The Lost Dutchman's Mine is likely to remain lost for some time yet. ☉



**Jonathan Tapsell** was born in Sussex in 1964. He has worked as an investigative journalist and filmmaker and is archivist of the world's largest witchcraft collection bequeathed by English Witch Doreen Valiente. He has written books about the occult and true crime and founded the annual Occulture Festival.



**DEVIL IN THE DARK:** This old woodcut shows the 'Demon of the Mine' (at right), a European variant on the English 'Knocker'.

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**“THE APPREHENSION THAT THE WHITE LADY OF CASTLE HILL MIGHT BE LOOKING WITH DISPLEASURE UPON US RASHLY INVADING HER ABODE, PRODUCED AN ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS NOT TO BE EASILY EXPRESSED.”**

# THE LADY OF THE LAKE

**DAVID HARRISON** revisits a spooky location remembered from his childhood, a mournful body of water which, despite now being bisected by a busy motorway, has retained its haunting atmosphere.

**IN THE ANCIENT LANCASHIRE TOWN** of Newton-le-Willows, there is a lake which hides a ghostly secret. Having spent my childhood years in the town, listening to tales of the haunted lake, I decided to pay it a visit for the first time in 30 years and try and research the truth of the ghostly goings on.

There are thousands of reported sightings of white ladies, blue ladies and even green ladies throughout Britain, but this particular tormented White Lady appears to have stirred the imagination of the local people and her almost

sinister manifestations have, in recent times, resulted in some lively reports in the local press.

In August 1972, the *St Helens News* reported that the White Lady had been up to her old tricks; the report told of how a motorcyclist travelling near the lake was suddenly thrown from his bike by a ghostly white arm. Lying helpless on the Tarmac, he suddenly saw the White Lady floating above him. Filled with

dread, he ran to the police station, despite his injuries, to report his terrifying ghostly encounter.

In November 1989, the *Newton & Golborne News* told of how the White Lady has been seen hovering over the M6 motorway which now divides the lake, drifting into the beams of the oncoming car headlights and causing them to swerve and sometimes crash. It emphasised

**‘A MOTORCYCLIST TRAVELLING NEAR THE LAKE WAS SUDDENLY THROWN FROM HIS BIKE BY A GHOSTLY WHITE ARM.’**

**HAUNTED WATER:** We have noted before in *Paranormal Magazine* the affiliation some ghosts have with water, and recently covered a haunted pool in Surrey, Newton Lake in Lancashire is possessed of a rather aggressive White Lady. © David Harrison

**ATMOSPHERIC:**  
Newton Lake is criss-crossed with marshy ground and choked with reeds. The author found it an eerie place, unnaturally quiet. © David Harrison

## 'LOCALS TELL STORIES OF HOW SHE HAS BEEN SEEN FLOATING IN THE MIST OVER THE LAKE, FREEZING THE ONLOOKER WITH PARALYSING FEAR.'

how she has been seen regularly over the past 30 years, her white, ghostly image being seen among the trees surrounding the lake – six foot tall with her arms folded. Many locals still tell stories of how she has been seen floating in the mist over the lake itself, a haunting lonely figure which freezes the onlooker with paralysing fear.

The legend of the White Lady of the lake appears to date from the medieval period and is reputed to be the victim of romantic tragedy; the ghost being that of a young maiden who drowned herself in the lake after being spurned by a local man who cruelly abandoned her for another girl. Ever since that tragic day, her watery ghost has forever mourned her lost love, terrorizing the locals who dare to venture out by the lake alone.

It is interesting that many of the more sinister encounters with the White Lady appear to be with men, as if she is acting out a cold revenge from beyond her watery grave. A poem published in a local collection dating from 1914 tells the tragic story of the White Lady:

*'Not far removed a  
village damsel dwelt  
In service with a kind widower  
And maiden relative.  
She happy seemed  
Until she met a youth,  
who courted her  
And her affections won.  
But she was told  
That he was false and  
wooed another maid;  
And this so preyed upon  
poor Lizzie's mind,  
She sought to end her  
broken-hearted life  
She first a letter to her  
mistress wrote,  
In which she told her  
grief and her intent,  
And one to him whom  
she so dearly loved,  
And then, in darkness,  
plunged into the lake.'*

Another tradition states that the White Lady is the ghost of Victoria Hood, who was drowned by her husband Robin Alfred Hood. The area around the lake has associations with the better-known Robin Hood: legends tell of a secret

cave which bore his name and the nearby Rob Lane also suggests some past associations. Whatever the story, the White Lady of Newton Lake certainly echoes the tragedy which surrounds most of the many other white, blue or green ladies that haunt Britain.

When I arrived at Newton Lake, I was struck by the loneliness of the place – even though it is now part of a park, I was the only person there. The lake was still and calm, and I was aware of a slight breeze which rustled the reeds along the shore, causing me to hear whispering sounds.

I found the lake to be more of a lagoon, with islands and rivulets twisting around the reeds. And even though the M6 motorway loomed in the distance beyond a newly ploughed field, the place was very quiet – almost too quiet. The lake is surrounded by woodland, and above the tree tops I could make out the old church of St Peter's in the distance.

As I walked along the lakeside pathway, I emerged from the woodland and walked towards the motorway. The pathway led underneath the M6 and I emerged on the banks of a bigger lagoon to find an ancient landmark, which is also part of the story – Castle Hill,

**‘ANOTHER GHOST—A MONK DRESSED IN DARK ROBES WITH A DOUR LOOK ON HIS FACE—HAS BEEN SEEN BY A YOUNG MAN WHO WAS RIDING A SCOOTER ALONG THE PATHWAYS THAT CRISS-CROSS THE HILL.’**

a Bronze Age burial mound which looms over the lake.

The White Lady has also been seen here, and another ghost – a monk dressed in dark robes with a dour look on his face – has been witnessed by a young man who was riding a scooter along the pathways that criss-cross the hill, this sighting being reported in the *Newton & Golborne News* in 1989. I climbed the winding path up towards the hill – part of which was cut out of the sandstone bedrock – grabbing the outstretched branches of the oak trees which grew out of the ancient mound.

An account of the excavation of Castle Hill was given by local historian and archaeologist Mr Beamont in the *Manchester Philosophical Society Transactions* in 1846. Beamont also mentioned sightings of the mysterious white lady. He discussed how the excavations of the hill went into the night, and as the archaeologists finally broke into the burial

chamber, they were disappointed to find no actual human remains, though there was evidence that a human body had been *in situ* due to an impression of a human figure in the burial chamber. Beamont described the haunting atmosphere and the uneasiness of the superstitious local miners who had been drafted in help excavate the mound. He wrote:

‘Castle Hill is said to be haunted by a white lady, who flits and glides, but never walks. She is sometimes seen at midnight, but is never heard to speak. The opening of the barrow, though begun by day, was continued through the night. There was then a sharp, cold breeze blowing, and as the fire kindled on the top of the hill threw eddying columns of smoke, rising under the lofty arch of the oak boughs...the flickering flame throwing its glare of light upon the quivering arch of oak leaves; the dark and dingy faces of the miners, standing close about the fire, and the apprehension that the

White Lady of Castle Hill might be looking with displeasure upon our thus rashly invading her abode, produced an association of ideas not to be easily expressed.’

Castle Hill still looks as Beamont described it: topped by ancient oak trees and set within a lonely, atmospheric landscape (despite being now alongside the M6). It seemed as if I was standing in an area cut off from the modern world; the only sounds were the occasional rustling from the reeds below on the shore of the lake and the occasional bird crying out. It was a very haunting place.

Nearby there is another, smaller mound called the Lady Barrow, supposedly named after the White Lady herself – perhaps that was her real resting place, and the archaeologists of the 1840s had not disturbed her after all. Perhaps the White Lady is much more ancient than the stories suggest, and the two burial mounds have yet to reveal her true secret.

It was easy to see why this place had been written about so extensively throughout the last 200 years. As I stood there alone on Castle Hill, the breeze once more rustled through the branches and stirred the reeds down below. I thought I heard a woman’s voice in the distance, and I decided it was time to go. ●



**Dr David Harrison** is a lecturer in history, currently at Liverpool Hope University, and has a general interest in the byways of history, including ghosts and folklore. David’s specialism is in the history of Freemasonry and he is the author of *The Genesis of Freemasonry*, a best-selling work which looked at the mysterious, magical origins of the Craft in the history of English Freemasonry. This was also the subject of his PhD thesis at the University of Liverpool. A second book is in preparation.

**ANCIENT GHOST:**

Castle Hill, overlooking Newton Lake, is topped by a Bronze Age burial mound. Is this ancient site the true origin of the White Lady – and what is the history of the ghostly monk also seen here? © David Harrison





# THE UFO COP

**CRISPIN ANDREWS** meets Gary Heseltine, the Yorkshire detective constable who has gathered a compelling body of evidence for extraterrestrial activity from some of the most reliable witnesses - police officers.



**AT THE TURN OF** the last century, a popular song told Music Hall audiences: 'If you want to know the time, ask a policeman'. People might not have thought the good old British Bobby so reliable, though, if they'd known about a report filed in December 1901 by two West Yorkshire officers.

There was nothing the slightest bit down-to-earth about what PS John Johnson and PC Clark saw one snow covered night in the village of Haworth. Walking their usual beat, they were in jovial mood, until suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere, a green glow lit up the entire area. A hundred feet above, a bright cigar-shaped object hovered. For 15 minutes, it moved slowly and silently across the night sky before disappearing into the distance.

Similar objects were spotted by locals in nearby Keighley and Shipley. But what must witnesses have thought? *Pearson's Magazine* had published *War of the Worlds* four years earlier, but surely aliens and UFOs weren't real? The Wright Brothers hadn't even flown their first aeroplane yet, and this was definitely no hot air balloon.



**THE CROFTON INCIDENT:** In Crofton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, PC Pat Tunney (pictured in his retirement) was checking on a couple of shops during the early hours of a winter's morning when he noticed three green lights approaching from around a mile away. His first thoughts were that it was a low-flying aircraft. Then he became conscious there was absolutely no sound. The lights were horizontal as they flew toward him at an altitude of only 200 feet. When the lights were approximately 200 yards from his position they suddenly banked to the left in total silence and sped off in an amazing burst of acceleration. At their closest point the officer described the lights as green spheres each the size of a car.

given talks on police UFO sightings all over the UK. Gary believes the testimonies he's recorded from more than 800 police officers gives credence to an evidence base that otherwise tends to be derided in the mainstream media.

Gary explains that 'many officers fear ridicule and are reluctant to come forward, or if they do they don't want their names mentioned'. Gary himself works for British Transport Police in Leeds but, although this fact is available on the internet, senior police officers have banned him from disclosing it on his website.

'If I was going to court I would want to take my best evidence, and it's no different with my UFO investigations,' he says. 'These aren't bleary-eyed hallucinations from the middle of the night: they're testimonies from reliable witnesses that correspond with what we already know about UFOs.'

It was 1975 when the then 15-year-old Gary Heseltine had his own encounter, in his home town

Almost a century later, an officer who'd had a teenage encounter with a UFO made a firm judgement on the Haworth case. For Gary Heseltine it was a straightforward CE1 – a close encounter of the first kind. It's the earliest of more than 350 UFO sightings by British police officers Gary has collected and now publicly displays on his website [www.prufospolicedatabase.co.uk](http://www.prufospolicedatabase.co.uk). In March this year Gary's research won him the 2010 Disclosures Award at the Paradigm Research Group's X Conference in Washington.

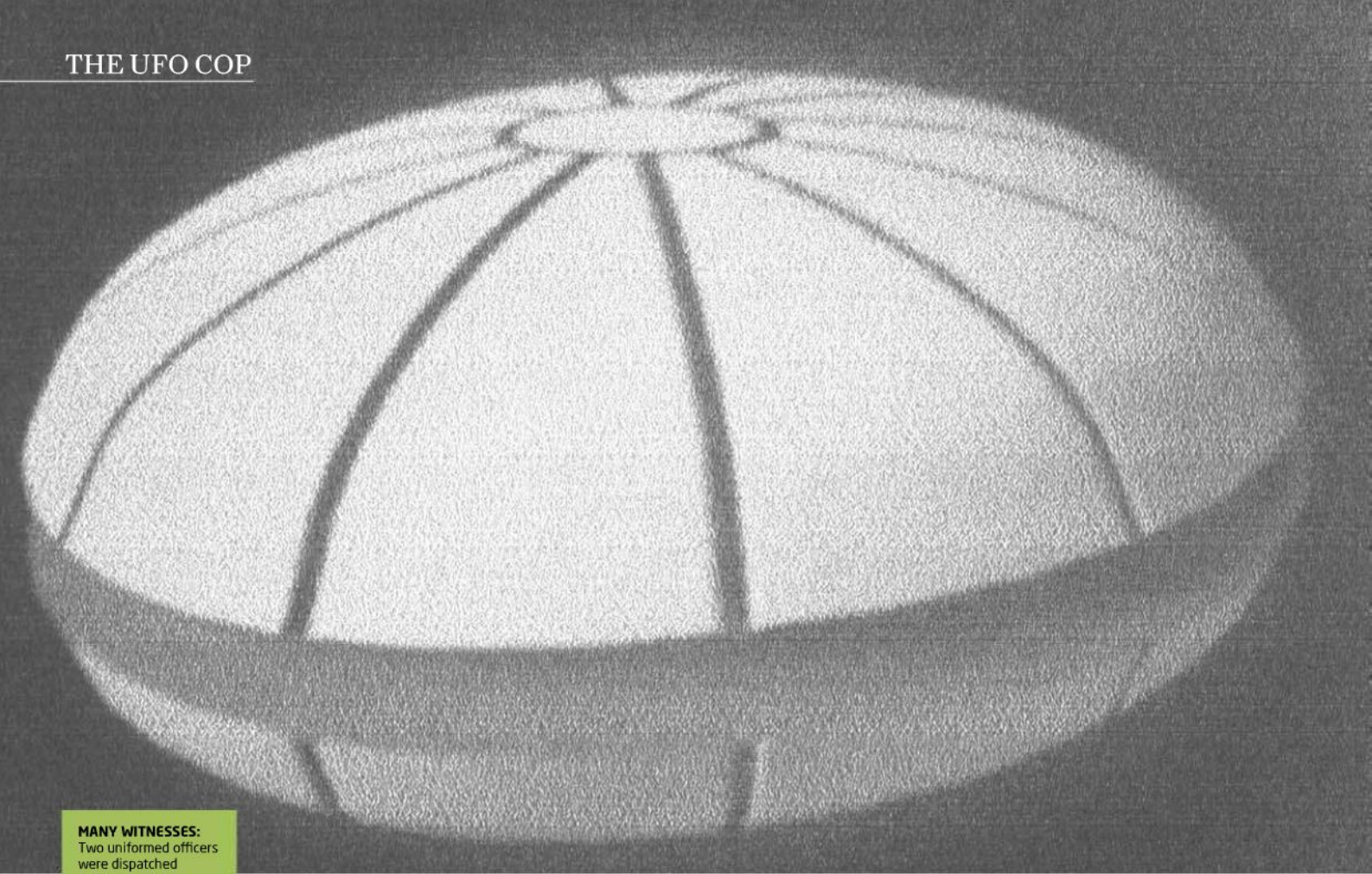
'People see police officers as matter-of-fact sorts, who tell things the way they are,' says the detective constable, who's

**'GARY BELIEVES THE TESTIMONIES HE'S RECORDED FROM MORE THAN 800 POLICE OFFICERS GIVES CREDENCE TO AN EVIDENCE BASE THAT OTHERWISE TENDS TO BE DERIDED IN THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA.'**

DC Gary Heseltine is keen to hear from any police officers, retired or serving, with a UFO story to tell. He can be contacted through his website: [www.prufospolicedatabase.co.uk/](http://www.prufospolicedatabase.co.uk/)



**AWARD WINNER:** DC Gary Heseltine outside the Press Building in Washington DC, where he received his award for his police evidence website at the PRG X Conference. © Gary Heseltine



**MANY WITNESSES:**

Two uniformed officers were dispatched to Russell Road in the Moseley area of Birmingham to investigate reports of UFO sightings. They saw an object the size of a double-decker bus hovering above some nearby trees on Dogpool Lane, Stirchley. It had a horizontal bar of orange light at its centre and was surrounded by a blue energy field. After a few seconds the object appeared to shrink in size and vanish from view. Further reports from members of the public followed and unconfirmed reports allege that several other police officers also saw the object from the vicinity of the West Midlands Police training school at Tally Ho.

of Scunthorpe, in Yorkshire.

One night, he was out walking with his girlfriend Dawn, when a bright light cut across the pathway between the playing fields of Frederick Gough School and some vegetable gardens. At once, all the lights went out in a nearby housing estate. A second power cut in another part of the estate, moments later, spooked the teenagers into a rapid dash home, where Gary was just in time to see the same object glide silently over his parents' house. Within

**"THESE AREN'T BLEARY-EYED HALLUCINATIONS FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT: THEY'RE TESTIMONIES FROM RELIABLE WITNESSES."**

seconds, the entire neighbourhood was in total darkness.

'Our parents didn't believe us, said the power cuts were a coincidence,' Gary recalls, 'and we were worried people would make fun of us if we said anything, so we kept it to ourselves.'

Intrigued by the experience, Heseltine flirted briefly with the world of UFOs. He joined the British UFO Research Association and bought a few books on the subject, but by the age of 19 he was in a long-term relationship with a new girlfriend and had a young daughter.

'Holding down a full-time job and a mortgage, life took over,' he says. 'It wasn't really until I was in my sixth year as a police officer in the mid-nineties when the *X-Files* and Graham Birdsall's *UFO Magazine* inspired me to get back into UFOs.'

Gary now realises that he experienced a close encounter of the first kind, in 1975.

'It has all the classic characteristics: the object moved in silence at a 60% angle at about two to three hundred feet,' he says.

During his 15-year hiatus, ufology had become a much more

precise science and Heseltine was both impressed and frustrated.

'There are so many well-documented sightings and encounters, but still the mainstream media mocks,' he says.

It was this drive to prove the credibility of the evidence that led him to set up his online database. Adding credence, many of the reports come from more than one officer. Gary recounts how in 1966, on a quiet moonlit road near Bristol Lulsgate Airport, PC Lester Stenner and a colleague's police vehicle stalled at the same time as they spotted an oval UFO approximately 100 feet off the ground. The object hovered for ten seconds, and only when it moved away did the engine of their vehicle, its headlights and nearby street lamps, come back on.

Another report explains how, the following year, PCs Clifford Waycott and Roger Willey chased a pulsating low-flying cross through the Devon countryside. At times the object slowed to 50 mph, they said, and at one point came to a stop in mid-air. Although the officers' vehicle reached speeds of up to 90mph and closed to within 400 yards

**MOTHERSHIP:**

PC Eric Rayment, one of the witnesses to one of Gary Heseltine's favourite sightings, a colossal UFO over Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire, which was the focal point of many smaller 'craft'.



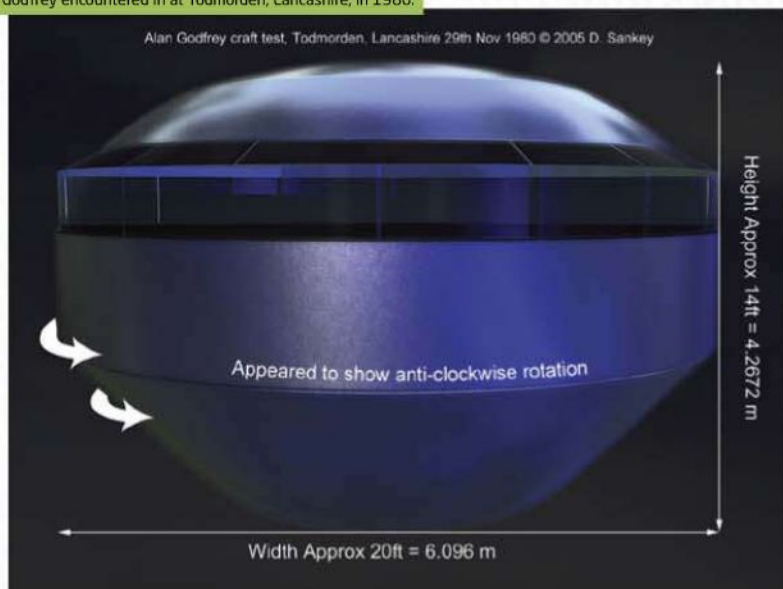
of the object, the UFO eventually accelerated away. Nearby they saw a second UFO, silent and cross-shaped like the first. A few hours later, in the skies above Glossop, Derbyshire, six police officers saw the same fiery cross.

From the 50s, right though to the present day, Gary's data base recounts numerous tales of police officer encounters with unidentified flying objects and strange nocturnal lights. In the year of Gary's own encounter, a UFO came within 30 metres of PC Fred Pullan as he patrolled Salford Docks in the early hours. Pullan's night shift colleague also saw the object.

Two years later, a couple of uniformed officers (who didn't give their names) spotted a bell-shaped UFO emitting a bright red light as it hovered in silence near a lake in London's Hainault forest. Later that year, over the course of several hours, 17 Cumbria Police officers saw a diamond-shaped UFO in separate sightings around Lake Windermere.

Gary also has confirmed police sightings from Chipping Norton, Nottingham, Tyneside, Wigan, Gosport, Carmarthen, Stoke-on-Trent, Banbury, Nuneaton, Liverpool, Evesham, Morpeth, Sunderland, Farnborough and Dumfries. He gets his information from local and national papers, UFO groups, cases released under the Freedom of Information Act, books by experts like Nick Redfern and Robert Chapman, and also first-hand contact with police officers themselves.

**FAMOUS CASE:** An artist's impression of the craft PC Alan Godfrey encountered in at Todmorden, Lancashire, in 1980.



**"THIS MUST HAVE BEEN A REAL MOTHERSHIP SCENARIO. THE SHEER SIZE AND PROXIMITY OF THE OBJECT SHOWS THAT THE OFFICERS COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN."**

He says: 'I always confirm the officers' credentials, take notes during our first meeting or conversation and then check for discrepancies when the officer has written up their account. I'm pretty good at sussing out whether someone is genuine, usually within the first few minutes.'

A few years back, a former police constable, Eric Rayment, told Gary how in 1978 he and two colleagues saw a huge object, the size of football field, in the sky, just outside the Buckinghamshire village of Long Crendon.

Gary says: 'This must have been a real mothership scenario. The sheer size and proximity of the object shows that the officers couldn't have been mistaken. Lots of smaller objects buzzed around it as it moved - maybe smaller craft?'

Gary is not the only Yorkshire police officer to have encountered UFOs. The late Tony Dodd, an officer for 25 years, became chief investigator for *UFO Magazine* after an encounter on the Yorkshire Moors in 1978, and two years later, PC Alan Godfrey was believed to have been abducted in Todmorden, West Yorkshire. A good proportion of the cases on Gary's database are from the same region.

He is sure there's something out there and hopes the aliens will show their hand in the run-up to 2012.

'To them, we must be like the



**TOP SIGHTING:** One early morning in the winter of 1975, PC Robert Tomlinson was on mobile patrol on Wakefield Road near Normanton, West Yorkshire, when he saw a huge UFO hovering low on his left. He estimated the object's altitude as being in the region of 200-300 feet. It was shaped like a child's spinning top. There were lights all around the lower rim, where there were also a number of rectangular windows.

Galapagos Islands,' he says.

'There's such a rich diversity of life on Earth that no wonder we're of interest. Imagine if you found a colony of 24-legged ants in your back garden: people would want to watch them, study them and the more unscrupulous amongst us would probably want to steal them and even dissect them. Maybe that's how aliens see us, like a colony of 24-legged ants.'

DC Heseltine's still frustrated, though. In Brazil he's seen how the government openly works with UFO experts to get the word out, whereas in Britain, even after South Wales and Gwent police put out a press release about a high-speed chase between one of their helicopters and a UFO, and the incident was reported on the front page of *The Sun* newspaper, Gary has found there's no official log of the incident.

'If someone calls, saying their cat's stuck up a tree, the police make a log,' he points out.

Until recently, the Long Crendon case was Gary's favourite. In the past few weeks however, he's been contacted by three police officers who when off-duty took digital images and video clips of an unidentified cylindrical object, about 700-ft long.

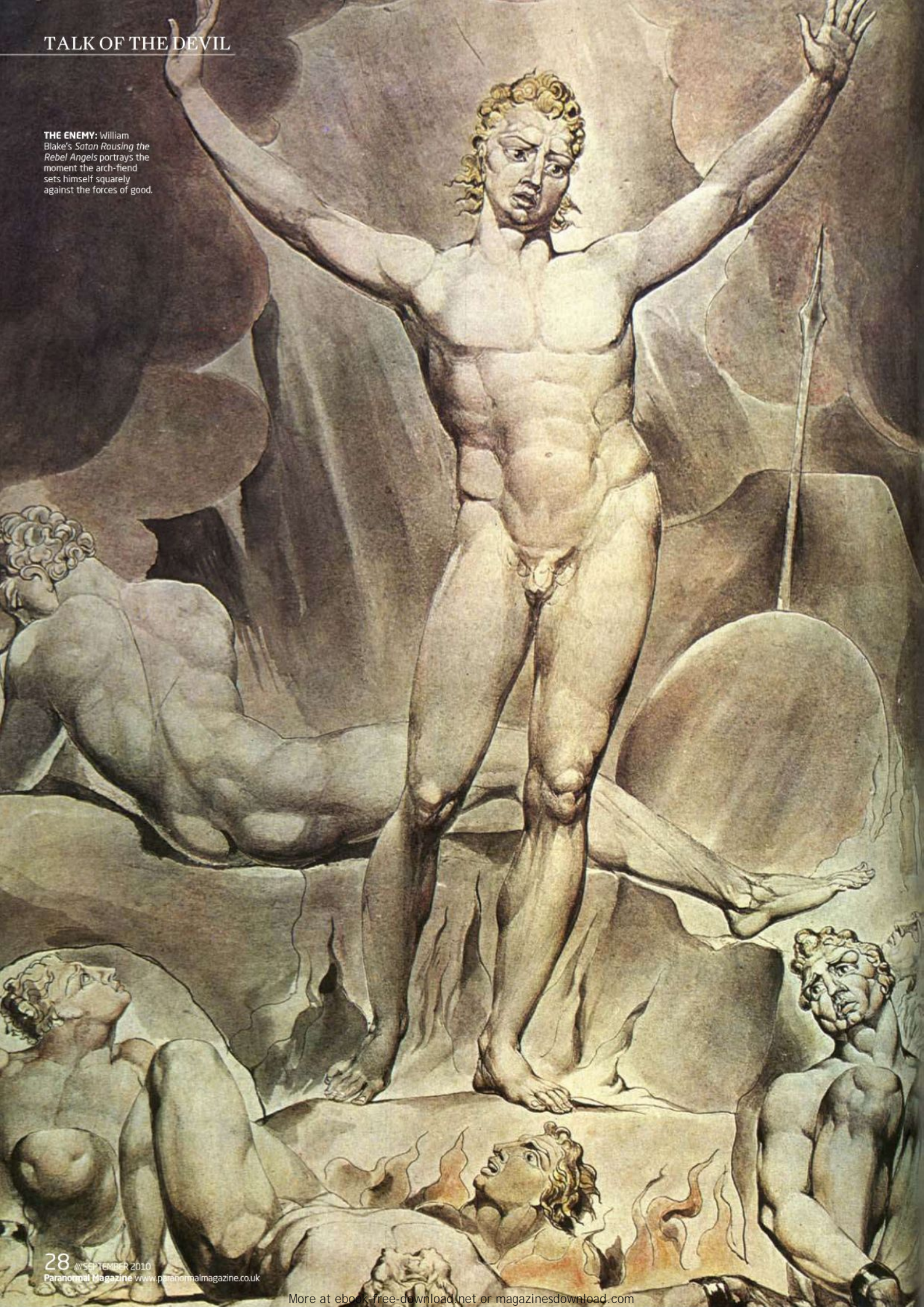
'This could be the best yet,' says Heseltine who, like a true detective, is still scrutinising the evidence before coming to any firm conclusions. ☉



**Crispin Andrews** is a freelance writer and journalist. He has always been interested in the paranormal and mysteries, particularly werewolves and unexplained phenomena. He writes for a wide range of magazines, such as *Britain*, *Teachers*, *Wisden Cricketer* and *Pet People*.

## TALK OF THE DEVIL

**THE ENEMY:** William Blake's *Satan Rousing the Rebel Angels* portrays the moment the arch-fiend sets himself squarely against the forces of good.



# Talk of the Devil

In the first of a two-part feature **LEO RUICKBIE** reveals the history of the force of evil known in the Western tradition as variously Satan, Lucifer, the Enemy, the Adversary, and most commonly the Devil. In part one Leo reveals the Devil's origins and traces his evolution into the Middle Ages.

**THE PRIEST APPROACHES** the bed, a smile on his face. His words are kindly as he addresses the girl bound to the bed frame.

'Hello, Regan. I'm a friend of your mother's. I'd like to help you.'

The girl looks at him. 'Why not loosen the straps then?'

'I'm afraid you might hurt yourself, Regan.'

'I'm not Regan.'

'I see. Well then, let's introduce ourselves. I'm Damien Karras.'

'I'm the Devil. Now kindly undo these straps!'

It is an unforgettable encounter in a film that would be regarded as the scariest of all time (AMC/

Harris Interactive poll, 2006). As one of the taglines to *The Exorcist* put it 'Somewhere between science and superstition, there is another world. The world of darkness.' And millions of us have gone there – at least director William Friedkin's version of it.

Possession is taken as perhaps the most compelling proof of the existence of the Devil. It was certainly what convinced psychiatrist M. Scott Peck that he was real (*Glimpses of the Devil*, 2005). But just who or what is the Devil? And is possessing young girls really the best use of the Arch-Fiend's time?

The Devil, we should not forget, is a relative newcomer. The pagan peoples of Europe had their own bogies and beasts to worry about, from Loki leading the *jötnar* and hordes of Hel into the last battle against the Norse gods, to the Morrigan and Caoránach, so-called mother of demons, and the whole race of Faery who bedevilled the Celts.

The word *devil* only entered the English language in the 8th century coming via Latin from the Greek *diabolos*. Meaning 'slanderer', the Greek was used in the third to first century BCE translations of the Hebrew Bible.

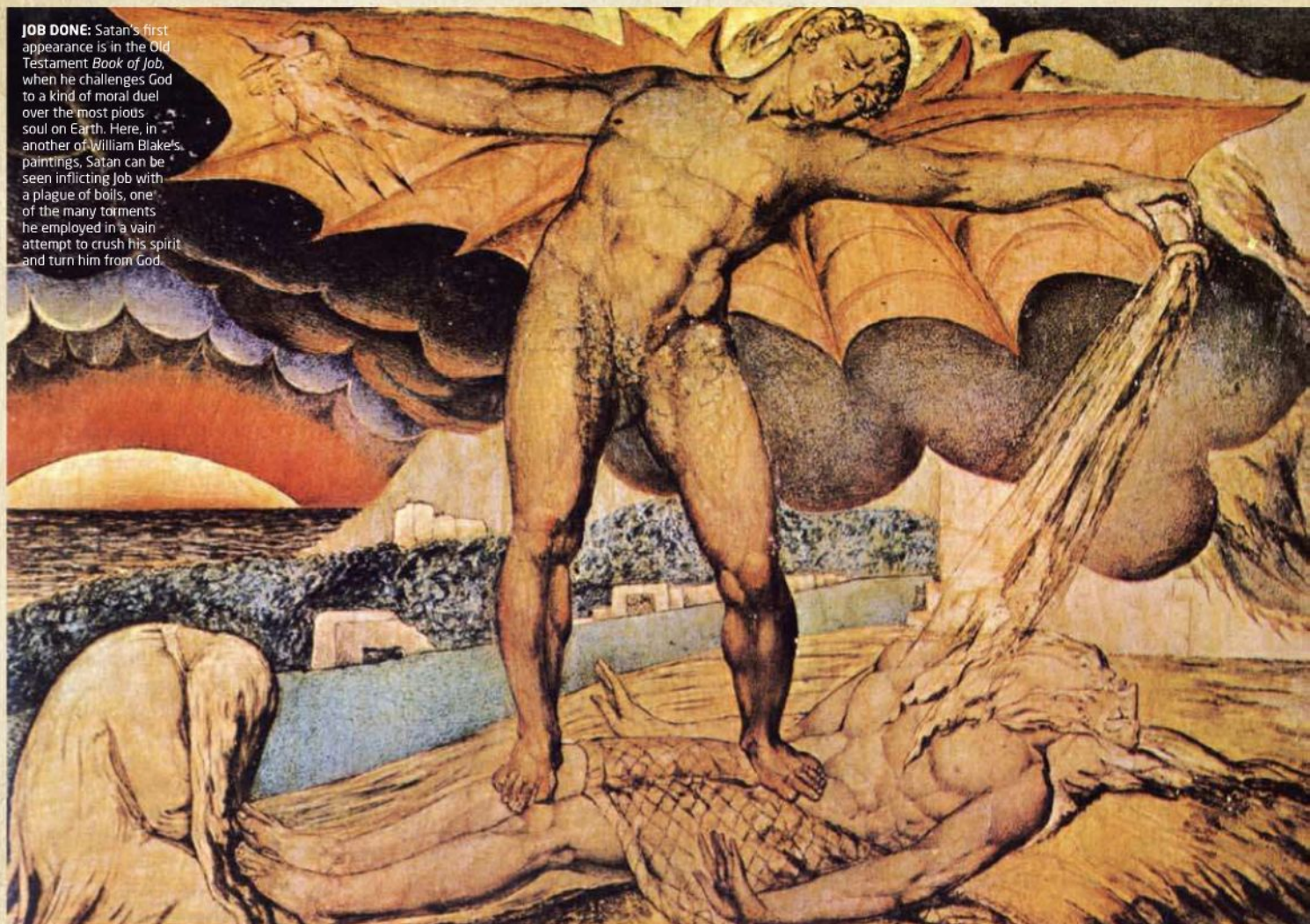
The Devil as we know him today began his career as Satan – the Accuser or Adversary of the Hebrew deity Yahweh (or Jehovah), whom Christians nowadays just call God. Yahweh himself was far from pleasant back in the old days. ●

**'The Devil as we know him today began his career as Satan – the Accuser or Adversary associated with the Hebrew deity Yahweh (or Jehovah).'**



**BESTIAL:** Detail of a medieval painting by Fra Angelico showing Satan as he was often portrayed in the Middle Ages, as a sub-human monster devouring the souls of the damned.

**JOB DONE:** Satan's first appearance is in the Old Testament *Book of Job*, when he challenges God to a kind of moral duel over the most pious soul on Earth. Here, in another of William Blake's paintings, Satan can be seen inflicting Job with a plague of boils, one of the many torments he employed in a vain attempt to crush his spirit and turn him from God.



**'He is the author of evil; he is Satanail who was thrown from heaven with his rebels; he is equated with Mastema, the angel who provoked God to test Abraham; he is the licentious Asmodeus; he becomes Samael, the angel of death in the Jewish Talmud.'**

In Exodus (20:1-6) we find him berating his people, telling them 'I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God' - hence no golden calves and such like. He had a strong thirst for vengeance - 'visiting the iniquities of the fathers on the children' - and happily led his chosen people to destroy everyone and everything in their path. Satan had a good teacher.

We first find Satan in the Book of Job (probably written after 537 BCE), 'when the sons of God came to stand before the Lord,

Satan also was present among them'. Yahweh boasted that in Job he had an exemplary believer, but Satan suggested that God's protection was what kept Job in the fold. 'Does Job fear God in vain?' he asked. Here the classic role of tempter is first played out, tempting not man, but God.

Yahweh succumbed and granted Satan his commission: 'Behold, all that he has is in your hand; only put forth your hand upon his person'. Satan got to work. Job's oxen were stolen and his

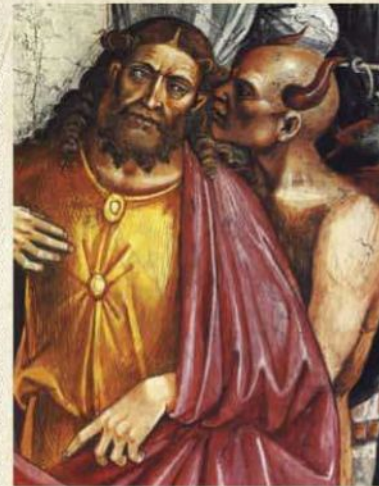
servants murdered, 'the fire of God' destroyed his sheep and some more servants, his camels were stolen and yet more servants were slaughtered, a violent wind blew down the house where his brother and children were feasting, crushing them all to death.

Job was understandably distraught, but kept his faith. Satan was not one to give up easily and persuaded Yahweh to grant him further permission to abuse Job. A plague of boils followed and Job threw himself on a dunghill, wishing for death. His wife and friends all tried to turn him against Yahweh, but Job refused to blame him. Yahweh finally relented and decided Job should be rewarded for his loyalty. The spots cleared up, he had more children, amassed an even greater fortune and lived to 140.

Satan appears again in the Book of Zechariah (3:1), a text supposedly written by one of the so-called minor prophets about the year 520 BCE. In a vision Zechariah saw 'Joshua the high priest standing before the angel



**INHUMAN:** In this 18<sup>th</sup> century engraving of the Gates of Hell, the artist has made an attempt to cover all the aspects of the Devil's appearance settled on in the Council of Toledo many centuries before (as well as perhaps adding a few of his own). The result is a weird chimera of human and animal forms, intended to highlight the unnatural as well as the supernatural essence of evil.



**SPREADER OF DISCORD:** In this detail from Signorelli's celebrated fresco (1499-1504) in the Duomo in Orvieto, an almost-human Devil can be seen whispering evil into the ear of the Antichrist.

brief details in Mark are fleshed out in Matthew and Luke with the addition of supposed dialogue.

'The tempter' approached Jesus, saying 'If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread'. Jesus retorted with: 'Man shall not live by bread alone'. The Devil then took him to the top of the Temple in Jerusalem and said: 'If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up'. Jesus replied: 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God'.

The Devil tried again, taking him to the summit of a high mountain, showing him the world stretched

**TEMPTATIONS:** Satan's early role has largely been that of a tempter, firstly of God the Father and then, in the New Testament, of the Son. In this 15<sup>th</sup> century French painting, the Devil has the appearance of a kind of fiendish second-hand car salesman, as he tries to persuade an unimpressed Jesus to test his faith, turn stones into bread or become lord of the Earth.

of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him'. But Yahweh took a shine to the raggedly attired Joshua and said to Satan 'The Lord rebuke you, O Satan!' Here Satan was clearly acting in his role of accuser and Joshua, like Job before him, is cleared of all charges.

In other 6th century BCE texts we read of Satan standing up against Israel and inciting David to make a census (1 Chronicles 21) and Satan is equated with the 'Angel of Yahweh' who gave Balaam such a hard time about his ass (Numbers 22). Confusing matters, 'satan' in the more general sense of adversity or accusation also crops up in several other books of the Old Testament.

As similar sounding or acting beings he enjoys further adventures in the non-canonical Apocrypha. He is the author of evil (Wisdom 2:24), he is Satanail who was thrown from heaven with his rebel angels (2 Enoch 19) and the seducer of Eve in the Garden of Eden (2 Enoch 31). He is equated with Mastema, the angel who provoked God to test Abraham

## 'The Devil showed him the world stretched out below, saying: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me".'

by asking him to sacrifice his son (Book of Jubilees 17:18). He is the licentious Asmodeus in the Book of Tobit. He becomes Samael, the angel of death and 'chief of satans' in the Jewish Talmud.

However, it was in Christianity that the Devil was to play his greatest role. In the New Testament the temptation in the wilderness is one of the keystones of Jesus' career, recounted in three of the four Gospels (Matthew 4, Mark 1, Luke 4). Jesus was specifically 'led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil' (Matthew 4:1). Dating from the first century CE these writings all tell of how the Devil appeared to Jesus during his 40 days and nights of fasting in the desert. The







**WAR IN HEAVEN:** John Milton exploited the concept of the Fallen Angel in 1668 with his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, in which Satan is seen as a flawed being brought down by his own pride and arrogance, rather than as an inhuman creature. This version of the Devil appealed to theologians wishing to distance themselves from what they considered the wild superstitions of the early church, and also to occultists.

out below, saying: 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me'. Jesus replied: 'Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and only him shalt thou serve' (Matthew 4:3-11). Satan's role here is little different from that played out in the Old Testament, but it would not stay that way.

According to the Gospel of Luke (10:18), Jesus told his followers: 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven'. In the Book of Revelation, which only found its way into the Bible in 367 CE, we read: 'And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him' (12:9).

Later Church writers, such as Tertullian and Origen in the second and third centuries CE, identified Satan with a character called Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12): 'How thou art fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son

## 'From this misinterpretation the Church Fathers developed the idea of Satan as Lucifer the Fallen Angel, as well as the original serpentine tempter in the Garden of Eden.'

of the morning!' Isaiah was actually comparing the King of Babylon to the 'morning star' - *helel* in Hebrew, *lucifer* ('light-bearer') in Latin - which is the planet we call Venus. From this misinterpretation, and much influenced by the dramatic war in heaven depicted in The Secret Book of Enoch (2 Enoch), the Church Fathers developed the idea of Satan as Lucifer the Fallen Angel, as well as the original serpentine tempter in the Garden of Eden.

After such a useful career with Yahweh why did Satan fall? We already had lust as a motivation in

Enoch, but Eusebius (c. 263 - 339 CE) said it was the worst of the Seven Deadly Sins: pride. For we read in John (1, 3:8) that 'the Devil sinneth from the beginning' and in Ecclesiasticus (10:15) that 'Pride is the beginning of all sin'.

Misinterpreting another Old Testament passage concerning the King of Tyre, the Church Fathers thought they had found further reference to Satan when they read 'Thou hast been in Eden... Thou art the anointed cherub... Thou wast perfect... till iniquity was found in thee... I will cast thee to the ground' (Ezekiel 28:1-19). It read like a description of an angel cast out of heaven and we get further evidence of pride, or more precisely vanity: 'Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty'.

But this beauty would not survive the fall from heaven. At the Council of Toledo in 447 CE we get the first official description of the Devil: 'a large black monstrous apparition with horns on his head, cloven hooves - or one cloven hoof - ass's ears, hair, claws, fiery eyes, terrible teeth, an immense phallus, and a sulphurous smell.'

From his beginnings in Yahweh's employ, Satan found himself leading the rebel angels as Lucifer in Christianity. As Christianity spread through Europe its missionaries identified every god and goddess they came across as

so many disguises of the Devil sent to lead people from the Gospel. For example, the Council of Leptines (744) added a new clause to the rite of baptism to 'renounce all the works of the demon, and all his words, and Thor, and Odin, and Saxnot, and all evil beings that are like them'.

Egbert, first Archbishop of York in the 8th century, prohibited what were called 'offerings to devils'. The Canon Episcopi (dated to 906) described how 'some wicked women, perverted by the Devil... ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of pagans'.

**ALL-TOO HUMAN:** Some early writers associated the Devil with Lucifer (the 'light-bearer'). The suggestion that he was 'an anointed cherub', a Fallen Angel rather than a bestial monster, inspired many later writers and artists, as we have seen with William Blake. Blake's contemporary, Antoine Wiertz, went one stage further in his portrayal of *Satan, the Angel of Evil*, where he seeks to imply the seductiveness of sin, rather than the horror of the medieval painters.



Thus the Church assembled its own theological Frankenstein's monster and sparked it into life with the raw current of fear.

His image, too, began to change. In a strange turn towards decency he would take to wearing human clothes. Innumerable witch

## 'At the Council of Toledo in 447 CE we get the first official description of the Devil: "a large black monstrous apparition with horns on his head, cloven hooves, ass's ears, hair, claws, fiery eyes, terrible teeth, an immense phallus, and a sulphurous smell".'

trial records would describe someone attired in the fashions of the day, although a German broadsheet of the 16th century pointed out the dangers of the 'trouser-devil' that drove men to wear insanely baggy trousers.

The descriptions from the late 16th century into the 17th century largely agree that he most often appeared as a large black man dressed in black. He had other colours to his wardrobe, but black was his favourite; 'as proof, said the demonologist Henri Boguet, 'that his study is only to do evil; for evil... is symbolised by black' (*Discours des sorciers*, 1602). He was sometimes young, sometimes old, sometimes female, usually male, sometimes crippled, most often able-bodied and frequently found unable to conceal his cloven hooves. He could take animal form, even appear as a priest or the Virgin Mary, but what of girls tied to beds?

The film *The Exorcist* (1973) was

based on William Peter Blatty's 1971 novel of the same name, itself based on an alleged real-life case of the possession of a boy in Maryland, USA, in 1949. One of the original exorcists, Fr Walter Halloran, told *The Kansas City Star* newspaper in 1995 that, 'I believe this was a genuine case of possession'.

Towards the end of the film Karras asks the older priest Father Merrin, 'Why her? Why this girl?'

Merrin replies: 'I think the point is to make us despair. To see ourselves as... animal and ugly. To make us reject the possibility that God could love us.'

It was Satan and Job all over again. Only this time there would be no happy ending. Merrin dies of a heart attack and Karras, suddenly possessed himself, throws himself out of a window, tumbling down those infamous long narrow steps to his death. ❁

Dr Leo Ruickbie takes the Devil's evolution into the modern world next month.



**DEVIL'S DUE:** By the Middle Ages any form of religious belief or continuation of old customs contrary to the teachings of the church were seen as the work of the Devil. Indeed, they were seen as Devil worship, and were ruthlessly put down. This woodcut shows a witch being carried off to hell by her presumed master.



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](http://www.witchology.com).



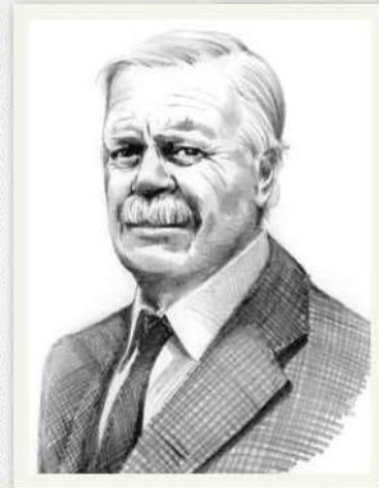
# The Little Grey Men

**BRYAN HOLDEN** has written a new book about Denys Watkins-Pitchford, a popular writer and illustrator on the subject of rural living and countryside sports. But this most practical of men had a mystical side - for one thing, he was convinced of the existence of a race of Gnomes.

**HIS FATHER WAS AN ANGLICAN PRIEST;** his maternal grandfather likewise. He was born and raised in the strictness of a Rectory House, joined in the family's daily prayers and was read an excerpt

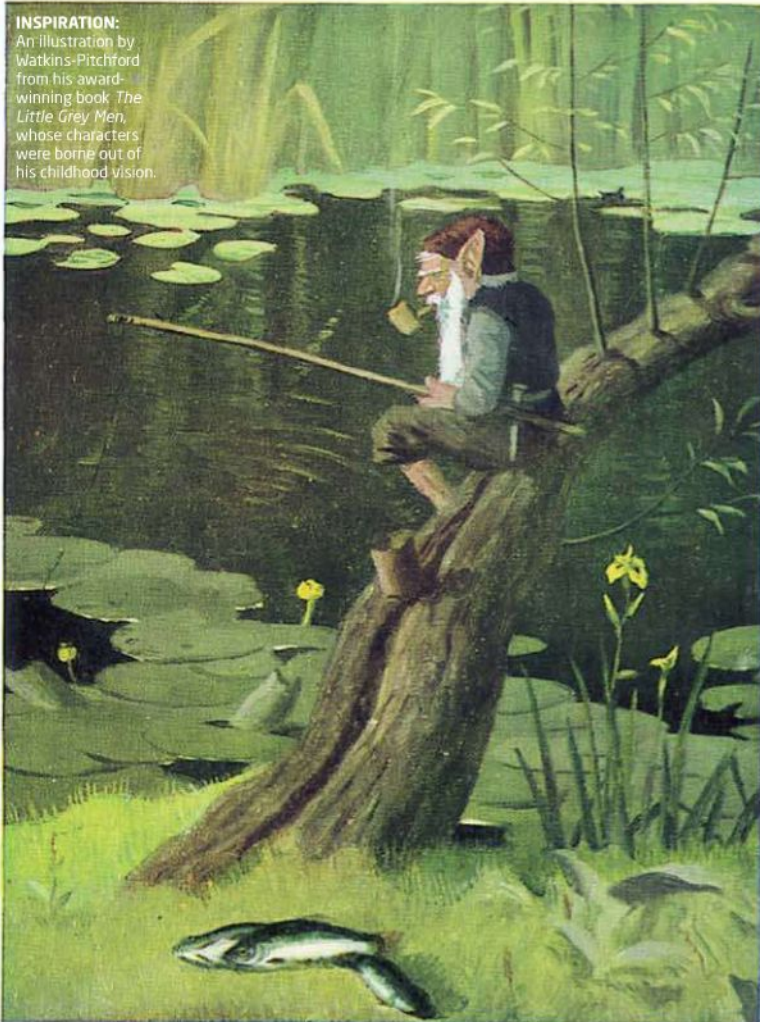
from the Bible every day. He was sermonised by his father from the pulpit in church every Sunday.

He was a sickly child, educated at home, and spent much of his boyhood years as a



**'B.B.':** Denys Watkins-Pitchford, the writer and artist who was convinced he saw a gnome as a child and continued to believe in their existence.

**INSPIRATION:** An illustration by Watkins-Pitchford from his award-winning book *The Little Grey Men*, whose characters were borne out of his childhood vision.

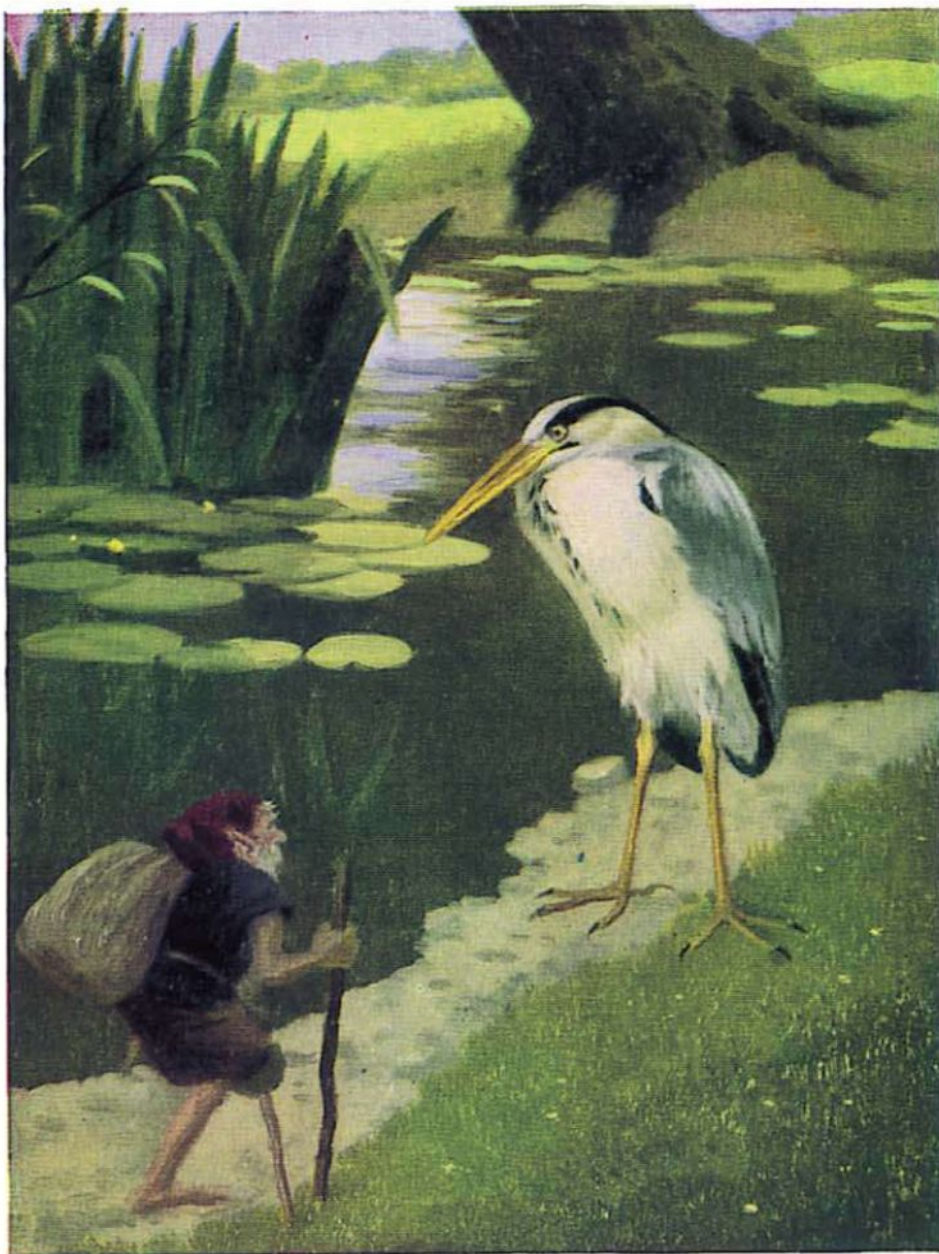


child alone roaming the fields and woodlands of his native Northamptonshire, observing nature in all its many guises.

Despite a religious upbringing he had no taste for conventional religion, yet he believed in the presence of spirits and even the existence of 'the little people', otherwise gnomes, and claimed to have seen a 'diminutive Being' one summer's evening in the nursery whilst occupying an adjacent bed to his sleeping twin brother.

He grew up to become a celebrated author, the writer of the classic tale of the *The Little Grey Men*, the story ●

**“Something made me turn over quickly to face the windows, and there, between the beds was a diminutive Being.”**



**IMAGINATION:** Another illustration from *The Little Grey Men*, in which one of the last four Gnomes in England, Dodder, encounters Sir Herne the heron.

of the last four gnomes in England. The book, published in 1942, won for its author the coveted Carnegie Medal awarded annually to the writer of the most outstanding book of the year for children.

The name of the author was Denys Watkins-Pitchford, the writer of over 60 books under the *nom de plume* 'BB' many of which are children's stories, including the much loved *Brendon Chase*; *Manka the Sky Gypsy* and *Wild Lone*, the story of a one-eared fox.

In his autobiography *A Child Alone*, BB recalls the moment he saw the gnome:

'I lay on my right-side facing away from the tall windows where the soft evening light gleamed through the chinks in the shutters.

**“Here they lived unseen, unknown, more wary than any four-legged or two-legged creature, never showing themselves to mortal gaze, only their wild neighbours.”**

Something made me turn over quickly to face the windows, and there, between the beds was a diminutive Being. It had a round, very red, bearded face about the size of a small crab apple – it had – I think, some sort of a hat on its head, but I was never clear about this. Astonishment was mutual, I was stricken with fright as was the small object which immediately, and with great swiftness, bobbed

down between the beds.'

The child's screams brought the nursemaid running to see what was the matter.

'I've just seem a little "tiny man". He's under the bed!'

The nursemaid laughed, which made the child angry.

'She lifted the bedclothes and looked under the bed – just to convince me I had dreamt the whole thing. But it wasn't a dream. I can still see that little red astonished face!'

The memory of the gnome in the nursery was indelibly printed on BB's psyche. Years later, out walking alone one April day, he came across a stream 'where the roots of the hawthorns are coiled like serpents'. Yet again the apple-cheeked gnome from the nursery was uppermost in his mind.

'Surely, he writes in *A Child Alone*, 'if gnomes there be, here was their dwelling place! Here they lived unseen, unknown, more wary than any four-legged or two-legged creature, never showing themselves to mortal gaze, only their wild neighbours which were their kinsmen'.

In BB's day, in the Edwardian era, the 'little people' were an integral part of the rural life of a superstitious populace that believed in the efficacy of charms, lucky horseshoes, Joan the Wad and the like. Even literary luminaries as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle believed in the existence of fairies.

BB regarded gnomes as spirits of the elemental earth, and with its strong fairy traditions it is not surprising that he should have

looked to Ireland for evidence of the 'little people'. In his *Ramblings of a Sportsman Naturalist* he wrote of Ireland:

'I often had the feeling that coming suddenly around a rock at twilight I might surprise a diminutive Being bustling about his business, or a ring of them, little bigger than grasshoppers, dancing a jig'.

As a result of his writings BB was joined by other believers. A

## 'BB's father believed he was the victim of a curse laid upon him by a beggar in the Holy Land.'

lady wrote saying that motoring in Ireland she stopped the car to look over a low stone wall and there, below her, were little men busy sawing a log.

Another observer on tour in Ireland glanced out of the window of her caravan and saw a tiny man sitting on a boulder smoking what appeared to be a pipe.

'Other sightings were akin to mine', records BB. 'Small men popping up at the end of the bed, nearly all seen by children of about the same age as I was when I saw my bearded sprite.'

There is, however, a significant factor which may well have coloured BB's childhood imagination.

Opposite the Rectory was the edifice of Lamport Hall, the seat of Lord Charles Isham. In the grounds of the hall the eccentric nobleman had built an immense rockery and populated it with an abundance of gnome figures imported from Germany. This was not due to a passing fancy or a hobby: his Lordship really did believe in the existence of gnomes.

In *A Child Alone* BB makes reference to his attendance at a children's party at the Hall, so

there is every likelihood that he would have seen the gnomes in the rockery. But surprisingly he makes no reference to them in any of his writings.

BB's father, Rev Walter Watkins-Pitchford, Rector of Lamport-cum-Faxton, believed he was the victim of a curse laid upon him by a beggar in the Holy Land whom he had refused alms. The aggrieved beggar prophesised that the clergyman's first-born son would die at an early age, and then the first-born of his second son (BB), neither of whom had yet been born.

Years later the curse was fulfilled with the death of Engel, the Rector's eldest son in his early teens, and later, the death of BB's son Robin aged only 9 years.

From his various writings, many of which detail his innermost thoughts, there is little doubt that BB was a firm believer in the paranormal.

In *A Child Alone* he records 'a somewhat weird and sinister episode' which took place on the day of his birth. The doctor arrived at the Rectory and the parlour maid opened the door and ushered him



**WHIMSICAL:** Today Gnomes are familiar to most people only as the garden ornament variety. An impressive display of garden gnomes at Lamport Hall, opposite BB's childhood home, may well have been an influence on his conception of the Little Grey Men.

in. Looking past him at the horse and carriage standing on the gravel drive she saw, to her disbelief, a small black monkey perched on the shoulder of the coachman. She turned to take the doctor's coat and hat, but when she looked again at the carriage, she saw there was no monkey sitting on the coachman's shoulder. It had vanished.

'I have often tried to make head or tail of this story,' writes BB, 'but can come to no explanation.'

The story of the beggar and the unaccountable appearance of the monkey were to remain with him all his life – as in all its essential elements the curse of the beggar was fulfilled. ☉

**EVIDENCE:** Arthur Conan-Doyle's supposedly 'epoch-making' article on the Cottingley Fairies photographs appeared in the Christmas 1920 number of the UK's best-selling magazine, *The Strand*. The article sparked a wide debate on the possibility of the reality of fairies. BB would have been 15 at the time of the article's appearance.



## Fairies Photographed

AN EPOCH-MAKING EVENT  
... DESCRIBED BY

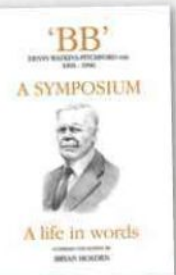
A. CONAN DOYLE

SHOULD the incidents here narrated, and the photographs attached, hold their own against the criticism which they will excite, it is no exaggeration to say that they will mark an epoch in human thought. I put them and all the evidence before the public for examination and judgment. If I am myself asked whether I consider the case to be absolutely and finally proved, I should answer that in order to remove the last faint shadow of doubt I should wish to see the result repeated before a disinterested witness. At the same time, I recognise the difficulty of such a request, since rare results must be obtained when and how they can. But short of final and absolute proof, I consider, after carefully going into every possible source of error, that a strong *prima facie* case has been built up. The cry of "fake" is sure to be raised, and will make some impression upon those who have not had the opportunity of knowing the people concerned, or the place. On the photographic side every objection has been considered and adequately met. The pictures stand or fall together. Both are false, or both are true. All the circumstances point to the latter alternative, and yet in a matter involving so tremendous a new departure one needs overpowering evidence before one can say that there is no conceivable loophole for error.

It was about the month of May in this year that I received a letter from Miss Felicia Scatcherd, so well known in several departments of human thought, to the effect that two photographs of fairies had been taken in the North of England under circumstances which seemed to put fraud out of the question. The statement would have

appealed to me at any time, but I happened at the moment to be collecting material for an article on fairies, now completed, and I had accumulated a surprising number of cases of people who claimed to be able to see these little creatures. The evidence was so complete and detailed, with such good names attached to it, that it was difficult to believe that it was false; but, being by nature of a somewhat sceptical turn, I felt that something closer was needed before I could feel personal conviction and assure myself that those were not thought-forms conjured up by the imagination or expectation of the seers. The rumour of the photographs interested me deeply, therefore, and following the matter up from one lady informant to another, I came at last upon Mr. Edward L. Gardner, who has been ever since my most efficient collaborator, to whom all credit is due. Mr. Gardner, to whom all credit is due, is a member of the Executive Committee of the Theosophical Society, and a well-known lecturer upon occult subjects.

He had not himself at that time mastered the whole case, but all he had placed freely at my disposal. I had already seen prints of the photographs, but I was relieved to find that he had the actual negatives, and that it was from them, and not from the prints, that two expert photographers, especially Mr. Snedden of 20, The Bridge, Wexham, Harrow, had already formed their conclusions in favour of the genuineness of the pictures. Mr. Gardner tells his own story presently, so I will simply say that at that period he had got into direct and friendly touch with the Carpenter family. We are compelled to use a pseudonym and to with-



These and many other paranormal happenings in BB's life are set out in *BB: A Symposium - A Life in Words* compiled and edited by Bryan Holden, Hon Secretary of the BB Society. Published in hardback, the book is strictly limited to just 380 clothbound copies at £35 each (plus £4 p & p) and 20 deluxe leatherbound copies, gold embossed, at £140. They are available directly from Roseworld Productions Ltd 8 Park Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 3SU enquiries@roseworldproductions.com Tel. 0121 704 1002.

# Spirits on The Rocks

Sydney resident **DREW TURNEY** visits one of the most historic areas of Australia's capital and meets long-term residents and enterprising business people who spend every day and night among its ghostly inhabitants.

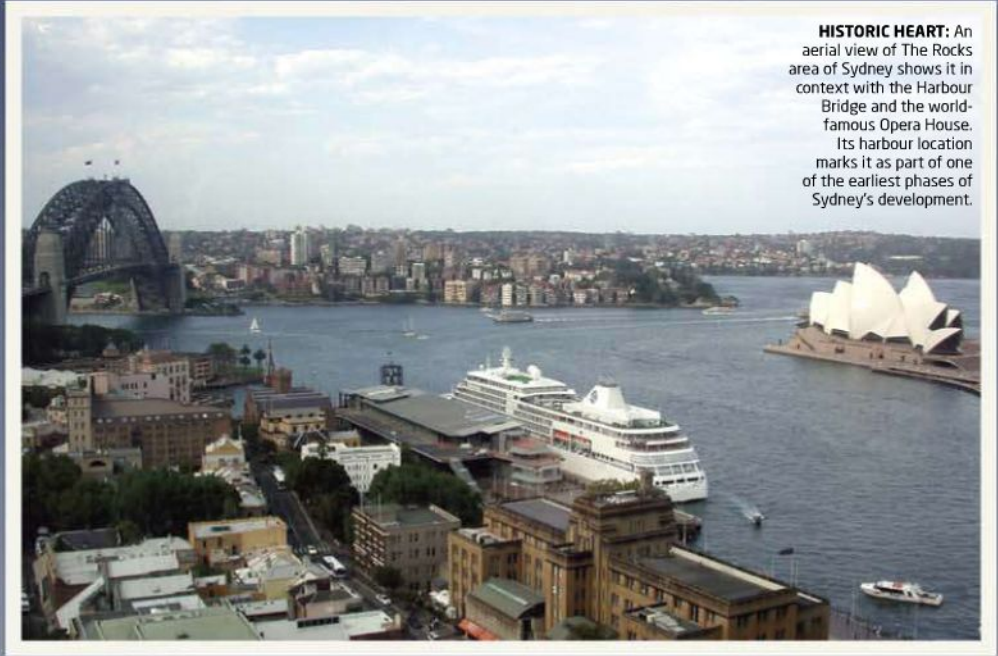
**COLLEEN HARRISON** believes in ghosts, and she not only subscribes to the theory that they're people who can't move on, she thinks they're people who were in a helpless state when they died.

'You'll find a lot of ghosts in prisons and hospitals,' she told me. 'Maybe that's why we have so many ghosts around The Rocks, because in the early days so many people were so disempowered.'

Colleen runs a popular ghost-walking tour business for tourists and if she's right, it's easy to believe The Rocks area of Australia's oldest city is crawling with supernatural phenomena.

When the First Fleet landed in 1788 harsh, arid scrub surrounded them. Today Sydney is a buzzing metropolis with every modern convenience but back then it wasn't even certain the new penal colony would even survive. The British hadn't brought nearly enough crop-seed or stock to sustain the population of just over 1,300 convicts, crew and soldiers, and farming the dry, hot land was nearly impossible.

When the first permanent settlements were built between Sydney Cove and Dawes Point (now a park from which the Harbour Bridge starts its northern journey),



**HISTORIC HEART:** An aerial view of The Rocks area of Sydney shows it in context with the Harbour Bridge and the world-famous Opera House. Its harbour location marks it as part of one of the earliest phases of Sydney's development.

**'Since the 1970s The Rocks has been a sought-after locality for tourists and the chic, but for most of its history it has been a hotbed of poverty, crime, prostitution and disease.'**





it was named The Rocks after the sandstone that went into much of the building.

Since the early 1970s The Rocks has been a sought-after locality for tourists and the chic, but for most of its 180-year history it resembled the darkest periods of London's East End or Harlem, New York – a hotbed of poverty, crime, prostitution and disease.

Today Sydney is a gleaming jewel of bright lights, stunning architecture, crippling real estate prices and modernity. At the northernmost end of the city's main thoroughfare (George Street) you'll find yourself in the modern Rocks, a stretch of galleries, charming old pubs and funky advertising agencies that pay (and charge) a premium to operate here. Even most of the well-known back alleys are crammed with boutique hotels, low-lit bars and artists' quarters.

But there's another side to The Rocks and in order to tackle it you'll need an intrepid spirit and a willingness to get lost among a maze of narrow paths, stairs, nooks and crannies in an area little bigger than one-and-a-half football fields. Old sandstone walls with time-worn wooden doorways rise out of cobbles in the darkness, hard to find and poorly lit.

The rest of Sydney is an explosion of light beyond, but



**PAST AND PRESENT:** The Rocks is a place of contrasts, where 19<sup>th</sup> century stone and brick buildings jostle with smart, modern office blocks glimmering with glass and steel.

## “It’s scary when [the activity] starts but you can feel that they’re happy. There’s a jovial mood in the place.”

down here it's like a parallel universe. The worn-down corners of sandstone blocks and small, tightly-closed shacks and stores look like the ideal home for a restless spirit who can't pass on.

### SIGHTINGS AND STORIES

Few people know more about the history of the ghosts of The Rocks than Colleen and Brian Harrison. Brian, who's lived in The Rocks all his life, heard stories from parents and grandparents of people whose spirits remained after dying in despair, violence or the barbaric medical care or penal system of the day.

Then Colleen saw her own unexplained phenomena.

‘When I first came to live in The Rocks I saw one woman in particular

who walked down Ferry Lane,’ she recalls. ‘She walked up the stairs to the Observatory and I thought she was just in my imagination. It wasn't until later I wondered about exactly what I saw. Until this day I'm not really that sure.’

Harrison thinks you do need a certain level of ‘sensitivity’ to see ghosts, and the number of reports she talks about would suggest many people have it.

‘We probably get two photos a month that are really good,’ she says. ‘On the tours themselves, at least one person a week feels extremely uncomfortable, notices a presence or feels something touching them.’

Of course, it pays to keep in mind that we often see what we want to see. No matter how theatrical or fun the tour is, you'll find yourself

in some very dingy, dark and scary corners where it's suddenly very hard to believe you're in the middle of a big city. Amid the rough-hewn brick walls slick with dank water, the sickly orange of old arc-lights and tiny blackened windows with peeling wooden frames, surely the imagination can take over a little too much.

‘People do have an expectation they'll see something,’ Colleen agrees. ‘I doubted it when I saw an apparition for the first time. But about four years ago I was with another [tour] host and we both saw the same woman. She was dressed in a lovely old-fashioned dress and her hair was in a tight bun.’

‘We both commented to each other about her and the way she glided passed the doorway. It was a very swift action and she looked like she was floating. It wasn't until later we realised we'd seen the apparition who haunts the Hero of Waterloo hotel. After that I felt confident that what I'd seen

before were other apparitions.

'Some people really want to see something but there are those who don't expect it. People have told me they were sceptics but after the tour they really doubted their convictions.'

### SPOOKS AND SPIRITS

Ivan Nelson, publican of the Hero of Waterloo for the last 20 years, is a slight but spritely man in his 60s. A descendant not of Nelson himself but of a Portuguese merchant who warned Nelson of the coming of the Spanish Armada, Ivan's a practical man who doesn't seem given to stories of ghosts and hauntings. But as he showed me around the bowels of the 169-year-old building, he told me about the hotel's two resident spirits: the Kirkmans.

Built by a stonemason near the then-waterfront in Windmill Street, the Hero of Waterloo was home to Thomas Kirkman and his wife Anne. An exhaustive search of old government records bought Anne Kirkman's existence to light, but failed to show where or how she died. She might be the lady Colleen Harrison and her colleague saw gliding past the downstairs window.

I asked Ivan whether it gives him the creeps lying down to sleep every night above a haunted pub.

He replied: 'It's scary when [the activity] starts but you can feel that they're happy. There's a jovial mood in the place.'



A visiting Thai businessman also felt many 'happy' presences in the hotel. The man, who was a monk as well as a businessman, told Ivan that if he left food and gifts out for them they'd leave in their own time. At the bottom of the present wooden staircase into the cellar you can see the top step of the original stone staircase.

**AFTER DARK:** The Rocks takes on a different character after sundown and ghost tours have become an intrinsic part of the area's nightlife. © Drew Turney

**“On the tours, at least one person a week feels extremely uncomfortable, notices a presence or feels something touching them.”**

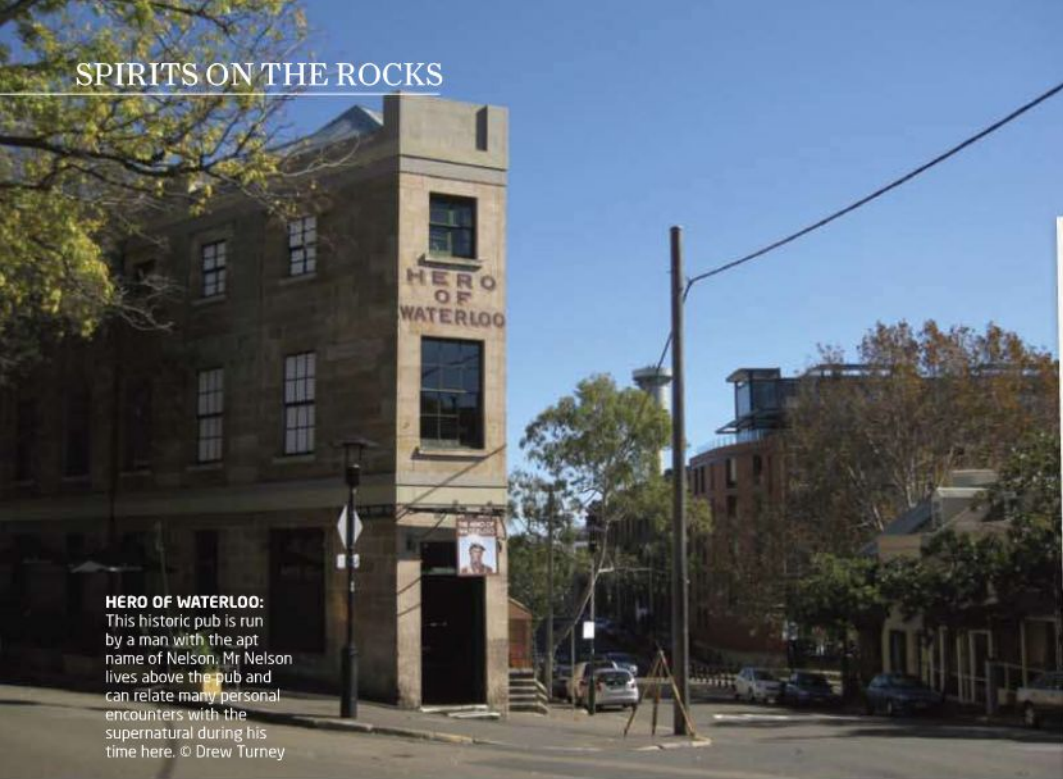


**OBSERVATION:** Ghost tour operator Colleen Harrison believes she saw her first ghost near the old Observatory, the apparition of a woman. © Drew Turney

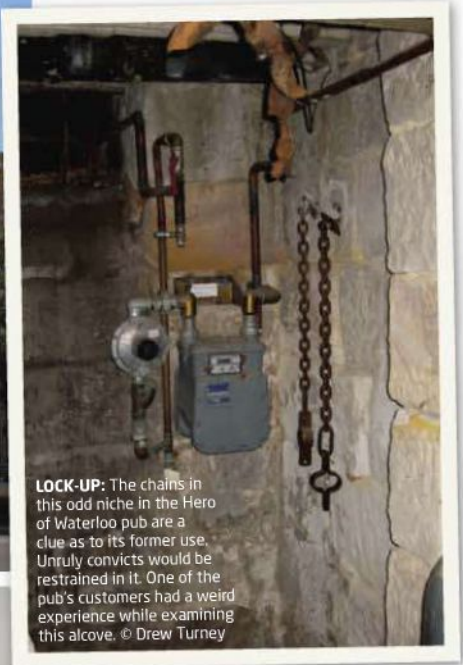
In the very place I was standing when Ivan was telling me this story, many a visitor has felt the rising of the hairs on the back of his neck. The Thai businessman-cum-monk also felt the mood turn when he stood here, telling Ivan something terrible had happened. Might the stairs be where Anne met her end?

Ivan introduces me to Stephen, the strapping Irish lad behind the bar, who has also witnessed the Hero of Waterloo's darker side.

He told me: 'I was showing a pair of American lads around downstairs. As one of them was leaving the lock-up [a small alcove where former publicans would manacle disobedient convicts to the wall for punishment], one of them suddenly jolted to a halt. Something



**HERO OF WATERLOO:** This historic pub is run by a man with the apt name of Nelson. Mr Nelson lives above the pub and can relate many personal encounters with the supernatural during his time here. © Drew Turney



**LOCK-UP:** The chains in this odd niche in the Hero of Waterloo pub are a clue as to its former use. Unruly convicts would be restrained in it. One of the pub's customers had a weird experience while examining this alcove. © Drew Turney

**OBSERVATION:** These chairs in a function room at the Hero of Waterloo have a habit of moving by themselves to face the fireplace. © Drew Turney



**“I was showing a pair of American lads around downstairs [when] one of them suddenly jolted to a halt. Something had pulled him back by the hood of his jacket.”**

had grabbed him and pulled him back by the hood of his jacket. The cross pendant he was wearing was turned around as well.’

The Hero of Waterloo’s regular phenomena are less frightening. It’s not uncommon, first thing in the morning, to find chairs moved about in the function room even though nobody’s been inside since the previous evening. In one room they are found facing the fireplace.

Another common occurrence was that Ivan and his wife would be woken in the middle of the night by beautiful classical music coming

from the piano in the main bar. In each case, the music would stop just as Ivan got down to the bar from the upstairs apartment. But he would find the lid of the piano open.

**THE GIRL AT THE GUMNUT**

If you take a walk along Harrington Street, you’ll pass pubs and restaurants full of young professionals unwinding after work. The white-walled house nestled behind a small courtyard seems much like any other historic building. In fact it’s the second oldest building still standing in

The Rocks. It’s currently empty but was until recently home to the Gumnut Café.

During the café’s lifetime, a customer saw a little girl in old-fashioned dress sitting on the stairs nursing a doll. On another occasion The Gumnut’s proprietor was sorting boxes in the upstairs room when she became convinced someone was watching her even though she was the only one in the room. Was it the same spirit?

It’s believed the ghost is of the young daughter of the Reynolds family who bought the premises in the 1830s.

**SILENT IN THE RUINS**

When a property developer started work on a swanky apartment building in Pottinger Street, a stone’s throw from the water, they found the ruins of a sandstone cottage below street level, buried by time and dating back to the 1820s.

Today Parbury Ruins is an historical exhibit. After climbing down a metal staircase you can see the remains of the old kitchen trough, well and chimney. If you’re lucky, you might also see the wife of the man who owned the house, standing in the gloom in her black dress and veil. Other witnesses have reported being touched by her invisible, phantom presence.

**HORRORS IN HOSPITAL LANE**

What might be mistaken for an abandoned lane turns out to be the site of Sydney’s first hospital, a short

stretch of makeshift shelters and tents adjacent to the old prison cells and police station off Nurses Walk.

The primitive, unhygienic conditions may have killed off more patients than the injuries or illnesses that had brought them to the hospital to start with. So many people died here of malnutrition, stab and gunshot wounds from drunken fights, brutal punishments like floggings and various other mistreatments and calamities that Hospital Lane is one of the most active haunted areas in The Rocks.

Along with manifestations of apparitions, a strong theme here is a sense of unease and discomfort

**‘The primitive conditions may have killed off more patients than their injuries or illnesses. So many people died here it is one of the most active haunted areas in The Rocks.’**

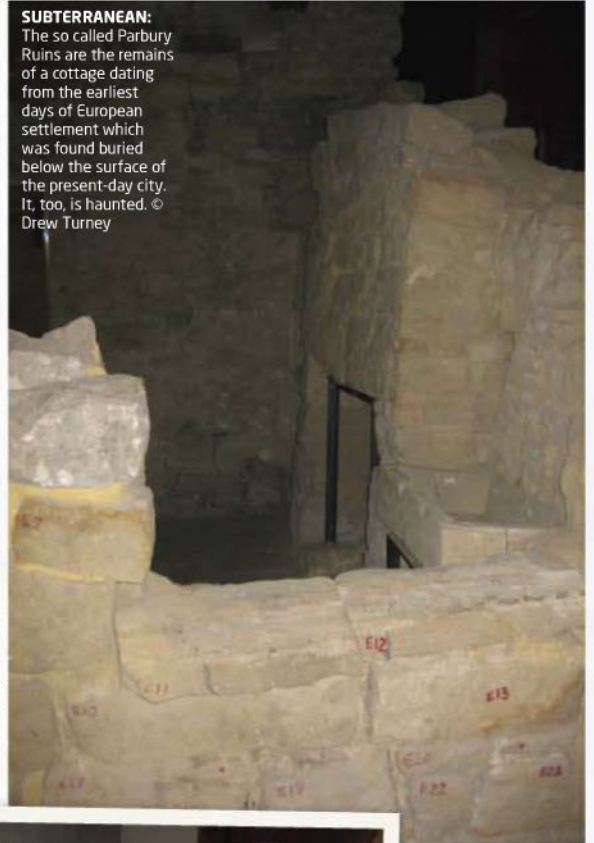
felt by witnesses and even the staff of nearby businesses.

#### SCIENCE AND THEATRE

After reading records and calling several university faculties around the country and particularly in Sydney itself, I was unable to locate a single academic researcher who had made a detailed study of the haunted sites in The Rocks. With a much smaller population than the UK or the USA, Australia has a comparatively smaller academic community, much of whose resources are geared towards business and industry.

I asked Colleen Harrison whether she would be concerned

**SUBTERRANEAN:** The so called Parbury Ruins are the remains of a cottage dating from the earliest days of European settlement which was found buried below the surface of the present-day city. It, too, is haunted. © Drew Turney



**HOSPITAL LANE:** This narrow alley is on the site of the oldest medical station in Sydney. It is considered one of the most haunted sites in The Rocks, perhaps because so many people died here. © Drew Turney

**SMALL SPIRIT:** The ghost of a little girl from Victorian times haunts the former Gumnut Café. © Drew Turney



that proof one way or the other would spoil the ghost tours' market? Her tours are largely theatrical, with assistants dressed in capes and handing out props to participants, and often rely on an atmosphere of the morbid and mysterious for their effect.

On the contrary, however, Colleen said she'd be happy to give investigators access to the sites her tours take in, some of which are off-limits to the public. So, all the ghosts who haunt The Rocks need is someone to step up and take on the challenge. ●




From an early age **Drew Turney** wanted to change the world for the better, but grew up realising it would be easier writing about other people changing it instead. As such he reports on movies, technology, business, society and culture for publications across the world. He has a keen interest in the paranormal but remains a chicken who hopes he never sees a ghost.



## MY BIGGEST FRIGHT

**DARREN RITSON** has been investigating the supernatural all his adult life. As one of the researchers into the South Shields poltergeist, he has certainly witnessed some alarming phenomena. But it was the unknown and invisible things he encountered in dark passageways during two other investigations that really shook him.



**EERIE MANOR:** Doxford House, Sunderland, where Darren Ritson suffered one of his most terrifying experiences to date. © Darren W Ritson

# ALONE IN THE DARK? I WISH I HAD BEEN.

**Darren W Ritson** is a ghost hunter based in North Tyneside and has written seven books on the subject. His books include *Ghost Hunter*, *In Search of Ghosts*, *Haunted Newcastle*, *Paranormal North East* and *Supernatural North*. With Mike Hallowell, he has penned *Ghost Taverns* and *The South Shields Poltergeist*. He founded the North East Ghost Research Team in May 2003, co-founded *WraithScape - Paranormal with a Passion* in 2007 and currently works with the Ghosts and Hauntings Overnight Surveillance Team. They can be found on line at: [www.ghost-team.net/](http://www.ghost-team.net/) [www.mikehallowell.com/wraithscape](http://www.mikehallowell.com/wraithscape)



ANYONE WHO TELLS YOU 'I don't get frightened or nervous while investigating the paranormal' is either a liar or hasn't yet experienced genuine full-on paranormal activity.

We are all human beings and those involved in this type of research are dealing with something we know very little about. It's only natural from time to time that we will lose the plot and run from a ghost. I am being deadly serious when I say paranormal investigating is no joke, it certainly shouldn't be deemed as 'entertainment' and is no laughing matter.

I have been involved in ghost research for the best part of my life and have experienced phenomena that many people would give their right leg to witness but all I can say is 'be careful what you wish for'. Investigating the now famous South Shields Poltergeist case back in 2006 put me in good stead for other, more terrifying investigations yet to come. Looking back on that case, I find that most of the phenomena I witnessed at 42 Lock Street were more bewildering than actually frightening.

But the point when I did begin to feel unnerved was when the polt began issuing death threats via mobile phones. Contagion (an aspect in poltergeisty when investigators and those close to the principal experients begin to experience strange phenomena in their own homes etc) played a large part in South Shields and I couldn't help wondering if the death threats would come my way. It certainly

**'I RAN LIKE THE WIND ALONG THE DARK CORRIDOR ... MY NATURAL SURVIVAL INSTINCT TOOK OVER. I STUBBED MY TOES, BUMPED MY HEAD AND SMASHED MY CLIPBOARD IN HALF AS I RAN STRAIGHT INTO A WALL.'**

**SUDDEN DREAD:**  
The back corridor in  
The Schooner Hotel,  
Northumberland, where  
the author suddenly  
felt compelled to  
run away from an  
approaching presence.  
© Darren W Ritson



wasn't nice to see someone being almost hacked to pieces before your eyes either... by an invisible force that could, if it so desired, do *you* some serious harm too!

Nothing really compares to Lock Street for its interest but I have experienced other frightening moments. In March 2005 I was investigating the many ghosts of the well-known Schooner Hotel on the Northumberland coast. In the back corridor down by the kitchens I heard footsteps coming from the darkness straight towards me. At the same time I felt a foreboding, threatening presence – and it was close by. Although I had ventured down there on my own, I knew I was not alone.

As I started to retreat, the footfalls followed me up the stairs and now they were even closer – and louder. It was at this point I lost it. I ran like the wind along the dark corridor. I had only been down in that location for five minutes and quite frankly that was enough.

Running from ghosts and spooks is really the wrong thing to do, as after all, that was why we were there, but I feel in this case my

natural survival instinct took over and I just needed to get out of there. My all-too hasty escape resulted in my left wrist being almost broken and gashed open. I stubbed my toes, bumped my head and smashed my clipboard in half as I ran straight into a wall. In retrospect it is rather funny, but at the time I was absolutely terrified.

Then there was an incident that will stay with me for the rest of my life during an overnight investigation at Doxford House on December 1, 2008. Doxford House is a magnificent privately owned stately home in the Silksworth area of Sunderland. A medieval chapel is said to lie under the ground at the side of this beautiful mansion. The house is believed to be haunted by the ghost of a former owner, a certain General Charles Beckwith. His shade has been seen on the grand staircase and in the large bedroom upstairs many times since the 1930s.

Thirty minutes into a vigil taking place in the upper level of the house, an unexplained male grunt was heard coming from down a dark and gloomy passageway. I

**'I BELIEVE THAT IF YOU ACTIVELY SEEK THE PARANORMAL FOR LONG ENOUGH, YOU WILL HAVE AN EXPERIENCE SO HARROWING THAT IT WILL LEAVE YOU A GIBBERING WRECK AND WILL MAKE YOU THROW IN THE TOWEL.'**

began to prepare my EVP machine when everyone else present except myself (there were four of us) then heard a male voice saying 'Ouch' as though someone was being hurt. I duly noted down these incidences and then ventured down the dark corridor to make my recordings.

A few steps took me outside Room 1, with Room 29 opposite. Suddenly, I got this feeling that someone was running a hand across my face. At the same time I heard a noise like sizzling static, followed by two distinct footfalls right in front of me. I thought to myself, 'something is coming toward me', and was then overcome with an ice-cold sensation *inside* my body which was accompanied by a feeling of absolute terror. This episode lasted for only a second or so but it left me shocked and shaken. As crazy as it sounds, I believe that something, a ghost or spirit perhaps, had just walked *through* me!

All I can say to readers is that I am positive that these experiences were real and that I have had genuine spiritual interaction with something that felt very untoward indeed. I reiterate: paranormal investigation is no joke and is not to be taken lightly. Remember, many people *have* to live in haunted houses and face these terrifying situations on a daily basis, so next time you think that 'you would love to be scared', or think 'ghost hunting would be fun'... think again.

I believe that if you actively seek the paranormal for long enough, you will have a defining moment: an experience so harrowing, so chilling, that it will leave you a gibbering wreck and will make you throw in the towel and say 'NEVER AGAIN!'

These aforementioned experiences have really come close to making me think twice about it all, yet I still venture out to investigate. I can't help wondering just when, or indeed what, my defining 'quit' moment will be... ●

# Wild Thing!

**SEAN McNEANEY** goes in search of a half-human Wild Man who for centuries was said to terrorize a lonely English hamlet.

**OVER THE YEARS**, I have researched many little known legends from my home county of Lincolnshire. One of the most fascinating tells of a ferocious 'wild man' who once dwelt in the woods near the remote hamlet of Stainfield, situated some 10 miles east of the city of Lincoln.

The creature is described in various accounts as 'naked', 'semi-human', 'covered with hair' and armed with 'a great club' which he used to kill animals and even people.

The wild man of the forest features prominently in the folklore of Europe. But unlike other notable wild men in British folklore, such as the Wild Man of Orford, Suffolk and the Wild Man of Salisbury, Wiltshire, Lincolnshire's wild man appears to have been overlooked in the wider studies of folklore and is little known outside of the county.

Did the Wild Man of Stainfield really exist? Many people believe that because so many stories

about him still persist, there must be a grain of truth in them. But strangely, none of the stories can agree on his identity or indeed the date when he was supposed to have lived.

The best known version of the tale first appeared to my knowledge in *Folklore Round Horncastle* (1915) by the Rev James Alpas Penny, who writes: 'In Stainfield church, near Bardney, are to be seen the helmet of one of the Tyrwhitts of Stainfield, with

**LEGENDARY:** The Wild Man of Stainfield as imagined by the author, in the style of a medieval woodcut. © Sean Mcneaney



the family crest of a wild man, with a dagger hanging underneath it on the wall.'

He believed the legend grew up around the crest and dagger in Stainfield church and dates from somewhere between 1700 and 1850. He then goes on to relate the story of one Francis Tyrwhitt- Drake (a descendant of Sir Francis Drake), who was promised all the lands of Stainfield, including its 280 acres of woodland and the land of neighbouring Lissinglea, if he would kill the wild man who had long terrorized the district.

As the wild man lay asleep on a bank by a pit, his presence disturbed a peewits' nest and the twittering of the angry birds attracted Drake's attention. Seizing his chance, Drake ran the wild man through with his sword. Mortally wounded, the monster jumped up, streaming with blood, and chased Drake for a mile through the fields before he fell dead. According to some versions of the story, the wild man's blood staining the fields gave rise to the name of the hamlet but in truth Stainfield, mentioned in *Domesday*, derives its name from the Scandinavian 'stony feld (field) and ford'.

**'The creature is described as naked, semi-human, covered with hair and armed with a club which he used to kill animals and allegedly people.'**

Another variant of the legend, identifies the wild man as a Stainfield nobleman who had been away fighting in the crusades for so long that when he returned he found he had been dispossessed of his estates. When he failed to reclaim his lands, he went to live in Stainfield woods, where he became so dangerous that Drake-Tyrwhitt was forced to kill him.

This legend goes on to say that Drake was rewarded with the aforementioned lands and he was permitted to have three peewits on the family crest to commemorate



his valour. 'Tyrwhitt' is an old name for peewit (which is also known as a lapwing).

*The English Baronetage* Vol 1, 1741, gives a very different account of the origins of the Tyrwhitt crest, however. It says: 'There is a tradition in the family which has been handed from father to son, that the first of the Tyrwhitts, valiantly defending a bridge (tho' the time not mentioned) was after the action was over, sought after

by the general and found sleeping amongst some bushes and was discovered by the cries and beating of the lapwings from whence he was called Tyrwhitt, and afterwards he had three lapwings assigned him for his coat arms.'

It has been suggested that the story of the wild man was simply an invention to explain the funerary armour - chiefly the aforementioned dagger, gloves and helmet, with a wild man for a crest - which were

**WOODS MEN:** An old woodcut of a wild man similar to the one which features in the Stainfield legend. Notice that he is wielding a heavy branch in the same way the Lincolnshire wild man was said to fight with a club. Image kindly supplied by Dr Karl Shuker.



**CENTRE OF THE MYSTERY:**  
St Andrew's parish church at  
Stainfield. © Philip Wright



**ARTIFACTS:** The interior of St Andrew's church, showing the poles from which the 'wild man's clothes' formerly depended. Parts of the armour of the putative hero who killed him were also formerly on display here but all that remains is this tiny figure of the wild man. The accompanying photo from an old press cutting shows the artifacts before they were removed or stolen. © Sean Mcneaney

**'The monster jumped up, streaming with blood, and chased Drake for a mile through the fields before he fell dead.'**

said to have belonged to the knight who killed him. Curious to see the relics associated with this gory local legend, I contacted the caretaker of St Andrew's, who informed me that regrettably the armour had been stolen from the church in 1995 and now only a small wooden figurine of the wild man that surmounted the helmet remains.

The 'Savage Man' or 'Wodewose' that forms the supporter of the Tyrwhitt crest is a heraldic symbol representing strength, honour and fertility and it was a popular choice of supporter with baronets in ancient warlike days. As a matter of interest, the crest can still be seen on the signboard of the 16th-century Tyrwhitt Arms public house at Short Ferry, near the neighbouring village of Fiskerton.



The pub passed from the Tyrwhitt Drakes in 1943 was often referred to locally as 'The Wild Man'.

A further variant of the tale states that the wild man was killed not by a bold knight but by group of local farmers known as 'The Hardy Gang'. Having had enough of the wild man killing and eating their livestock, they hunted him down and killed him after a fierce combat in a wood between Langton and Stainfield still known as 'Hardygang Wood'.

Yet another version claims the wild man was killed in nearby Fiskerton wood, where it is said an unusual black stone marks the spot (his blood having blackened the stone). I can only speculate that this remarkable stone is the historic Fiskerton Stone, a glacial boulder mentioned in *Domesday* which has been moved to various locations in and around the village over the years (it was once even rescued from a rubbish tip). Local tradition once had it that whenever



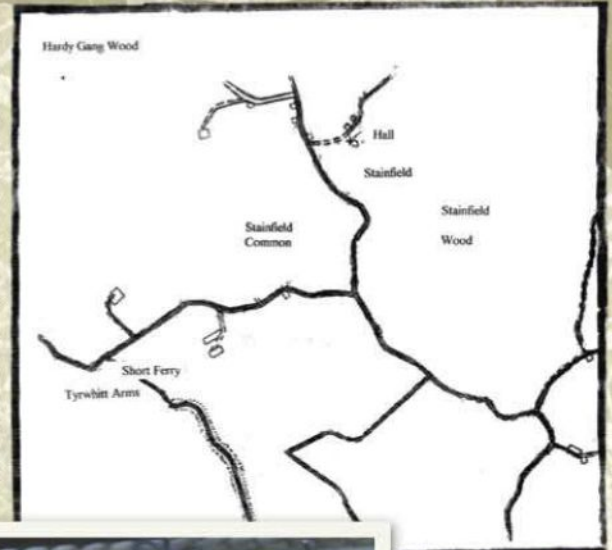
Certainly the clothes I saw in Stainfield Church many years ago, a helmet, gloves and remnants of a leather jerkin, are not inconsistent with such a theory.'

A former resident of the nearby village of Wragby remembered his father telling him that the wild man killed sheep to live on and had nails six-inches long. He was eventually shot dead and his clothes hung in Stainfield church.

The clothing, believed by many to be the wild man's apparel, is in fact the remains of three tattered battle standards and funerary clothing belonging to the Tyrwhitts that once hung above the vicar's stall in St Andrew's church.

The relics are thought to have been removed from the church sometime in the late 1970s and despite my on-going efforts to locate them, their current whereabouts remains a mystery.

In a letter dated 1974, a former resident of Stainfield adds another twist to the saga. She was told a Squire Turner went to the woods one day with his gun and shot the wild man as he lay asleep in the bracken, then buried the body under a stone just outside Stainfield church. Now it would appear the wild man had achieved immortality,



**STAMPING GROUND:** The author's sketch map of the key places relevant to the Lincolnshire Wild Man's story. © Sean Mcneaney



**INN-SPIRING:** The signboard of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Tyrwhitt Arms at Short Ferry shows the family crest with the elements of the legend, the wild man himself and the three peewits or lapwings. © Sean Mcneaney

**'The correspondent writes [in 1974] that she heard her friend's mother talk about the wild man as still alive when she was a girl.'**

there was a thunderstorm or a hanging at Lincoln prison the stone rolled over of its own accord.

Further research into the wild man saga led me to a series of letters published in local newspapers. In a letter headed 'Refuge from the Armada', a reader from Essex offers the theory that the wild man could have been a surviving Spaniard from one of the many ships of the great Armada that was wrecked by storms in the North Sea.

He writes: 'The theory is that a survivor of one wreck, evading capture, escaped inland and lived in the woods around Stainfield. Of strange garb and countenance, speaking a strange tongue and depending on what food he could steal, it is not surprising he terrified the local inhabitants who regarded him as a wild man.

surviving successive attempts to kill him over the centuries, for the correspondent writes that she has 'heard her friend's mother talk about the wild man who was still alive when she was a girl'!

In conclusion, there can be little doubt that colourful stories of a club-wielding savage living in the dense woodland around Stainfield and Fiskerton are just fanciful tales inspired by the unusual supporter on the Tyrwhitt coat of arms and the relics once housed in St Andrew's church.

However, it is likely that over the years, a mass of hearsay concerning one or more harmless vagrants living rough in the woods around Stainfield has perpetuated the wild man myth. One such notable eccentric was the hermit of nearby Sudbrooke Park, a

magnificent 120-acre estate once dominated by the elegant Georgian Sudbrook Holme Manor, which burned down in mysterious circumstances in 1921. The park was redeveloped in the 1970's but many years before, the hermit lived out his solitary existence amidst the forgotten weed choked gardens and wood groves of the estate.

When he died in the late 1950s, in his hut was found a huge pile of letters dating back some 50 years, including his call-up papers for the First World War. Most intriguing of all, at the very bottom of the pile was his personal invitation to ride with the local hunt. Evidently, this latter-day wild man had once held a position of social standing. Why he chose to live out his last days in the forgotten ruins of a once important estate remains a mystery, just one of a chain of intriguing details attached to a fascinating local myth. ●

Turn the page to learn more about Wild Man legends throughout Europe.



**Sean Mcneaney** is a keen student of folklore who has unearthed many little known legends and supernatural tales from his home county of Lincolnshire. When not gardening for a living he is lead singer with Lincoln-based punk rock band The Eccentrics. The band's quirky lyrics reflect Sean's interest in all things arcane.

# The Forest Dwellers

The Lincolnshire Wild Man is just one example of a tale told throughout Europe of savage hairy people living in the depths of the darkest forests. Known as the Woodwose, these beings may represent a folk memory of the remnants of 'ape-men' living alongside humans. **KARL SHUKER** investigates.

**W**hen, in 1735, the pioneering natural philosopher Linnaeus published his *Systema Naturae*, featuring his revolutionary system of classifying plants and animals, *Homo sapiens* was not the only species of human named and recognised by him. Among several others was *Homo ferus*, the wild man, which according to Linnaeus was covered in hair, moved on all fours, was mute, and lived apart from *H. sapiens* in forests, hills, and mountains.

Today, none of Linnaeus's 'other' species of human is recognised by mainstream science. Nevertheless, his European wild man, also known as the woodwose or wudewasa, has such a richly intertwined history of folklore, depictions in medieval art and architecture, and reported true-life encounters, including certain very recent ones, that some cryptozoologists and primatologists wonder whether such beings might indeed have existed in the not-too-distant past, and may even still linger on today in some of Europe's more remote, secluded localities.

But what could they be?

## WILD MEN OR FERAL CHILDREN?

Linnaeus himself delineated various subcategories of *Homo ferus*, of which the most significant was *Juvenis lupinus hessensis* - 'wolf boys', or feral children. These are children believed to have been abandoned or lost by their parents in the wild but subsequently raised there by wolves or other animals. There is little doubt that these were indeed responsible for certain reports of alleged woodwose.

As recently as 1934, for example, a supposed woodwose was briefly spied running through some trees by a party of hunters in the forests near Uzitza in Serbia. Pursuing it, they fired and the entity dropped to the ground, shocked but unharmed. When the hunters



**WOODLAND FOLK:** A late 15<sup>th</sup> century French miniature of a family of cave-dwelling Woodwose. Usually depicted as savage creatures, here they are represented as simple Arcadians. The idea that they could be folk memories of now extinct hominids is an attractive one.



**BESTIAL:** This 1499 work by Albrecht Dürer shows the untamed, savage nature more typical of Woodwose representations. Each is armed with an archetypal club and, like the Lincolnshire Wild Man of the previous article, they seem to be linked to heraldry. The green hair covering the figure on the left provides a significant link with the Green Man figure of folklore.



approached, they discovered to their great surprise that their quarry was a completely naked and somewhat hairy but otherwise normal-looking human youth, approximately 15 years old, terrified, and covered in mud.

Taken back by the hunters to their home village, he was unable to speak any language, but was found to be remarkably fast-moving, could run naturally on all fours, and was able to imitate with startling accuracy the sounds and songs of the various beasts and birds sharing his woodland home, where he had apparently lived for much of his life, feeding upon berries and roots.

Another such case was the Wild Girl of Champagne, France, cited by Linnaeus himself (dubbing her *Puella campanica*) as support for his *Homo ferus* species. She had been confirmed to have survived 10 years (November 1721-September 1731) in this region's forests before being captured at the age of 19. Unusually for feral children, she then learnt to read and write, and became totally rehabilitated intellectually and socially.

**'As recently as 1934, for example, a supposed woodwose was briefly spied running through some trees by a party of hunters in Serbia.'**

### RETURNING TO THE WILD?

A number of so-called wild men have proven to be ordinary humans that for a variety of different reasons – from poverty, mental health issues, escape from persecution or criminal retribution to a simple desire to shake off the burdens of modern life – had abandoned their normal life and dropped out of human society, seeking solace and solitude in the wild, where they end up regressing to an almost bestial existence.

In autumn 1936, for instance, a team of foresters inspecting one of the great forests near Riga, Latvia, unexpectedly encountered an extraordinary apeman-like entity crouching at the base of a tree. When it saw the men, it fled rapidly, swinging itself onto an overhanging branch and climbing upwards with remarkable speed and agility to the very top. When shot at by one of the foresters, the entity shrieked and crashed down onto the ground.

The men seized it and discovered that it was covered in hair and bereft of any clothing. When it was taken back to a village close by, however, the being was recognised as a farm labourer who had disappeared many years earlier. However, he was now no longer able to speak or understand speech, and was capable only of yelling gleefully when meat or fruit was placed before him.

During the Middle Ages, insane people or simpletons were sometimes released into the wilderness to fend for themselves, so that they became little more than wild beasts. According to the Holy Bible's Book of Daniel, moreover, the once-mighty Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II underwent a seven-year period of madness, during which time he lived alone in the wild, crawling on all fours eating grass, and allowing his hair and nails to grow unchecked until he resembled a man-beast instead of a man.

### AT THE SIGN OF THE WILD MAN

There is no doubt that an appreciable component of the woodwose composite is the wild ◊

### Was Grendel a Woodwose?

The eponymous hero's deadly foe, Grendel, in the famous Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf*, is generally thought of as a totally imaginary monster, and has been depicted and classified in many different ways.

Intriguingly, however, some cryptozoological researchers, including American chronicler Thomas J. Mooney, have speculated that perhaps Grendel was actually a man-beast – because he is described in the poem as bipedal, clawed, larger and stronger than humans but somewhat humanoid in shape, very ugly, and residing in gloomy seclusion with his mother inside a cave hidden deep within a forest in Sweden.

If we assume (though it is obviously a very big, unsubstantiated assumption) that Grendel was based upon a real creature, a woodwose or similar man-beast would correspond more closely than any known animal species, including bears.

The Grey Man of Ben Macdhui



Living being or paranormal presence?

In modern times, there have been reports of man-beasts in regions of Britain where it is simply not possible for such a species to exist without having been discovered by science long ago.

Persistent sightings of troll-like entities in the forests of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, for instance, and even a 6.5-m-tall hairy bipedal giant allegedly encountered on Ben Macdhui, Scotland's haunted mountain where the panic-inducing Big Grey Man is said to roam, cannot be readily explained (if accepted as genuine and not hoaxes) by normal cryptozoological theories [see *Paranormal Magazine* issue 42].

Consequently, it has been suggested that beings like these are not corporeal man-beasts at all, but instead are 'zooform' entities - preternatural creatures assuming visible, humanoid form but of occult, paranormal nature and origin.



**BORN TO BE WILD:** This boy was found living in the jungles of Sri Lanka in 1973. About 10 years old, he appeared to have been looked after by a family of monkeys. He was adept at running on all-fours but could not stand up and was unable to speak. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century a boy of similar age was found living wild in the forests of rural France. Cases of feral children may have been more common in Europe in centuries past - if they survived into adulthood they would help to continue the Woodwose legend.

man as a symbol, a personification of Nature or various aspects of it. In traditional rural folklore, the wild man most commonly represents strength, fertility, rebirth and the 'noble savage' uncorrupted by modern civilisation.

Very popular in medieval times but still occurring in certain rural areas of the Balkans and elsewhere in Europe even today are countryside pageants and festivals that feature dancers dressed in elaborate, ostentatiously hairy wild man costumes and taking part in symbolic wild man hunts, in which the latter is the quarry, to be captured and killed but afterwards resurrected.

Moreover, the symbolic wild man is often closely allied to the green man, in which the former's hair is replaced by a leafy profusion of foliage but its symbolic significance remains much the same.

**LAST OF THE NEANDERTHALS?**

By far the most exciting suggestion on offer is that at least some woodwose reports are based upon relict Neanderthals. Various deemed a subspecies of *Homo sapiens* or a separate species in its own right, Neanderthal Man first appeared in Europe as a

distinct hominid with a complete set of recognisable characteristics approximately 130,000 years ago and officially became extinct here 24,000-30,000 years ago. Co-existing alongside our ancestor, Cro-Magnon Man, for around 10,000 years, Neanderthals are widely believed to have interbred with Cro-Magnons, and such interbreeding may even have brought about the Neanderthals' extinction, via absorption into the Cro-Magnon population.

It was veteran American cryptozoologist Ivan T. Sanderson who first widely popularised the notion that perhaps the reports and legends of wild men in Europe arose from encounters with late-surviving Neanderthals, quietly persisting reclusively in various scarcely-traversed localities across Europe long after their official extinction date. This was subsequently championed by none other than the 'Father of Cryptozoology' himself, Dr Bernard Heuvelmans, who believed that the satyrs of Greek mythology also belonged to this category, and included the following paragraph in his comprehensive annotated checklist of cryptozoological creatures,

published in 1986:

[In Europe:] Wild hairy men, most probably Neanderthals having survived into historical times. Known as *satyrs* in classical antiquity - a name borrowed from the Hebrew *se'ir* ("the hairy one") - and as *wudewása* ("wood being") in the Middle Ages, they were reported until the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Ireland, until the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Saxony and Norway, until the 18<sup>th</sup> century on the Swedish island of Öland and in Estonia, in the Pyrénées ([known there as] *iretges*, *basajaun*) up to 1774 at least, and in the Carpathians ("wild man" of Kronstadt) up to 1784 at least.'

In fact, it is possible that such beings have survived far beyond even those times in certain mountainous regions of Spain, with sightings there having been reported as recently as the 1990s, and which have since been researched by several cryptozoologists, including Sergio de la Rubia-Muñoz, who documented the following reports.

On May 4, 1993, at around 3.45 pm, in a sparsely-populated area known as Peña Montañesa (in Huesca) in the Spanish Pyrenees, woodsman Manuel Cazarra was working with five others when, after they had all heard a scream and some squeals nearby, he went off to investigate and encountered a hairy man-beast, standing 1.7 m tall. It immediately clambered swiftly up a pine tree, where it remained,

**'When it saw the men, it fled rapidly, swinging itself onto an overhanging branch and climbing upwards with remarkable speed and agility.'**

**'It would be easy to shrug off the woodwose as merely a medieval legend, but reports such as those documented here suggest that there is much more than that to this mystery.'**

clutching a branch with its arms and legs, and screaming loudly.

When Cazcarra called the other men, they came running up and one of them, Ramiro López, was just in time to see the entity climb back down to the ground and hide itself behind a dense thicket before hurling a hefty tree branch in their direction. Not surprisingly, they chose not to pursue it further!

These eyewitnesses were woodsmen who were used to working in forests and were familiar with bears, but they stated categorically that what they had seen was no bear. Mysterious footprints that could not be identified with any known species in the area were found there later that same week by a patrol of the Guardia Civil, accompanied by one of the woodsmen. And soon afterwards, an ape-like figure was seen crossing a road near the French border by a family travelling in their car towards Prats de Molló.

During the late spring of 1994, another putative woodwose sighting was made in this same region. While hiking from Peña Montañesa to the village of Bielsa close by, Juan Ramón Ferrer, a mountain climber from Andalusia, encountered a very hirsute but distinctly humanoid entity jumping from tree to tree and giving voice to ape-like squeals. According to the description later given by Ferrer, who had duly fled, terrified, to a campsite near Peña Montañesa, the entity was shortish, was covered with reddish hair, had very long ape-like arms, and exuded a musky odour.

It would be easy to shrug off the



woodwose as merely a medieval legend, but reports such as those documented here suggest that there is much more than that to this mystery. Reports of hairy man-beasts in Europe and the Middle East (not to mention the Himalayan yeti, Mongolian almas, Chinese yeren, North American bigfoot, and numerous other similar beings reported elsewhere around the globe) date back to antiquity, and some of these definitely bear comparison with Neanderthal Man.

But perhaps we should not be too surprised that a second species of human, a hairy wild man far removed from our own naked 'civilised' species, may well have existed alongside us since the earliest days and even into the present day. We have only to turn to the Holy Bible (Genesis 25: 21-27, referring to the brothers Esau and Jacob) for a highly unexpected yet remarkably precise corroboration of this dramatic cryptozoological prospect:

'And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife...and Rebekah his wife conceived.

'And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord.

'And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

'And when her days to be



**Above HE'S BEHIND YOU:** This rather enigmatic English woodcut of the 18<sup>th</sup> century appears to show a naked man descending from the trees behind some woodsmen - a similar incident to those described from the forests of Europe in more recent years.



**Above Left FOLKLORIC:** A Wild Man who featured in a German carnival of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. His costume of green fur and foliage suggests his role was that of a nature spirit.

**Left KEEPING THE SPIRIT ALIVE:** A present day 'King of the Wild Men' taking part in a Renaissance Festival in California. A few historical festivals featuring Wild Men still take place in mountainous parts of Europe.

delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

'And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.

'And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob...

'And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.'

What better way of describing to non-scientific laymen, back in the ancient days when this Old Testament passage was written, the existence and development of two separate species (nations) of human, one of which is modern man and the other the wild man? Perhaps Linnaeus was right after all. ☉



**Karl P N Shuker PhD** - pictured here on Cannock Chase - is a zoologist and expert in cryptozoology, animal mythology and wildlife anomalies. A scientific fellow of the Zoological Society of London, a fellow of the Royal Entomological Society and a member of the International Society of Cryptozoology, he is the author of more than a dozen books on mysterious phenomena, including *In Search of Prehistoric Survivors, The Beasts That Hide From Man* and *Dr Shuker's Casebook*. His website is [www.karlshuker.com](http://www.karlshuker.com)

# Just too weird-two!

Following Richard Freeman's eyebrow-raising article last month, editor **RICHARD HOLLAND** has decided to make his own selection of crazy apparitions that boggle the mind and defy explanation.

**I HAVE BEEN INTERESTED IN** ghosts and ghost stories since I was a boy and have spent many years of my adult life researching and writing about ghost-lore, especially in Wales. One of the weirdest apparitions I've come across in my research – although it might more properly be called a vision – took place in the parish of Bedwelty, South Wales, in 1760.

A group of hay-makers saw coming down the hill before them 'an innumerable flock of sheep'; not, you might



**CARRIED AWAY:** The ghost of Sir Robert Chichester not only takes the form of a black hound but also rides around in an outlandish carriage. His is one of the craziest ghosts on record – but not necessarily the craziest. © Jonathan Edwards / www.jonathan-e.com

think, an unusual sight in Wales, but this particular flock suddenly vanished before their astonished eyes. Half an hour before sunset, the vision appeared again, but this time with an extra twist of weirdness: not everyone saw the same thing. Some people saw sheep, as on the previous occasion, but others reported seeing a herd of pigs or a pack of greyhounds. Strangest of all, some people saw a crawling host of naked babies.

This extraordinary account comes from the pen of one of my favourite characters in British folklore, the Rev Edmund Jones. Jones was a Nonconformist preacher who lived in the South Wales Valleys in the Georgian period and claimed to have had several brushes with the supernatural, including encounters with ghosts and sightings of fairies. He held the view that the paranormal (to use the modern term) was a manifestation of God's presence on Earth and to disbelieve in ghosts and fairies was the first step towards disbelieving in God. He was a very religious man. And a true eccentric.

He wrote two, now very rare, little books in 1779 and 1780 featuring encounters with apparitions told to him personally by colleagues and neighbours. Most of these reports are particularly well-

attested: Jones is able to provide precise details of location and the date of the encounter as well as biographical information about the witness (needless to say, they are always described as being entirely truthful!). Yet the stories collected

by Jones are among the weirdest in UK ghost-lore.

Thomas Miles Harry, for

example, reported an alarming experience near Cwmbran. Returning from Abergavenny one evening, his horse shied, startled by something in the road which he could not see. It bolted home, Mr Harry clinging on for dear life. In the safety of his own yard, as he was removing the saddle from his trembling horse, he saw what had spooked the animal: the apparition of a woman 'so prodigiously tall as to be about half as high as the tall beech trees at the other side of the yard'.

In the same neighbourhood a Mr Edward Frank had a not dissimilar encounter. Walking home one night he heard footsteps approaching, then, looming out of the darkness, he saw 'the ghost of a

marvellous thin man, whose head was so high above the observer's line of vision that he nearly fell over backward in his efforts to gaze at it'. He cried out: "In the name of God what is here? Turn out of my way or I will strike thee!" The giant ghost vanished at these words and the shaken Mr

**'Most of these reports are particularly well-attested, yet the stories collected by Jones are among the weirdest in UK ghost-lore.'**

**LICKETY SPIT:** In the 18th century a milkmaid saw a bizarre apparition lurking by a stile. When her dog approached it, the spook shooed it away with a long black tongue.  
© Jonathan Edwards





Frank found a handy cow to lean on while he steadied his nerves.

Many of the spooks recorded by the Rev Jones were sub-human, half-formed shapes lacking detailed features. Two young men, Lewis Thomas and Thomas Andrew, saw on separate occasions in the vicinity of Ebbw Vale a strange, bestial 'resemblance of a man walking on his hands and feet'. Mr Andrew described it as 'creeping on all fours, scraping the ground, and looking aside one way and the other, also making a dreadful noise'.

So many weird and fiendish things were reported to Jones, I couldn't help wondering whether members of his congregation were making them up just to please him. Many were educated men,

**WHEELY STRANGE:**  
In North Carolina, the wheelchair recently vacated by its deceased owner began to bash about the apartment as if its bad-tempered occupant was still using it. © Jonathan Edwards

## 'The giant ghost vanished and the shaken Mr Frank found a handy cow to lean on while he steadied his nerves.'

however. A schoolmaster named Henry Williams Hugh told Jones he had seen a 'somewhat odd figure' by a stile in Bedwas parish. Something about the man not only alarmed Mr Hugh but also his dog, which ran away. They were right to be nervous - the 'man' suddenly became two men and then the pair of them disappeared in 'a pillar of fire'. When Mr Hugh got home, he found his dog had been so scared, it had hidden its head in a pot and got stuck. Mr Hugh had to smash it to get him out.

Perhaps the strangest of all these strange apparitions was the one reported to Jones by a dairymaid at a farm near Pontypool. It was roughly the shape of a man but 'very big in the middle and narrow at both ends' and when the girl's dog approached it, it shot out a long, black

tongue, scaring it away. With a heavy, earth-shaking tread, the monster then marched off in the direction of a spring named, intriguingly enough, Ffynnon yr Yspryd (Well of the Ghost), where it vanished.

Grotesque figures of this type are not confined to the South Wales Valleys of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1920s, a correspondent wrote in to the *Daily News* to say they had seen a peculiar apparition at Wanstead, Greater London. Walking along a bridle path with a friend, he was 'astonished to see coming across the field a figure which I can only describe as appearing to be a form on stilts, judging by the strides it was taking'. His friend also saw it and cried out in alarm as it came to a halt about 30 ft away from where they were standing. It then 'appeared to dissolve... leaving no trace behind it.'

Sometimes only parts of the body are seen. The Well of the Phantom Hand on the eastern shore of Loch Ness, for example, is named after the hand of gigantic proportions that is said to reach out and startle people gathering water there. This odd phenomenon has been reported for the past 200 years.

Regular readers may recall the letter in issue 48 from a Mr Patel about a disturbing haunting in his shop, which included a spooky eye that would peer at his family from various parts of the building. His wife saw it watching her through a crack in the door and his son saw it peeping through a hole in the garden fence. Mr Patel wrote: 'Things reached fever pitch when I was at the kitchen stove one lunchtime and I noticed from a knot-hole in the floorboards a human eye watching me, so I took a kettle of boiling water from the stove and poured it through the hole, but the eye was back several minutes later.'

Remarkably, this is not a unique experience. In 1958, Mrs Violet Nicholls of Pattingham, near Wolverhampton, found her five-year-old son staring at a large knot-hole in the floorboards in his



bedroom. Peering back at him was 'a pale blue, unmistakably human eye'. According to Peter Moss, in his *Ghosts Over Britain* (1977), the eye 'at first seemed to be frightened and then cautiously watchful' as it 'glared unblinkingly upwards'. It moved about as if trapped in the confines of the knot-hole then, after five or ten minutes it faded away never to be seen again.

Sometimes, of course, no body is seen at all, as in the case of the numerous phantom footsteps, odd taps, ghostly voices and music that have been reported. A far more dramatic example of a bodiless ghost was noted by Dennis Bardens in his classic work on *Ghosts and Hauntings* (1965). A correspondent from Asheville, North Carolina, told him about the strange happenings that followed the death of a rather cantankerous old lady, who had been confined to a wheelchair but was very much used to getting her own way. On the night she passed away and after her body had

been taken to the mortuary, 'the old woman's wheel chair began to move noisily about the room, as if being used by someone angrily trying to get out. The chair rolled around the bare floor, occasionally banging with much force the inside of the door.'

A cliché of ghost-lore is a ghost without its head, but there are also accounts of ghostly heads minus their bodies. After 'Black Vaughan' was beheaded after being found guilty of treason to King Richard III, his disembodied noggin was often seen floating over the moat of his ancestral home, Hergest Court in Herefordshire.

The head of a more famous knight, that of Sir Walter Raleigh, haunts West Horsley Church in Surrey. Raleigh was decapitated in 1618 but his head was spared the final indignity of being put on public display. His wife pleaded successfully that she might take it away. She had the head embalmed and is said to have carried it around with her everywhere she went. Eventually, after her death it was given decent burial by Raleigh's son at West Horsley, where he was then living. According to local lore Raleigh's embalmed

head can be encountered drifting mournfully round the church.

Animal ghosts are legion and come in all shapes and sizes.

They include white rabbits, blue pigs, blue or white donkeys, red dogs, huge birds, a talking mongoose and giant bulls without their skin.

**QUACKERS:** An angry duck terrorized the village of Stanney, until a group of men cornered it and cut its head off. Unfortunately, they only made things worse - the duck's headless ghost returned to plague them further. © Jonathan Edwards



**HEADS UP:** The embalmed bonce of Sir Walter Raleigh is said to float mournfully round a Surrey church. © Jonathan Edwards



**'Mrs Nicholls found her five-year-old son staring at a large knot-hole in the floorboards of his bedroom. Peering back at him was a pale blue, unmistakably human eye.'**

Like their human counterparts, they can also be headless.

A man named Simon Jones, during his days as a Royalist soldier, was frightened by 'something like a headless bear' that appeared to him while he was standing sentinel in Worcester. An old yarn tells of the villagers of Stanney in Cheshire who were unaccountably afraid of a duck which used to wander down a lane towards the neighbouring village of Stoak. Eventually, a band of men ambushed the belligerent bird, cut its head off and buried it at the top ●

**DOG GONE:** An apparently normal dog encountered by two men near a cemetery suddenly expanded into the size and shape of a bed quilt and flew away over the tree tops. © Jonathan Edwards



of Stoak Lane. This only made things worse, however, for then the duck's ghost haunted the lane, waddling past without its head.

Perhaps the most commonly recorded animal ghosts in UK ghost-lore are the Black Dogs. Though weird, they are usually much of a muchness, boasting great size, black shaggy hair and sometimes saucer-shaped glowing eyes. The black hound reported from

long distance, judging by its lolling tongue, its tired and jaded look. It stood for half a minute or so and we both spoke to it and remarked that it must be lost, and we were about to walk on when, to our great surprise, the dog seemed to pull itself together and, rising before our

holidaying in Fiesole, near Florence, Italy, she decided to talk a walk in the summer moonlight.

Strolling round the ancient town, enjoying the romantic, antiquated scene, she noticed a large, dark shape sprawled on the steps leading up to the Church of Santa Maria Primerano. At first she thought it was a dog, but realised it was much too large and the wrong shape.

She recalled: 'At that moment the Thing moved, and stretched itself like a spreading ink-stain on the moon-bathed steps. I have never seen such a sight before or since. The Thing was black, much bigger than a calf, with an enormous head; its eyes shone like twin emeralds, its jaws slavered; one felt instinctively that it did not belong to this earth.'

'We watched the Thing amble leisurely down the steps until it reached the level of the ground, when its pace changed into a stiff gallop, until it finally "sloped" up the hill ... and I remember how its long whip-like tail lashed the air from side to side.'

During the same trip, Miss ffoulkes learnt of a haunted stables at San Terno. The stables were near a ruined tower which was

## 'Animal ghosts include white rabbits, blue pigs, blue or white donkeys, red dogs, huge birds, a talking mongoose and giant bulls without their skin.'

Cowpen in Northumberland takes the dog-biscuit, however. Two gentlemen came across him near a Roman Catholic cemetery and, as one of them told the editor of the *Daily News*, there was nothing odd or ghostly about him initially.

He wrote: 'From whence we came we knew not. It had the appearance of having travelled a

eyes, gradually spread itself out to about the size of an ordinary bed quilt, then it sailed away from where we stood leaving us standing spellbound. We watched it drift away over the tops of trees and finally disappear from our view travelling skyward.'

When Maude ffoulkes, co-author of *True Ghost Stories* (1936) was

**‘Members of the family would be dragged out of bed by their hair and pulled around the house. They decided to leave, and it was only then that the ghost manifested itself visually.’**

said to be the haunt of phantom hounds. One night one of the horses became agitated in its stall. Its owner found it was covered in foam and ‘its mane plaited in a grotesque way’ [a phenomenon we have encountered before in *Paranormal Magazine*]. But this was nothing to what happened on a subsequent evening: ‘the shadow of a horse with a dog rider was plainly silhouetted against the white wall of the cortile, the shadow finally materializing as a horse, which galloped away in the darkness.’

If you think a dog riding a horse is crazy, you ain’t heard nothing yet. Doomed by the wicked deeds he performed during his lifetime, the soul of Sir Robert Chichester is said to roam the Devon countryside in the shape of a black dog. However, being an aristocratic and arrogant spirit, he is not content to do so on his own paws, and would spurn even a ride on a horse. Sir Robert’s

dog-shaped ghost trundles around in style: in a hellish, flaming carriage pulled by four elephants, no less!

It seems hard to credit, but there is another ghost – the final one in this collection – which bears some similarity to Sir Robert Chichester’s mode of transport. According to the authors of *True Irish Ghost Stories* (1914), a house in Co. Cavan became horribly haunted during the 1860s. It became impossible to live there: the poltergeist-type entity would send showers of soot down onto any pot placed over the fire at meal times and any lamp that was lit

was immediately put out. Chairs and tables ‘would be sent dancing round the room’. Worse still, members of the family would be dragged out of bed by their hair and ‘pulled around the house’.

Things came to a head when the lady of the house ‘was severely handled’ and then found her boots had been placed facing the door ‘as a gentle hint for her to be off’. They decided to leave, and it was only then – according to curious neighbours who claimed to have seen it – that the ghost manifested itself visually.

It was described as appearing in the shape of a human being with a pig’s head with long tusks, riding out of the house on a horse with an elephant’s head.

And that is just about the strangest apparition I ever heard tell of. So far. ●

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**STRANGER DANGER:** A violent poltergeist caused so much trouble for a family in Ireland that they abandoned their house to it. Only then did the previously invisible entity taken on a visual form – one weirder than anyone could have imagined. © Jonathan Edwards



## Popular Haunts

MARK OTTOWELL revisits a unique location whose haunted reputation turned it into a tourist attraction. Mark is in no doubt the place really is haunted because he's encountered a ghost here himself.



**TUNNEL OF TERROR:**  
A view part way down the length of the South Bridge Vaults. Any number of the Vaults on either side are said to be badly haunted.  
© Mark Ottowell

# South Bridge Vaults EDINBURGH

DISAPPOINTED THAT YOUR VISIT to a haunted house did not leave you with so much as a shiver down your spine? Then you should check out the paranormal activity that reputedly occurs within Edinburgh's South Bridge Vaults at Niddry Street. If you do you may never sleep with the lights off again!

Auld Reekie Tours, who run the forays into these Vaults, regularly receive reports from visitors who have experienced the inexplicable. Tour guide Ewan Armstrong told me that on average five people a week faint, are sick or just leave midway through a tour, overcome

by fear: 'We have all sorts of levels of paranormal activity in here, everything from spectral figures to entities that cause physical harm such as scratch marks and bruising.'

Entry to the Niddry Street Vaults is by way of a winding stairwell up to an old, dark and musty tenement apartment, one of many which flank the South Bridge on either side. Passing through here leads right inside the Bridge and into a cavernous gothic passage lit by guttering candles. Such is the sense of disorientation that paradoxically, despite 'ascending to the Vaults', you actually get the impression of being underground.

The South Bridge gained a reputation for being cursed from the day of its inauguration in 1788. The privilege of being the first person across South Bridge was given to the oldest woman in Edinburgh. However she died a few days prior to the official opening so her funeral procession was the first thing to cross it, which to the locals was a bad omen.

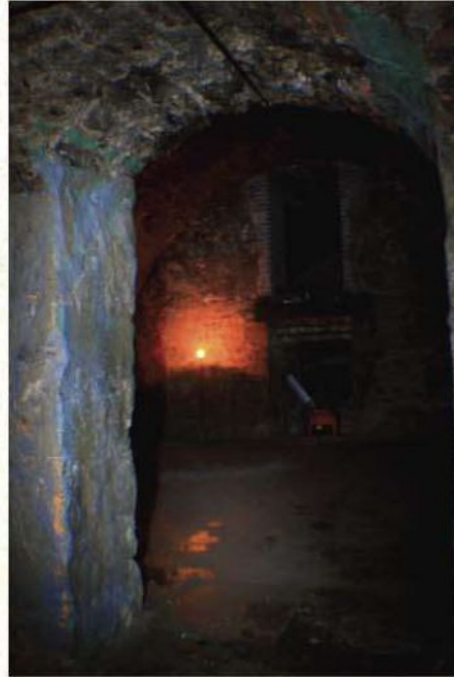
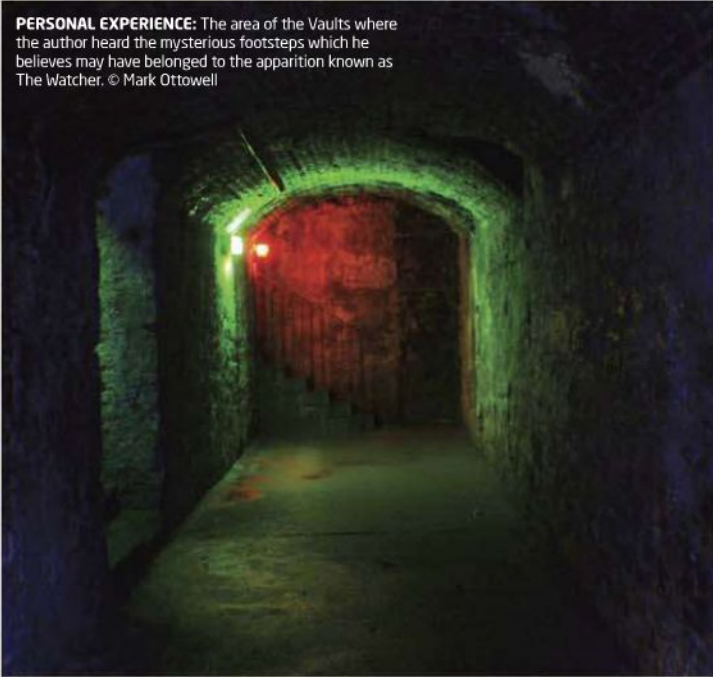
The Vaults were later created within the Bridge for storage space to accommodate the businesses growing around the area. Unfortunately the Bridge had been built mainly from porous rock so when it rained water leaked in and damaged the stored goods. As a result the businesses moved out and the poor and wretched, which included prostitutes, criminals and murderers, moved in.

Up to 30 people would share any of the dark, dank, unsanitary

**'I heard resounding footsteps coming down the passage. My EMF reader started to react... the closer I got, the more frantic the meter became.'**



**PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:** The area of the Vaults where the author heard the mysterious footsteps which he believes may have belonged to the apparition known as The Watcher. © Mark Ottowell



**HOSTILE:** At the far end of this Vault you can still see the equipment abandoned by workmen who were attacked here by something unearthly. © Mark Ottowell

chambers, which were rife with syphilis, cholera, typhoid and dysentery. By 1872 the Vaults had become mould-ridden and impossible to live in. Many of the chambers were filled with rubble and the passage sealed up and forgotten. They were rediscovered in 1972 and became a tourist attraction in 1996. Soon afterwards visitors reported seeing the apparition known as 'the Watcher' standing on the steps at the north end of the passage. He is described as a grey-haired man wearing a long cloak.

He is rarely seen but often heard and I can attest to having heard him myself! In 2009 I was on a tour when I heard resounding footsteps coming down the passage. My EMF reader started to react so I went towards the approaching footsteps. The closer I got, the more frantic the meter became. When the footsteps paused, the EMF reader went quiet. The footsteps resumed and the EMF reader reacted accordingly. Finally the footsteps ceased altogether and the EMF reader was still. When I looked around for the rest of the tour I found myself standing alone! I could find nothing that would make the reader respond again in such a manner.

Further up the passage is a Vault which is home to a Wiccan temple - but it was not the Wiccans' first choice. The abandoned their

original location, which still contains a stone circle, because of the unpleasant atmosphere and a presence which knocked over goblets and made the sound of

invisible force, and that someone or something had tampered with their equipment.

Perhaps this is not surprising, as this Vault is home to Edinburgh's

**'The burly Scots builders downed their tools and refused to go back inside. They claimed to have been pelted with stones by an invisible force.'**

dragging footsteps. A clairvoyant told them a scrying mirror they had set up had become a gateway for paranormal entities. Before leaving, they performed a ritual to trap any entities within the circle. Visitors tempted to enter the circle do so at their own risk!

Another Vault is said to be haunted by a man who hanged himself there and children are kept out of it because the guides have come to believe the spirit means them harm. At least one child has run away in terror from this Vault.

It is not only children who flee the Vaults. You would not usually expect burly Scots builders to be deterred by ghosts but while carrying out excavations in the 'Haunted Vault', they downed their tools and equipment (which were still there at the time of writing this article) and refused to go back inside. They claimed to have been pelted with stones by an

infamous South Bridge Poltergeist, believed by some to have come into being after the devastating effects of Edinburgh's Great Fire of 1824. Many people rushed into this Vault to escape the conflagration but ended up baking to death within it. However, Ewan believes the presence may be the violent spirit of Edward McLaughlin, a murderer and rapist who was killed here by the brother of one of his intended victims. Women in particular, he says, feel uncomfortable in this Vault and have even suffered the indignity of being pushed over by an invisible force.

Ewan asserted: 'A lot of people who come here think these occurrences are part of the show. I guarantee that *we* do not put on a show... although whatever is in here might.' ☹

Information about Auld Reekie Tours and the South Bridge Ghost Walks can be found at [www.auldreekietours.com](http://www.auldreekietours.com)



Main image © Alan Friswell

# the closest ENCOUNTERS

**NIGEL WATSON** explores the controversial subject of sexual contacts with space people, explaining how they became central to the alien abduction experience as both men and women reported having forced or consensual sex with extraterrestrials, sometimes resulting in the birth of human-alien hybrids.

**A** 41-year-old Italian woman called Giovanna recently claimed aliens impregnated her after she was taken into their craft. Her memories about this, and other encounters she has experienced since she was 4-years-old, are vague.

However, Giovanna claims that they marked her body, and poured disinfectant liquid over her. The Italian video report on her case says that the luminescent liquid is a silicon-based substance, and it shows evidence that an implant was inserted inside her brain. Giovanna has also taken many photographs of UFOs in the area around her home in the Cerdenya region of Italy that show a structured disc-like craft.

After recalling being inside a UFO with four aliens who spoke to her via telepathy, she had a scan that showed she had a foetus growing inside her. This became malformed and had to be aborted. The video shows this foetus, implying it is the result of Giovanna's union with the aliens. To me, it looks more like a skinned rabbit with a different head fitted to it to make it look extraterrestrial. I'm of the opinion we have to consider this particular case with much suspicion until we can get any better evidence.

Alien liaisons are nothing new, however, according to such authors as Erich von Daniken. In *Chariots of the Gods*, Daniken proposes that thousands of years ago spacemen found planet Earth and artificially fertilised females of an ape-like origin, to create *Homo sapiens*. The rejects of this breeding project were either slaughtered or sent to other parts of the world.

To support this viewpoint he quotes this passage from the Bible:

'When men began to multiply on the



**IMPREGNATED:** Are extraterrestrials using human women as breeding stock?

face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took to wife such of them as they chose... The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them.' (Genesis 6:1-4)

Scholars have debated whether the Nephilim were fallen angels or humans associated with a powerful dynasty, but they also neatly fit von Daniken's view that they were spacemen.

The Bible and other ancient texts have been frequently ransacked by ufologists since the 1950s to find evidence for the arrival of ancient astronauts and their genetic relationship with humanity.

## **a rael hybrid**

Aliens themselves have also lectured contactees and abductees about the origins of humanity. When motor sport journalist Claude Vorilhon had a series of encounters with a short oriental-looking alien in the French Auvergne during December 1973, he was told:

'We were the ones who designed all life on Earth.'

'You mistook us for gods.'

'We were at the origin of your main religions.'

He told Vorilhon that in the Bible they are called Elohim, meaning 'those who came from the sky'. He said the Elohim artificially created humanity in their own image, and regularly visit us to keep track of their breeding project.

Vorilhon, changing his name to Rael, founded the Raelian movement to promote the work of the Elohim and to prepare for their public arrival in 2035. Rael himself claims that he is a hybrid created by the union between his human mother and the Elohim's leader, Yahweh. ●

*'he said the elohim artificially created humanity in their own image, and regularly visit us to keep track of their breeding project.'*





above **PROMOTED:** British sci-fi writer John Wyndham's novel *The Midwich Cuckoos* (1957) and its successful film adaptation *Village of the Damned* (1960), first presented the concept of human-alien hybrids to a wide audience.

above right **MOLESTER:** In 1994 a young German man claimed that he was forced to have sex with a slim, white-skinned, bald woman after he was woken by a pulsating blue light in his room.

## alien affairs

Across the channel, a housewife in Birmingham, UK, had regular visitations from the space people. Mrs Cynthia Appleton said a blond-haired, white-skinned man appeared in her lounge, wearing, 'a kind of dome over his head and a tight-fitting all-in-one suit of a grey metallic colour'.

At this time, November 19, 1957, most people had black-and-white TV sets, so she was stunned by the full colour, three-dimensional 'living images' that now appeared between her and the man. This showed a flying saucer hovering and darting about the sky.

She was told that the flying saucers collected energy from our atmosphere, and revealed that the man came from a planet Gharnasvarn, which we know as Venus. Then the images and the man vanished.

In 1958, she had six more visits from these men. On these occasions, they arrived more prosaically in a large black car with tinted glass (unusual for a car of that period) and knocked on her front door. On these visits, they ditched their garish silver suits for sober business suits and hats. They provided her with lots of scientific information that was far too complex for her to understand.

The most personal and astonishing revelations were given to her on their last visit in September 1958. They said she would have a baby weighing 7 pounds, 3 ounces (3.3kg), with blue eyes and fair hair, on May 31, 1959. They admitted her husband was the father but the baby was 'of the race of Gharnasvarn' and should be called Matthew (meaning 'gift from God'). It was predicted that when he reached 14-years-old he

would show signs of becoming a leader of men.

Mrs Appleton was staggered by this information, yet her doctor confirmed her pregnancy. Virtually on the predicted day (June 1, 1959), she gave birth to a fair-haired, blue-eyed boy who weighed only one ounce off the predicted weight. There were no more alien visitations after that, which upset Cynthia because they promised to return.

When he was a few months old, Matthew seemed just like a normal child. After that, no more was ever heard of Matthew, Cynthia or the rest of her family.

A year before Mrs Appleton's adventures, Elizabeth Klarer began a long-term relationship with an alien scientist called Akon. He took her from South Africa to his home on the planet Meton. He explained that they only selected a few chosen people for breeding, as they needed to 'infuse new blood into our ancient race'. The product of this union was a highly intelligent boy.

## outer space beauties

As might be expected, several male contactees in the USA had liaisons with beautiful space women in the 1950s. Howard Menger, for example, said that from 1946 onwards they regularly visited him in the woods near his home in New Jersey.

In return for cutting their hair and buying clothes for the female aliens, the Space People gave Menger a ride to the Moon. Unlike the Apollo astronauts of the 1960s and 1970s, he found the Moon had a breathable atmosphere and plenty of vegetation.

He also took a trip to Venus, which was, you guessed it, a veritable paradise. He was encouraged to become a vegetarian, and he was told that

in a past life he was a citizen of Saturn. In that life he had been in love with a Venusian called Marla (a.k.a. Connie Weber). As luck would have it, she was also now an Earth person, living in New Jersey. They eventually fulfilled their alien destiny by getting married in 1958.

Truman Bethurum had encounters with Aura Rhanes, the beautiful captain of a flying saucer. His first meeting with her was in July 1952 in the Mojave Desert. Going inside her landed UFO, he described her as the 'queen of women'.

He said: 'That is where my eyes bulged... I stood before their captain, a beautiful woman... Her smooth skin was a beautiful olive and roses, and her brown-eyed flashing smile seemed to make her complexion more glowing.'

## hot bed of activity

Antonio Villas Boas reported the most famous sexual alien encounter in 1957. On the night of October 14, he was working on his family's farm near Sao Francisco de Sales, Minas Gerais, Brazil, when he was grabbed from his tractor by three aliens.

He was taken into an appropriately egg-shaped craft, where he was stripped naked and put into a room dominated by a large bed. A beautiful, naked woman entered the room and they twice had sexual intercourse. When leaving him she pointed at her stomach, at him and then at the sky, implying she would have his child somewhere in outer space.

As Boas was a reliable and intelligent reporter, who did not have the tainted aura of a self-promoting contactee, his story became an accepted part of mainstream ufology.

South America seems to be a hot bed of alien sexual activity, as several men reported experiences similar to those of Boas throughout the 1970s.

In 1976, cowman Liberato Anibal Quintero was forced by several small beings into a UFO near his home in El Banco, Colombia. After losing consciousness, he found himself being massaged by three naked alien women. They were very hairy and barked like a dog when he had intercourse with them.

Two years later, Jose Inacio Alvaro saw a blue beam of light over his home in Pelotas, Brazil. He lost consciousness and found

*"They said she would have a baby weighing 7 pounds, 3 ounces, with blue eyes and fair hair when (the child) reached 14-years-old he would show signs of becoming a leader of men."*

himself a long way from his home several hours later.

Under hypnotic regression Alvaro remembered being in a circular room where he had intercourse with a tall, dark-haired woman on a net-like structure. His description of their sexual act was so graphic that the researchers erased the tape of the hypnosis session.

Juan Valerio da Silva in the town of Botucatu reported a very similar experience. On the evening of November 30, 1982, he went outside his home and the next thing he knew it was a few hours later, and he was naked and covered in oil. Hypnotic regression revealed that during this missing period he was forced to have sexual intercourse with a dark-skinned, long haired, woman. After this encounter, he had several others and he was told that his eldest son was the product of alien genetic experimentation.

Antonio Carlos Ferreira experienced missing time after seeing a UFO on June 28, 1979. The incident happened as he worked as a watchman at a furniture factory in the city of Mirassol, Sao Paulo, Brazil. UFO researcher Walter K. Buhler, who investigated the Boas case, used hypnotic regression with Ferreira, who recalled being paralyzed by a beam of light fired by three beings in tight-fitting space suits. They took him in a disc-shaped craft into outer space where he was transferred to a larger ship. Here he was forced to have intercourse with a woman he found ugly and repulsive.

These types of encounter are not exclusive to South American men. Dr Johannes Fiebag, a German abduction research specialist, interviewed a young man who saw a pulsating blue light in his bedroom. Under hypnotic regression, he remembered that on that night of May 10, 1994, he found himself on an examination table. Here a dark-eyed, slim, white-skinned, bald woman climbed on top of him and forced him to have sex with her. Two other women also had intercourse with him on this table, which was presumably



inside a UFO. The 21-year-old had a history of alien encounters since childhood, but after this incident, he felt exceptionally traumatized.

### **phantom pregnancies**

In the closing decades of the 20th century three writers, Budd Hopkins, John E. Mack and David Jacobs, made the concept of an alien hybrid breeding program acceptable to mainstream ufology. They announced that alien abductions are more frequent than anyone imagined and that a major component of these encounters is the extraction by any means imaginable of eggs or sperm from human abductees.

These authors note that female abductees regularly have 'phantom' pregnancies. It is only later that they discover that the aliens have stolen their foetus, rather than being a trick of the imagination. They report seeing baby incubators onboard the UFO craft and that they are encouraged to hold and play with alien babies.

The case of jazz singer Pamela Stonebrooke demonstrates the otherworldly complexity of these experiences. From 1993 onwards, she had numerous frightening dreams about being medically examined by aliens in a cold and detached fashion. After 18

months of this, she woke to find a handsome, blond man making love to her. Through telepathy, he informed her that she was safe, and then he shape-shifted into a snake-skinned reptilian alien. On further visits, he had intercourse with her again, but did not bother disguising himself as a human.

These visits finally explained four false pregnancies she had in the past, and for an encounter when she was taken into a metal walled room where four hybrid alien girls grabbed her arms and called her 'Mummy'.

Stonebrook said her liaison with this reptoid combined strong emotional, spiritual and physical feelings that gave her a great deal of fulfilment. Unfortunately, other female abductees have recounted being raped by reptoid aliens from childhood onwards.

Alien sexual liaisons run from the romantic encounters of the contactees to the traumatic rape of modern-day abductees. Are they just erotic fantasies that reflect the concerns of their experiencers and reporters? Alternatively, do they indicate some form of hybrid breeding program?

Throughout history it seems aliens or alien-type beings have lusted after humanity, but so far we are not much nearer to understanding why this is going on. ☹

**MALE FACTOR:** Several men, particularly in South America, have reported being forced to have sex with alien women of various types. © Alan Friswell



**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](http://www.talkingpix.co.uk).

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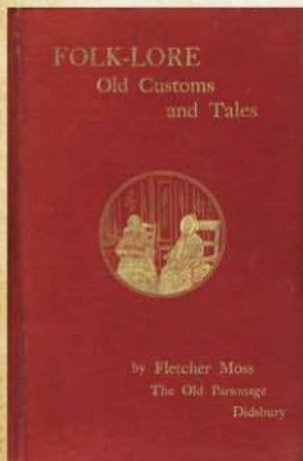
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## Unearthed

I am a fan of a writer called Fletcher Moss. Moss lived in a former parsonage in Didsbury, now a suburb of Greater Manchester but in Moss's time a rural Cheshire village. Moss self-published a number of beautifully produced books from the Old Parsonage. Initially these were on the history of various Cheshire towns but he later began a series of *Pilgrimages to Old Homes*, from 1901 to 1920, in which he took cycling tours around the country, visiting decaying mansions and ancient monuments with his friend James Watt (known simply as 'X' in the books), who was a keen amateur photographer. For their evocation of a rural Britain long gone, for the wit of Moss's text and for the quality of Watt's photos, these books deserve a wider audience. Before he began the *Pilgrimages*, Moss wrote *Folklore, Old Customs and Tales of My Neighbours*, in 1898. This includes a chapter on ghost stories, from which I have selected these highlights (the photos, incidentally, are by Moss not James Watt).

# Fletcher's Phantoms



**T**hough no respectable ghost stirs abroad in the Holy Week, or until Twelfth Night is past, yet the festivities of Christmastide bring round again the old familiar tales of spirits who uneasy rest, and in the witching hour of moonlight flit across our path or hover round our bed, the dim, shadowy ghosts of the departed.

It would be imprudent of me to tell of all the haunted houses that I know, for I should render myself liable to that most unghostly action, an action

at law for damages or losses incurred by the depreciation of property through my reckless statements. Many there are who scorn the very idea of a belief in ghosts, but they would not take a haunted house on any account, and they dare not sit alone in a churchyard at twelve o'clock at night to save their souls.

When houses are haunted the usual cure for the annoyance is to have them at least partly rebuilt and rechristened. In olden times priests or parsons would have been called in to lay the ghosts. Nowadays people are losing faith in the powers of the priesthood; they want the drains inspected and the rent reduced. That is the chief requisite; a good reduction will cover a multitude of sins.

'She glided through the rooms, looking everywhere with a stony stare, her silken gown rustling as the dry leaves rustle in the winds of autumn.'

**THE AUTHOR:** Fletcher Moss and his mother in the garden of the Old Parsonage, Didsbury, where Moss wrote *Folklore, Old Customs and Tales*.



### The Swivel House

There is a house in a country lane about two miles from here that I have seldom known to be inhabited. The front windows are all broken, and if they are mended they are soon broken again. There is a melancholy pit in the orchard, and the whole place looks lost and lonesome. No one will stay in the house, for they say a man named Aaron Warburton, who lived there sixty years ago, 'comes again', and will persist in showing new

tenants how he did that deed that ends all other deeds.

There is a house at Didsbury that was once called the Swivel House, where a fine lady 'walked'. Once upon a time there was an old bachelor named Sam Dean, who lived at the Swivel House. He had made lots of money out of swivels - they were little hand-looms for making tapes or smallwares - and when he died the money was missing, and the house changed hands.

Every night there passed through the house a beautiful, fine lady, dressed in the fashion of our grandmothers, all frills and fur-belows, powder and patches. She wore a rich silken gown of green flowered brocade, that stood out stiff, and rustled as she walked. Her shoon were of brocade to match, with high wooden heels covered with red leather; and her hair was dressed high off her face, done up with bows of fine ribbons, and pouthered beautifully. On her face were little patches of black to make the skin look whiter, and round her neck she wore a snowy kerchief with the ends tucked in her bosom.

She merely glided through the rooms, looking everywhere with a stony stare, but never speaking to any one; and she would quietly vanish away, while her silken gown rustled as the dry leaves rustle in the winds of autumn. No one ever knew who she was, or whence she came, or whither she went, for old Sammy had kept himself to himself. But some feared she was an old sweetheart or light-o'-love who had gotten more from old Sammy than he had ever bargained for.

The lady in the high-heeled shoes has probably purged her sins in purgatorial fires or gained rest for her perturbed spirit in some other way, for I do not hear that she has been seen for many years. It is about seventy or eighty years since a new housekeeper, when going to the house, was told she could have any one she liked to sleep with her if she was afraid of the ghost.

The house has been rebuilt and enlarged until there is very little or any left of the old building; and since writing the above, and in consequence of writing it, I have heard from the daughter of the man who rebuilt it, that when they were pulling down the old house



**ABBEY HABITS:** There is a long section in the chapter of Ghost Stories on Combermere Abbey. Almost all of this is devoted to the history of the Abbey, however, its fate under the Dissolution and its subsequent rise as one of the most important seats in Cheshire. Moss only briefly mentions the ghosts, those of the 'cowled monks' who, still angry at their treatment under Henry VIII, 'gaze with lack-lustre eyes on the intruders who are in their place'.

## 'He was an uneasy spirit who came out of his grave and squeaked and gibbered about the Carr Lane.'

they found in the chimney-stack a small secret chamber, with some mouldering remains of a chair and table and some fowl bones. It is very singular there should have been this 'priest's hole' unknown to any one, and yet to some extent confirmatory of the old legends.

Since the rebuilding, the house has been rechristened twice, and has now a very aristocratic name, so there is little inducement for the lady to revisit her old haunts. I did intend to give the present name of the house, but thought it better to ascertain whether the owner or tenant had any objections to my doing so. So I wrote to ask, and received a reply saying that I was perfectly at liberty to mention anything and everything, and my article was anticipated with pleasure; but a postscript was added saying the wife had been consulted, and she would not allow it on any account, for several of her friends and relatives would never sleep in the house again if they knew; therefore the dread secret must not be publicly divulged.

### The Gatley Shouter

The Gatley Shouter was a much better known and more vulgar bogie. He was an uneasy spirit who came out of his grave in Northen churchyard, and squeaked and gibbered about the Carr Lane to Gatley. There is no evidence to show that he did anything more than adulterate the goods he sold, and that has been described as only another form of competition; but he did it rather unmercifully, or his conscience was tenderer than

it is convenient for the conscience of a tradesman to be. It is said he even whined about the water he put in the milk, though it is a very common failing to water milk. Indeed, some doctors recommend it, saying that even the milk of commerce is too strong for the stomachs of some people.

The Gatley Shouter sang a verse of an old song, sang it often in Gatley Carrs when the moon was at full:

*'Milk and water sold I ever,  
Weight or measure gave I never.'*

This spirit's vagaries became a nuisance and a discredit to the good folks of Northen, and it was resolved to lay him, for the resurrectionists would not fetch him although they often paid Northen churchyard a visit in those days. The *modus operandi* of laying a ghost was to wait until it was on the prowl, and then a parson, or priest as they are still called in some country places, got on the grave with a Bible and a lighted candle, thereby cutting off its retreat, just as the earth-stopper goes round at night to stop up the foxes' earths or holes when the hunt is expected to be on the following day.

If the laying is to be done regardless of expense, there should be seven or even more parsons, all with Bibles and lighted candles, for there is great virtue in the light, and the belief in it probably shows a survival of the ancient sun or fire worship. Candles are still put on the altars of churches, and about a corpse that is being 'walked', and if something comes in the wick of a candle it is called the winding. ◉



**OLD PARSONAGE:** The Didsbury home of Fletcher Moss. The locals all warned him the house was badly haunted before he moved in.

sheet, and forebodes a funeral. If Holy Church excommunicates any one with bell, book, candle, I am told the candle is put out when that soul is put out of the Church.

Now in laying a ghost the great thing is to corner it, keep your candles burning, and pray like fury. It will sweal away under the prayers, and if you have a holy circle round it that it cannot pass until daylight doth appear, it will be done for, or laid; or, in other words, the devil will be cast out.

The rest of the tale, of which there are several versions, had perhaps better be given somewhat as it was told to me years ago by an old man who was then over eighty. I am not sure whether he said he was present at the great hunt or only remembered it.

'Aye, sure, th' Gatley Shouter wur Jim Barrow's ghost. 'E cum fro' Cross Acres, t'other side o' Gatley. Them Gatley folk wur allus a gallus lot. Owd Jim wur desprit fond o' brass, an' 'e stuck to aw as 'e could lay ode on. 'E'd a fleyed two fleas for one 'ide, 'e wud, an' when 'e deed Owd Scrat got 'im an' 'e warnt 'im, 'e did so, an' Jim mi't a bin 'eard a neets moaning, "Oh dear, oh dear, wa-a-tered milk, wa-a-tered milk," till folks got plaguey feart a goin' yon road arter dark.

'Now there come a new passon to Northen, a scholar fresh from

Oxford or Rome or someweers, chok'-fu' o' book-larnin', an' 'e played th' hangment wi' aw th' ghoses i' these parts, an' 'e said 'e'd tackle 'im. So 'e got aw th' parish as could read or pray a bit to cum wi' their Bibles, an' one neet when th' moon wur out Owd Scrat mun a bin firin' up, for th' Shouter wur bein' rarely fettled by th' way as 'e moaned. An' aw th' folk got round 'im, an' they drew toart one another in a ring like, an' kept cumin' closer till at last they'd gotten 'im in a corner i' the churchyard by th' yew tree, an th' passon was on th' grave, an' 'e whips a bit o' chalk out o' 'is pocket an' draws a holy ring round 'em aw, an' aw th' folk join 'ands and pray desprit loike, an' th' passon 'ops about an' shouts an' bangs th' book till 'e's aw o' a muck sweat.

'An' 'e prayed at 'im i' Latin too, mind yo', as weel as English, an' th' poor ghost moans an' chunners an' gets littler an' littler till 'e fair sweals away like a sneel that's sawted. An' at last th' devil wur druv out o' 'im, an' 'e lets 'im abide as quiet as a mouse. 'E's now under yon big stone near by th' passon's gate. Yo' may see it for yosen. It's theer now.'

#### More boggarts

The name hob for hobgoblin appears several times in the names of fields or places, there being Hob

Lane, Hob Croft, and Hob Bridge at Gatley, near to where the Black Pit Boggart resided. At Didsbury we had Boggart Lane until the Methodist Church was built in it, and since then the bogies have not been seen, and the lane is called Didsbury Park.

In the fields near Adswood Hall, where Fanny Fowden was murdered on her way from church one Sunday afternoon, her ghost appears at times to naughty boys who are after mushrooms or mischief. She merely glides harmlessly about in the mist or gloom.

Jinny Chorlton, of Gatley, used 'to come again', until they pulled her old house down. There was supposed to be a ghost at the Old Parsonage, Handforth, of a woman who was frightened to death when Prince Charles visited Handford Hall on his celebrated march in 1745; and a gamekeeper at Authorley used to 'walk' wi' a black dog till th' passon laid him; but th' passon's yure wur as black as a crow th' day afore, an' in the morn it wur as grey as a badger; so he mun a bin rarely feart.'

#### The Old Parsonage, Didsbury

Perhaps it is fitting that these writings on the folk-lore, old customs, and superstitions of the district, should give an account of of the house from which they have been dated, for to some extent the house may have inspired the work that has been done in it. The unknown correspondents scattered over the earth who write to me for their family pedigrees and address letters to the Rev Fletcher Moss, sometimes beginning them 'Reverend Father',

'The house had a terrible reputation for being haunted when we took it. It was said the ghosts came out of the graves in the churchyard and sat up in the trees in the garden.'

may now learn how it happens that I write from an old parsonage.

[After a series of parochial squabbles] in 1851 the Old Parsonage was left forlorn, desolate and deserted, abandoned by ghosts, who had to be restrained by more constant and vigorous clanging of the bells, as the priestly influence lessened. The house was let to common ordinary laymen, even a brewer being a tenant. We entered it on March 8, 1865, and in 1884 I bought it. Here my happiest hours have been spent, and here I hope my days may end.

The house had a terrible reputation for being haunted when we took it. It was said that no servant would stop in the place, for the bells were often rung in the middle of the night when everyone was asleep, and this we soon found was quite true. When we first came into the house the noises at night were certainly extraordinary. They were mostly made by rats, who took refuge under the roof from the adjoining stables. One of them might jump on the ceiling, and in the room below it sounded like a body falling. Then there would be squeals and moans, followed by a rush like the sound of a troop of cavalry. In my bedroom are bell wires that are admirably adapted for the gymnastic exercises of the rats and if some fat fellow tumbles off he probably rings the bells and frightens the maids.

It was also said that the ghosts came out of the graves in the churchyard, and sat up in the trees in the garden, airing themselves on fine evenings, but I never believed that tale.

As for the real ghosts, the reader may be impatient to hear about them, but I feel I cannot describe them. There is nothing real, and yet there is something. Probably hundreds of times I have been awakened out of sleep and heard some one coming upstairs, stealthily and quietly, step by step; heard the doors open and shut; have gone after them and found nothing. There may be something light, there may be a waft of chilled air, but there is nothing tangible.

I may state the case fairly by saying, that in my younger days I have often distinctly heard some one, have rushed after them, and found nothing, although conscious of something. I have been wide



**HAUNTED HOME:** Ghosts were said to roost in the trees round the Old Parsonage. The author found that although the ghost stories were exaggerated, there was indeed something uncanny about the place.

**'In my younger days I have often distinctly heard some one, have rushed after them, and found nothing. Nowadays I never trouble about the ghosts.'**



**GOMER:** This clever terrier 'hated ghosts worse than cats' and would often go chasing them through the Old Parsonage.

awake with a very matter-of-fact mind, and a body trained in all athletic exercises from my youth, but I could catch nothing.

Nowadays I never trouble about the ghosts. They may roam about as they like, for I never heed them. Three months since (December 1896) there was an earthquake and the bed shook under me, waking me up. I merely muttered to myself, 'Well, I wonder whether that is a bogie or an earthquake,' and instantly went to sleep again, forgetting all about it until the next morning, when in the train going to town, the passengers were all talking of the earthquake. That reminded me of what I had felt in the night.

The dogs know when the

ghosts are about, for we used to have them in the house until they became a greater nuisance than the ghosts themselves. They would see, hear, or feel them when we could not, and that multiplied the disturbance. My dogs are of the old English bristle-haired, rat-catching terrier kind, with a dash of badger and beefsteak in them.

The old dog, Gomer, would lie dozing by the fire, and suddenly jump up, and go on tiptoe across the room to stop and scratch at the carpet; that might mean there was a rat under the floor, or the ghost from some prehistoric burial; or he would bark at apparently nothing, and it would be supposed there was something outside; or he would growl, and follow something with his eyes fixed when we could see nothing. That showed his senses were keener than ours.

Gomer hated ghosts worse than cats, for he never could fasten the former as he sometimes did the latter deceitful, uncanny beasts. In the witching hour of night the ghosts still come and go. I know nothing about them as to whose they are, what they want, or whither they go. They will not hurt us, and we never heed them.

*'We meet them at the doorway, on the stair,  
Along the passages they come and go,  
Impalpable impressions on the air,  
A sense of something moving to and fro.'*



**HAUNTED VILLAGE:**  
Even if it wasn't well-known for its ghosts, Culross looks like it ought to be haunted, says Jamie Andrew. Ancient dwellings huddle together alongside twisting cobbled lanes as if for mutual protection.



# Frights in Fife

**JAMIE ANDREW** takes a mystery tour round the creepy villages, ancient towns and ruined castles of this former Kingdom of the Picts in eastern Scotland.

**THE KINGDOM OF FIFE** sprawls across a peninsula in eastern Scotland. Fringed by the North Sea and sandwiched between the Firths of Tay and Forth, it's a land of rolling fields, sleepy marinas, quaint cottages and pristine golf courses.

But there's a stranger, darker side to this former Pictish Kingdom, which back in Scotland's wilder years went by the name of 'Fib'

## FINAL PERFORMANCE

The Alhambra Theatre, in the ancient Scottish capital of Dunfermline, has undergone many costume changes and titivations over its 86-year history – from theatre to cinema to bingo hall, then back to theatre again. The large letters of its name, stretched out in an Art Deco font across its front entrance, bring to mind 1950s matinee screenings, where outside you'd find men in Trilby hats and women in fur coats, smoking thin cigarettes as they waited to file into the auditorium. With its mix of red bricks and stone archways, the theatre also looks a bit like the Ghostbusters' HQ – an apt comparison considering how many phantoms have been sighted there.

One of the ghosts still said to tread – or float over – the boards of the theatre is believed to be that of an Italian actress, who sang there with her opera company in the 1920s. The lady's husband discovered she'd been 'hitting the high notes' with one of her co-stars, and so confronted her on-stage during a dress rehearsal. This was a case of life imitating art – although the climax to this performance would be closer in spirit to Shakespearian tragedy.

There was a commotion. The opera singer fled the stage for the sanctuary of the actors' box, slamming the door shut behind her, the husband thundering at her heels. But the box was to prove more sepulchre than sanctuary. In her husband's zeal to confront her he forced open the door. The ensuing fracas ended in a broken neck for his beloved. This act of jealous rage has consigned the poor, faithless performer to the theatre for eternity.

In 2005, the Ghost Club investigated the spooky goings-on at the theatre and compiled a lengthy report. Its author concluded that: 'Most accounts of activity have at least a ninety percent natural explanation... I feel that the ten percent that remains unexplicable (sic) applies... [to the Alhambra].'

The Alhambra's current manager, Simon Fletcher, is rather more sceptical about the sightings. He hasn't seen anything, but earlier this year members of his staff reported witnessing strange phenomena. One of them saw a purple-tinged apparition, more of

**'There's something ominous about the old palace that repels the eye; something that seeps into your bones.'**

a haze than a figure, floating in the actors' box. They're not alone in their experiences. Workmen, staff and visitors alike have seen all sorts of strange things over the years, the most common being a ghostly nun. A previous manager is also among the haunt-ees, something that fills Mr Fletcher with glee.

'I'd love one day to come back from the dead to terrorise my staff,' he told me. ☉

**STAGE FRIGHT:** The ghost of an Italian opera singer haunts the footlights in the Alhambra Theatre, Dunfermline. © Stuart Anderson





**KOOKY CULROSS**

The village of Culross looks like it should be haunted. What self-respecting spectre could want more from a location? The buildings are old, with solid oak doors set in doorways designed for Hobbits. Cobbles wind this way and that through Victorian streets that no developer's hand has touched for centuries. At the top of a steep incline, next to the Abbey, is a cottage whose gable windows look like two giant eyes glaring malevolently over the hillside.

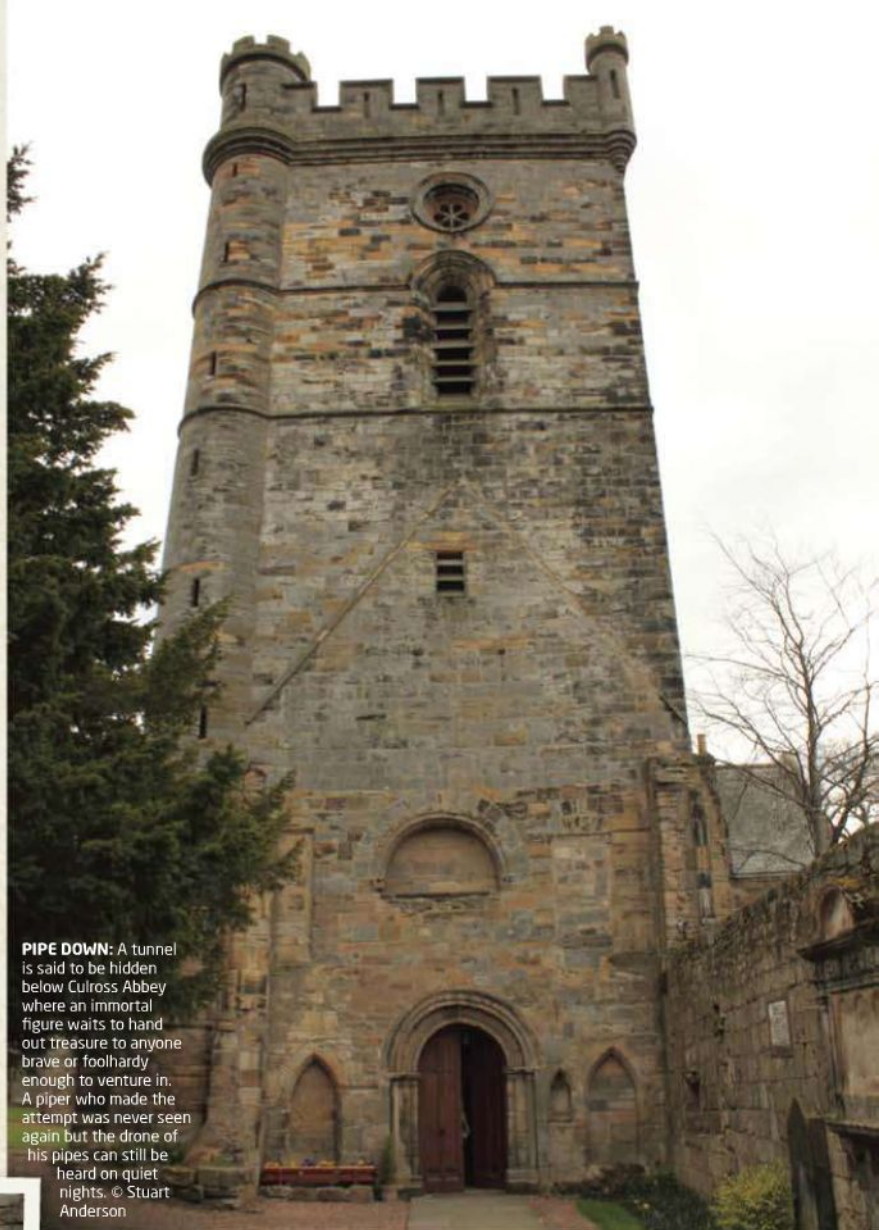
Legend has it that the Abbey is built on top of a secret tunnel, in which a man on a golden chair waits to reward with treasure those able to find his sepulchral hiding place. A blind piper and his dog are fabled to have quested for this treasure, but only the dog was ever seen again. It's said that the faint sound of the blind man's pipes can now and again be heard droning in the Culross night.

The Ghost Club visited Culross, too, to investigate the old palace, a building that - with its poky, ornate windows and sickly sandstone facade - looks like a sinister gingerbread house. There's something ominous about it that

**DISFIGURED:** A ubiquitous White Lady is one of several ghosts believed to haunt the windswept ruins of St Andrew's Cathedral. Unlike her sisters, this White Lady is the opposite of beautiful.



**‘The congregation began to dwindle ... more so when strange events began to occur in the chapel, such as the upturning of pews and the spontaneous igniting of candles.’**



**PIPE DOWN:** A tunnel is said to be hidden below Culross Abbey where an immortal figure waits to hand out treasure to anyone brave or foolhardy enough to venture in. A piper who made the attempt was never seen again but the drone of his pipes can still be heard on quiet nights. © Stuart Anderson

repels the eye; something that seeps into your bones.

During the Ghost Club's investigation, a young girl had to be ushered screaming from one of the rooms. The manager of the building felt ill, confused and unsettled while in the room known as the painted chamber, even though she had visited it without incident every day of her tenure. Someone else reported a strong feeling of being pushed towards the window. The Ghost Club has vowed to return.

The Mad Monk is said to haunt the ruins of nearby St Kentigern's Chapel and its surrounding streets. In life, this monk - Brother Joseph McGregor - served in Culross Abbey. As his age advanced so too did his madness, a condition the church saw as no bar to the carrying out of his religious duties. On New Years' Eve 1799, his birthday as well as the last day of the old century, he claimed to have had a vision of the Chapel's destruction. The congregation began to dwindle.

People were scared; more so when strange events began to occur in the Chapel, such as the upturning of pews and the spontaneous igniting of candles. The following summer, poor Brother Joseph was alone in the Chapel when the roof caved in on his head, confirming the truth of his vision and ending his life at the same time.

**CREEPY KEEPS**

Many castles litter Fife's landscape, most of them haunted. Balcomie Castle, by the sea near the East Neuk o' Fife, has been converted into a home, but still looks as it did when it was first built: overbearing and imposing.

A few centuries ago, a young minstrel lived there in the service of the castle's then owner, a general with a mean and fiery temperament. The minstrel loved to roam the castle grounds merrily playing his tin-whistle. This happy act quickly grated on the nerves of the general; not a man renowned for his good cheer. Grabbing the boy by the throat he consigned

him to the castle's keep, where he remained for seven long days.

By the time the general bothered to remember what he'd done to the boy it was too late. The minstrel had starved to death deep in the castle's bowels. It's said that on dark winter nights, like the one upon which he was imprisoned, you can still hear the eerie sound of the boy's tin whistle trilling in the wind. Today, the castle's courtyard is piled high with the brightly coloured toys and trinkets of the children who now live there. I wonder if their games are ever disturbed by that eerie sound, or if they realise just how lucky they are to have been born in the 21st century.

Kellis Castle is also haunted and Balgonie Castle (no relation to Balcomie!) has so many ghosts they're seen as part of the family by the people who live there. There were nine at the last count and included a disembodied head, a ghost dog, a selection of old men in 17<sup>th</sup>-century dress and a phantom female, 'Green Jeanie'. Wemyss Castle, not far from Balgonie, is also haunted by a Green Jean.

**'The boy starved to death deep in the castle's bowels. On dark winter nights you can still hear the eerie sound of his tin whistle trilling in the wind.'**

#### HAUNTS IN ONE

Modern-day St Andrews is a town of opulence and elegance. Driving in, first-time visitors might catch a glimpse of a polo match, or take in the grand sandstone facade of the Old Course Hotel as it basks in the Scottish sun like a Spanish Fortress (admittedly, the concept of a Scottish sun may be the most supernatural element of this feature). Mention St Andrews and you're more likely to conjure up images of its university students and golfers than ghosts and ghouls.

Yet St Andrews is built on bones, those of the eponymous saint brought over from Constantinople by the monk, St Rule, and its savage beginnings still cast a dark shadow over the supposed gentility of the town.

St Andrews' Castle is haunted by the ghost of a less-than-sanguine character called Cardinal David Beaton, who was the town's Archbishop until 1546. In that year his appointment, and his life, came to an abrupt and brutal end. Don't feel too much pity for the Cardinal,

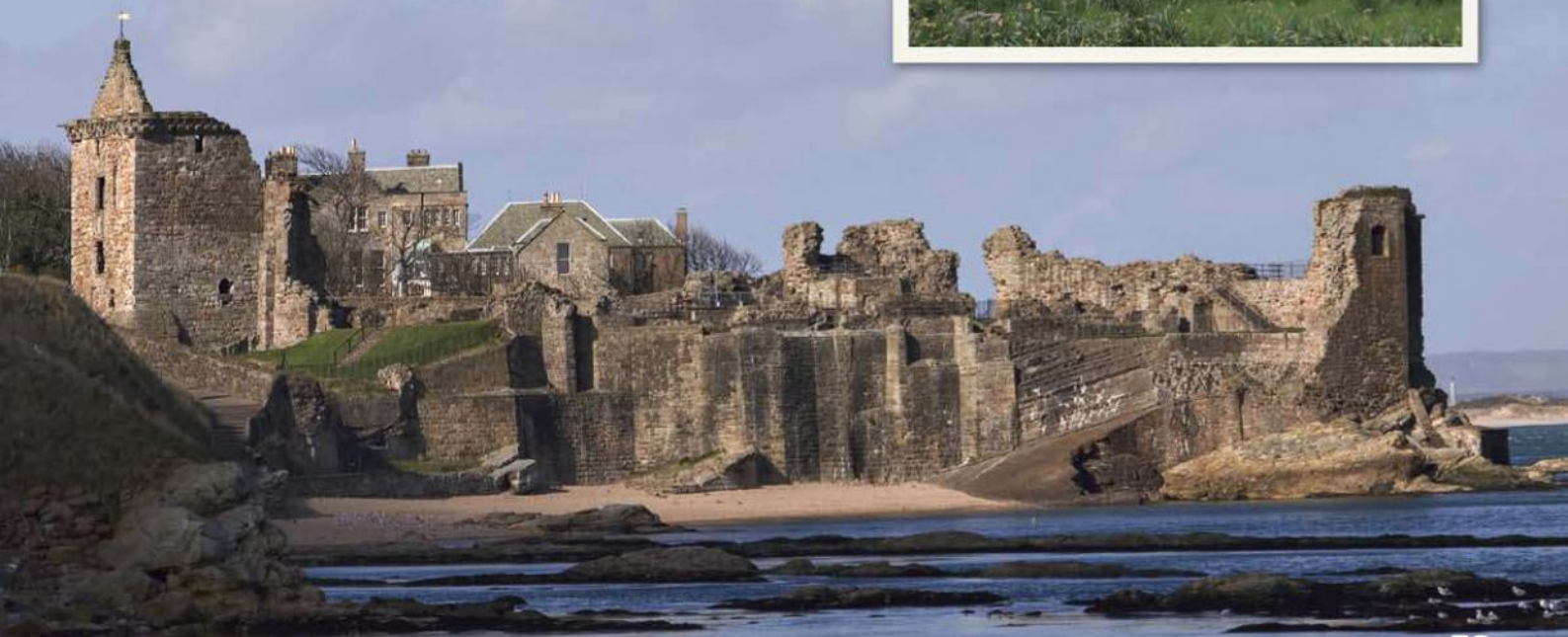
as he invited this fate upon himself through the cruel and sadistic ways in which he revelled. Protestants were his favourite group to torment. He had them imprisoned in the castle's dungeons, driven mad then murdered. On one occasion he ordered a preacher to be tied to a stake and burned alive for his personal entertainment.

A few months later, on a balmy night in May, a group of protestant lairds posing as workmen infiltrated the castle and enacted their bloody revenge. The castle was taken, and Beaton slain in his sleep. His

**HAUNTING AIR:** Balcomie Castle is also haunted by ghostly music, this time the pathetic piping of a tin whistle that belonged to a little minstrel boy who suffered a horrible fate. © Stuart Anderson



**BLOODY DEEDS:** The castle at St Andrews bore witness to torture, murder and execution in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The perpetrator of the atrocities, Cardinal David Beaton, is now doomed to haunt the scene of his crimes.



naked corpse was hung from the battlements and posed in the shape of the St Andrew's cross, a flag of flesh left to rot in the spring air. After a few weeks of posthumous humiliation, Beaton's body was dumped and buried in a dung heap. His ghost still roams the remains of the castle today, unable to rest or find peace; a fitting punishment, some would say, for a man who practised his moral corruption under the banner of God.

St Salvator's Chapel, on the grounds of the university, bears the mark of another unfortunate soul's demise. Patrick Hamilton was only 24 when he was tied to a stake beneath the bell tower and burnt alive for his protestant beliefs. It took six agonising hours for Hamilton to die. As he screamed his last it is said that his face appeared in the stonework of the College Tower, where it remains to this day.

The nearby cathedral also has its share of spooks. The structure, and its ancillary buildings and towers, overlooked St Andrews' stormy sea-front for centuries until, during the Reformation, a mob of fanatical protestants, whipped into a violent frenzy by the preachings of John Knox, ransacked and destroyed it.

These days, seagulls keep

**ODD HABIT:** During its life as The Royal Hotel, this building in Cupar was possessed of a mysterious cowled figure who prowled the Function Room and enjoyed mucking about with the lights. © Stuart Anderson



**GOOD SOUL:** St Rule's Tower is the only structure surviving intact on the cathedral site. It is haunted by a helpful monk. © Stuart Anderson

## 'Cardinal Beaton's body was dumped and buried in a dung heap. His ghost still roams the castle today, unable to find peace.'

lonely sentinel atop the remains of the old Priory. A patchwork of gravestones – grey granite, faded sandstone and red marble – is embedded in the outer walls, like some ghoulish modern art exhibit. Hunks of masonry and half-ruined towers are all that remain of the cathedral's former majesty. Centuries of slow decay have left sinister shapes in the stone-work, like some great beast has cleaved at it with tooth and claw.

St Rules' Tower is one of the few buildings to have survived intact on the site. From its peak you can enjoy sweeping views across the ruins and the ocean. On your way up the stairs you might even bump into a ghostly monk – thankfully friendly – who is said to help people safely to the top.

Another, more malevolent, monk is said to hold domain over the lower keeps and dungeons.

Inevitably, there's a White Lady. Is there any town without one? This lady is most often seen in one of the ruined towers of the cathedral, but is sometimes spotted stalking the grounds or out by the shore. According to legend she's either a plague victim or a disfigured nun whose hideous face, if left uncovered, makes anyone who sees it go mad.

### INTO THE DEN

Dunino lies on the road between St Andrews and Anstruther. Its churchyard sits at the end of a dirt-track which is itself a capillary of a long and lonely country road.

There's a promontory a few hundred yards down from the churchyard, upon which stands a small, hollowed-out pool. Nobody knows who made it, exactly when, or why, but there seems little doubt its purpose was ritualistic. The most salacious explanation for its past function is human sacrifice, although this is a minority view. But who wants to hear a mundane story when there's a chance the pool once ran red with blood, and bodies were hurled from the promontory into the fast-flowing Kinaldy burn below?

A set of slippery stone steps winds down to ground level, where trees flank the water. A faded Celtic cross is carved into a wall of rock. All manner of strange baubles and trinkets dangle from branches, lending an eerie *Blair Witch* feel to the place.

There's no evidence of spooks here, despite the creepy feel of the place but there's plenty of scope for cryptozoologists to get involved. People claim to have seen a big, Puma-like cat stalking the forests and fields of Dunino. Large paw prints have been found in farmers' fields, prompting police to investigate, but no sighting has ever been confirmed. So far.

#### MYSTERY MONK

Pets like the Dunino puma wouldn't have been welcome at The Royal Hotel in Cupar, a spill-over town usually bustling with St Andrews' excess golfers. One dark evening in October 1978, Mr Watson, one of the hotel's regular guests, ambled past its Function Room. To his mind, he was the only soul in the building still awake. The door of the room was open, inviting his curiosity. He noticed that the closer he got to the doorway, the colder the air became. Seasoned ghost-spotters know that a severe drop in temperature is a classic indicator of supernatural activity, but Mr Watson wasn't yet ready to succumb to the paranormal. Even when he saw a tall monk, veiled in a hooded robe, walk slowly and silently across the room, he simply shook his head and continued on to his bed.

Weeks passed. An assistant manager was shutting down the hotel for the evening, killing the lights and preparing for a long and silent night-shift. But the light of one room – the Functions Room –

**ENIGMATIC:** The so-called Sacrificial Pool can be found in the 'Den', an atmospheric dingle near Dunino. Were unspeakable rites once carried out here? No one knows for sure but the faint Celtic cross scratched into the cliff-side shows that a later Christian presence believed the area needed to be sanctified. © Stuart Anderson



**'According to legend she's either a plague victim or a disfigured nun whose hideous face, if left uncovered, makes anyone who sees it go mad.'**

shone in defiance of the shutdown, confusing and unnerving the manager in equal measure. He reached out and grasped the room's door-handle, instantly recoiling from the feel of the freezing metal. The sight within the room did nothing to quell his mounting dread, for there was Mr Watson's monk, again keeping his eerie vigil. The monk moved silently towards the outer wall, at which point he vanished, taking the light with him. With an icy-cold palm and hammering heart, the manager was left – alone – to contemplate the darkness.

It's now been over a decade since The Royal Hotel closed for business. People still live and sleep there, though these days as tenants and home-owners. The building's new name is the Royal Mews. None of the new occupants have reported seeing the monk, although the ghostly legend of the haunting – printed on a piece of paper that's been treated to look

like parchment – hangs on the living-room wall of the gentleman living on the top-floor.

I wonder if he knows that the Royal Hotel was built on an old burial ground?

#### THE END?

You can take a piece of land and churn it up. You can erect great monuments and palaces or destroy them to make way for shopping malls. What you can't do is shake a spook off its territory. It will stubbornly remain at the site of its untimely death or harrowing life regardless of what's written in the council's land registry. Redevelopments, reclassifications and regenerations are of no consequence to the dead. Try bulldozers, try dynamite: try as you might, you'll never shift them.

The former Pictish Kingdom will continue to change over the next two thousand years, but it's safe to assume that its ghosts and ghouls will remain a constant. ❦

# 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](mailto:editor@paranormalmagazine.co.uk) or write to The Editor, Paranormal Magazine, Jazz Publishing, The Old School, Higher Kinnerton, Chester CH4 9AJ.

## Was it our mother calling?

As much as I enjoy your magazine and as fascinated as I am by the paranormal, supernatural and the unexplained, I am the first to admit that I am not a believer.

Whether cynical or scientific, I share more in common with Scully's mindset than Mulder's and suspect that in many instances people are so keen find proof that they see 'evidence' where none exists. However, there is one event in my life which casts doubt on my firmly held scepticism and to this day I have been unable to rationalise it.

Back in 2007, my younger brother and I (now 28 and 26 respectively) got the message that our mother, terminally ill with cancer, had deteriorated and was not expected to last the night.

After driving to join our father in hospital, it was agreed that neither of us wished to see her in her present condition, instead taking with us the memories of her smiling and chatting only days before. Leaving him to remain at her side, we returned to the family home and attempted to get some rest.

In the early hours of the morning, quite unable to sleep, I left my room to go downstairs. Upon hearing me, my brother opened the door to his room, in much the same state. While talking, the landline rang and I raced through to my parent's room to answer but on doing so, I heard nothing but silence – no voice, no breathing, no static or dial tone. Just silence. Assuming the worst and suspecting my father was too choked to speak, I asked if it was him and how Mum was. Still the line remained silent and after a few seconds went dead.

We dialled 1471 to identify that the last caller was indeed my Dad's mobile, double-checking because neither of us knew his number by heart. We immediately rang back and were taken aback when he seemed surprised to hear from us. I explained the phone call, which he denied having made and, giving reassurance that Mum was still with us, promptly told us to return to bed.

Somewhat perplexed, we assumed he

must have sat on his phone or called by accident and decided to go downstairs for coffee. Just over an hour later and Dad walked through the door; the look on his face confirming the worst.

When we asked what time she passed, he looked at us and said he was shocked when we had called earlier because it was within minutes of her passing and that he hadn't been honest with us on the phone. Once more, we dialled 1471 and made a note of the number and exact time of the call – a time that correlates with my mother's death certificate.

We then checked my Dad's mobile to look at dialled numbers and cannot to this day explain why the landline did not appear in the recent calls list. As tired and anxious as we may have been, neither one of us can see how human error, subconscious thoughts or technological faults might explain this. And, maybe little more than coincidence and wishful thinking, I find it odd that three light bulbs blew over the next two hours, when they would normally do so weeks apart.

Open and frank as a family, we had often discussed my mother's failing health and she had always promised that if there was a way she could prove life after death, she would try her best to do so. I do not believe that her spirit lingers, but cannot help but think it maybe passed through on her way to somewhere else.

**Mark Fuller, North Yorkshire**

## Night-and-day mare

I was asleep in my bedroom when the sound of hooves running on my bedroom floor woke me up. I was not fully awake yet, but I saw what looked like a horse with red eyes and sharp teeth.

The next morning, I was at home alone in the bathroom when I heard a loud neighing noise and saw a black horse look at me and jump, vanishing into midair. I haven't seen it since.

**Kyle Garcia, via email**

## The last of Lance

Last year my cousin's dog Lance, a beautiful sheltie, had to be put down. It was about 2 am, when we took Lance to the emergency vets. The vet said he had

already lost his vision because of lack of oxygen in his brain and there was no way out.

After Lance expired, I went to the parking lot to unlock the car. There was nobody around. I had a strange feeling as I unlocked the doors. I heard the jingling sound of dog tags but there were no dogs around.

For about a month I heard a dog walking in the garage and my dog was behaving strangely every time that was happening. One morning about a month later my cousin asked me if I had had my dog in the back yard at 2 am that morning. I said no, why? He said that he heard jingling dog tags in the back yard. The back yard has an 8ft fence and there are no dogs around.

Was that Lance saying the final goodbye? I have not heard dog tags since.

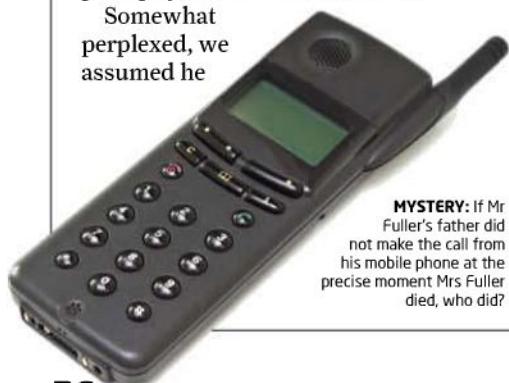
**Dean Nichols, via email**

## After the funeral

My grandfather, aged 89, passed away in November 2009. We always said he would live to 100 – he was such a strong, independent man. I even recall him climbing onto the roof to get in through a bedroom window when he locked himself out of the house a year or two back, but the stress of looking after my grandmother, who has severe dementia, really wore him down. After a short stay in hospital, he died.

Obviously this was a traumatic time for all, especially my mother who had to sort out his affairs with the help of a family friend – we all pitched in where we could. During this time some really odd things happened. I was often woken up at the same time each night by the sound of someone knocking loudly on the front door as if they wanted to come in. It was a really loud banging. I couldn't be sure if it was a dream or whether it was real, but it left me feeling very nervous. It felt as if my grandfather had come to call. This went on for several weeks.

Now, it's perfectly possible that the worry and stress at the time caused me to have dreams like this, but then again it could have been real. It seemed very real at the time. I wonder if this was due to the fact that both my sister and I did not



**MYSTERY:** If Mr Fuller's father did not make the call from his mobile phone at the precise moment Mrs Fuller died, who did?

**'We dialled 1471 and made a note of the number and exact time of the call – a time that correlates with my mother's death certificate.'**



**CAT'S EYES:** What could Mr Smith's cat see that he could not?

read at his funeral – we are not the sort of people who would feel comfortable doing this. He might have felt angered that we had not shown due respect.

It wasn't just this though. The neighbour's cat, a very friendly creature, started to come into the house on a regular basis and stay in for hours. He often popped in and out, but his habits changed. It was almost as if he was in sympathy with the emotions around him. In fact, my mother described the cat as being 'a great comfort'. He seemed to know what was going on.

However, he did exhibit some strange behaviour. I remember him sitting at the top of the stairs for hours at a time with his eyes fixed on the front door as if he was looking for something. I even watched him pad out of the living room into the kitchen and come back with a look of astonishment on his face – as if he had seen what he thought was a real person, then discovered that the person he thought he had seen wasn't there. He had seen a ghost. The look on the cat's face was almost comical.

During this time I also heard odd creaks on the landing at night as if someone was walking up the stairs. It was all very odd. Fortunately things have got back to normal and the cat has returned to his usual habits.

One last thing. We had to clear my grandparents' house ready for sale, which was in itself a very sad thing to do – they had lived there for over 50 years and to see their personal possessions being donated to the charity shop, sold or binned was a difficult experience, but I have to say the house had a very odd atmosphere. From being a friendly welcoming home it became sombre, dark and cold – a really sinister place you wouldn't want to spend a lot of time in. The electricity and water had been turned off so it was always dark and cold. My mother experienced a gust of cold air around her ankles when she was clearing the house, as if something was moving past her.

I hope my grandfather is at rest now – if indeed his spirit *was* prowling round for a few months after his death. I quite understand traditions in other cultures to ward off the dead – various rituals

## 'Using a metal detector they blasted eerie electronic sounds into the air. The visitors were excited and delighted by this "alien activity".'

to purify and cleanse a place, or even to confuse a restless spirit and prevent it returning home. In modern western society, life and death is all too often a packaged, commodified experience – something to get through, forget about. There may be something in the wisdom of other cultures. Think again – beware of the restless dead!

**Nick Smith,  
Buckinghamshire**

### George the tommy

My house has been haunted ever since I can remember. I'm in my 40s and have lived here since I was about 3 years old. Things are always going bump in the night; all sorts of objects go missing all the time only to reappear when we shout at our resident ghost to return whatever it is he has taken; my girlfriend of 12 years has seen and heard him on several occasions.

We've had our family priest bless the house five or six times only to have 'George' return to his thieving ways after a short while. I know his name because I contacted a medium by phone who told me he is a relative and if I was to look in my family photos I would find him dressed in a First World War British tommy's uniform, which I did and there he was. He is our family guardian, apparently.

We love him very much and would never get rid of him and, by the way, we have never been broken into or anything else of the kind. I never told the medium any information whatsoever, as I know how some of the false ones work.

**Terrence, via email**

### Confession of a Ufologist

When you visit Warminster in Wiltshire it immediately strikes you as an ordinary market town. There are the usual shops, pubs and houses. Nothing on the surface tells you that this was THE centre of British, indeed worldwide, UFO activity from the mid-1960s to early 1970s.

There are several reasons why UFOs might take an interest in this particular area. The surrounding countryside consists of rolling hills and great views of the sky from horizon to horizon, making it ideal for spotting any roaming UFOs. The landscape also has links with Britain's mystic past, in particular Stonehenge is only a few miles away to the west. The nearby Cley Hill and Battlesbury hills are said to be ancient burial sites.

Furthermore, the town itself has the infamous and well-named Cradle Hill. You can drive nearly to the top of

the hill, and then it is just a short walk to its summit. In 1965 at the peak of the UFO activity, thousands of people would gather on this hill to take part in skywatches. There UFOs were spotted literally every night and people wondered if this was a prelude to a mass landing.

Newspapers called this the Warminster Thing. In 1972 after forming the enigmatically named Scunthorpe UFO Research Society (SUFORS), six of us piled into a Bedford Workabus and spent a week visiting Warminster, Stonehenge, Silbury Hill and Glastonbury.

We visited Cradle Hill and did a bit of skywatching, but we only saw a few other UFO seekers. Indeed, it would have been hard to guess that Warminster had been a hotbed of UFO activity. To relieve the boredom, when some American visitors came up Cradle Hill some members of our group hid behind a bush near the gate that leads to its summit. Using a metal detector they blasted eerie electronic sounds into the air. The visitors were excited and delighted by this alien activity.

After a short cursory walk to the summit of Cradle Hill, the excited Americans went home thinking they had encountered the notorious Thing.

The only spooky thing we saw were the staring eyes of sheep in a nearby field. Actually, I'm wrong there. After speaking to one of the SUFORS six, I was reminded that we did see some strange lights in the sky that spooked us for a few minutes. They were beams of light radiating upwards that we finally put down to being searchlights or car headlights. In terms of poetic justice it would have been good if the lights were produced by the American tourists

Now I wonder if we should have played this prank on them. Did we brainwash those people into thinking there are aliens amongst us, ready to abduct and probe us at any opportunity? Had we mentally scarred those Americans on Cradle Hill for life or did we give them a much needed boost of excitement? Are we sinners and can the Americans and the aliens ever forgive us?

**Nigel Watson, Plymouth**

**For your chance to win a free entry to the *Weird 10* event at Warminster, turn to page 82.**

## Books



### The Real History of the End of the World

Written by **Sharan Newman**  
 Published by **Berkley**  
 Price: **£10.99**  
 Reviewed by **Mark Greener**

How will the world end? With a nuclear or astronomical bang? Or a biological or climatological whimper?

As Newman shows in this wonderful book, societies worldwide and throughout history have speculated about the world's demise. 2012 is just the latest suggestion that the end is nigh to capture the headlines. Reassuringly, we've missed numerous appointments with the apocalypse.

Newman begins around 800 BC with the apocalyptic beliefs of Hindus and Buddhists. Over the next three millennia, religious leaders regularly offered apocalyptic prophecies, including the Rapture of evangelical Christianity, the Cherokee ghost dance and montanism.

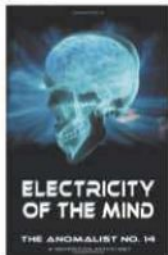
My 'favourite' is the wonderfully named Mummyjums, from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, who believed the end of the world was imminent. They wandered, wrapped in bearskins, around the USA constantly repeating: 'My God, my God, my God, my God, what wouldst thou have me do - mummyjum, mummyjum, mummyjum, mummyjum.'

More recently, futurologists predicted the end with Y2K, nuclear war and climate change.

Yet many apocalyptic predictions have certain common themes that suggest an archetype. As Newman notes, 'almost all... predict massive destruction of societies with almost total loss of life'. In most cases, 'immoral behaviour... along with lack of respect and devotion for the deities' causes the demise. However, 'the righteous, the devout, the ones who put the secret sign over their door' are saved.

In many cases, Newman points out, most of the movements focus around a charismatic leader, such as William Miller, David Koresh or Hong Xiuquan. The followers have 'absolute certainty' that the leader will 'keep them safe from whatever disaster is going to occur'.

Newman's synopses are concise, insightful and thought provoking. And they'll probably inspire you to look more deeply at several traditions. Indeed, almost every chapter left me wanting to know more, which is just about the highest praise I can offer. As you reach the final few pages, you'll regret the end of this book, at least, is nigh.



### Electricity of the Mind: The Anomalist Vol 14

Edited by **Ian Simmons**  
 Published by **Anomalist Books**  
 Price: **£9.50**  
 Reviewed by **Nick Redfern**

I always look forward to a new *Anomalist*, as they're the kind of title you can dip into and read whichever chapter catches your eye first.

For me, it was Aeolus Kephas' highly thought-provoking piece that focuses upon two individuals who have most assuredly left a mark on Fortean: Whitley Strieber and Carlos Castaneda. This is a superbly-written submission that delves deeply into the world of what Kephas describes as the 'Literary Shaman'.

The author does a fine job of dissecting and analyzing the characters, motivations and body of work of both men; he tackles the issue of fact vs fiction and how we should interpret their written output; and offers deep thoughts on the profound influence both men have had upon their audiences. Arguably, this contribution alone makes *Electricity of the Mind* essential reading.

I also read with great interest Chris Payne's piece on the seemingly never-ending controversy surrounding the alleged continued existence of the thylacine of Tasmania. Although brief, Payne's paper gets right to the point, carefully analyzes the data, and offers a firm opinion regarding the status - and future status - of the beast. The story isn't over yet. But, as Payne makes clear, it may very well be soon.

Dwight Whalen's contribution concerns a series of aerial apparitions in the skies of Hetlerville, Pennsylvania in 1914 that would have put the Angel of Mons saga to shame. I had not previously heard of the Hetlerville sightings - of houses, of children and of angels in the sky, no less - and, so, digesting Whalen's findings on this curious affair was most instructive.

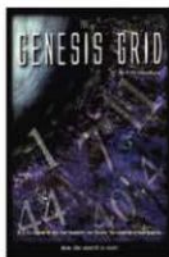
Mark Pilkington's 'History, the Hive Mind, and Agrarian Art', tells the eerie story of the parallels that exist between certain elements of the Crop Circle controversy and the content of a 1973 science-fiction film, *Phase IV*. Did the film leave its mark on some of the early circle-makers just like they left their sculptured marks in the fields of England?

I have to confess that when I saw that Ulrich Magin had written a paper on out-of-place volcanoes, I considered that it would surely be way too dry and academic for such a volume as *The Anomalist*. But, I

was wrong! This is an engaging and captivating piece that looks at the claims of volcanoes spontaneously appearing here, there and everywhere and then seemingly vanishing without trace. Sounds strange? It is!

As for the rest of *EOTM*, it's all top-notch, and includes contributions from Theo Paijmans on Fortean and the age of digital newspapers; Cameron Blount on Peru's Moche and Nazca cultures; Mike Jay on Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the realm of the supernatural; and much, much more.

Here's looking forward to issue 15!



### The Genesis Grid

Written by **P. M. Woolford**  
 Published by **Authorhouse**  
 Price: **£15.49 pb**  
 Reviewed by **Nigel Watson**

The basic premise of *The Genesis Grid* is that the Bible contains a set of six numbers that predict the future of humanity and our place in the universe. Two of these numbers are 7 and 11, which represent Jesus and God respectively.

These numbers are derived from the position of words and phrases in the Bible, and through them patterns and predictions can be worked out to show that: 'God is going to self-replicate, by way of a resurrection, through the human race.' (p.208).

The sub-title of the book boldly proclaims: 'Now the search is over.' This relates to the fact that Woolford believes the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (S.E.T.I.) is worthless as the 'only alien is God himself' (p.174).

In 2003, a signal was sent to show that the apocalyptic end of the world, as we know it today, is about to occur. This signal consisted of eight power cuts that struck throughout the world and formed a figure of 8 that has Rome at its centre. In addition, this was the year of the launch of Dan Brown's fourth novel that was translated into 44 languages (*The Da Vinci Code*) and David Blaine's fourth 44-day-long 'magical' stunt over the Thames.

For Woolford this indicates a 444 pattern that predicts the fall of the USA and the UK. Whether Woolford's number coding is correct or not, it all falls down to how you interpret this data. At its heart, the author uses it to decry the 'United States of Europe' and the power of the Roman Catholic Church.

If he is right, be prepared for the 42-month-long hellish war that will punish our corrupt world.



## DVDs/Blu-Ray



### Shutter Island

Directed by: **Martin Scorsese**  
 Cast: **Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo & Ben Kingsley**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Leonardo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese team up once again, this time for the gritty psychological thriller, *Shutter Island*.

Teddy Daniels (DiCaprio), a US Marshall, arrives with his partner chuck (Mark Ruffalo) on a prison island for the criminally insane to investigate a woman's disappearance. Confronted with the foreboding island Teddy begins to suspect there is more going on than meets the eye and becomes embroiled in a hunt for his wife's killer with devastating consequences.

*Shutter Island* has a convoluted, twisting plot that while engrossing some, will infuriate others. Everything fits very well, but in order for the twist pay-off to work, there are a number of drawn-out scenes and unexplained actions present for it all to come together. This may sound like a grumble, but if you view this with the readiness to ponder then *Shutter Island* is a fascinating character piece in an environment that will have you gripping the arms of your seat.

As the modern day Scorsese-De Niro pairing, Scorsese and DiCaprio just seem to fit perfectly together. The post-war, gritty noir setting and flawless mise-en-scène are given added texture by the depth, complexity and secrets of DiCaprio in one great performance out of the many on display; Ruffalo, Ben Kingsley, Max von Sydow, et al.

Many will undoubtedly be annoyed by the twist, but this is actually the real coup of *Shutter Island*, as it asks us, 'What can you trust in a film filled with secrets?' and 'What should the ending resolve when we can't be sure of what went before?' One thing you can trust is that this is one of the most skilled psychological thrillers you will see for some time.





**The Crazies**  
 Directed by: **Breck Eisner**  
 Cast: **Timothy Olyphant & Radha Mitchell**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Another adaptation of a cult horror sees George Romero's 1973 shocker, *The Crazies*, updated for the modern day with enough scares, lunatics and masked military goons to hold the attention for the time being.

In a sleepy Midwest town, there is often very little for the sheriff (Timothy Olyphant) to do! Until, that is, a government plane carrying a biological weapon that turns citizens into murderous, pseudo-zombie 'crazies' crash-lands in the town's drinking water supply and the government step in to 'clean-up' the town.

While *The Crazies* brings nothing new to the horror table, it is an efficient enough piece of film-making to tick all of the necessary horror boxes (scares and suspense) to be considered a well-executed remake.

For those unfamiliar with Romero's original, *The Crazies* fits well in with the modern obsession that is infection horror. However, not quite reaching the quality of its rivals, the film has very few standout moments to be remembered beyond an enjoyable watch. For instance, the strongest motif in the film is the terrifying iconography of doctors in ominous Hazmat suits accompanied by the army toting guns and gasmasks. Well used, but looking back to *28 Weeks Later*, a poor addition to its predecessor, the Hazmat suited military moving through a poisonous fog burning everything that moves, simply stands out more.

*The Crazies* is as good as it was ever going to be - a competent genre movie with a solid plot, where the main failing is not packing enough punch when delivering the shocks. Somewhat of a missed opportunity I feel.



**Solomon Kane**  
 Directed by: **Michael J. Bassett**  
 Cast: **James Purefoy & Max von Sydow**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

A dark and brooding adaptation of Robert E. Howard's story that first appeared in *Weird Tales* magazine back in 1928.

At the turn of the 17th century, a mercenary of Queen Elizabeth named Solomon Kane (James Purefoy) is told by a demon that his soul is destined for Hell. He vows to give up his violent ways for a chance of puritanical redemption, until the kidnap of a young girl and the murder of her family returns him to his bloodthirsty life so he can seek salvation.

There is quality present in *Solomon Kane*, with the pulp source material coming from the father of the 'sword and sorcery' subgenre, who would go on to pen *Conan the Barbarian*. Luckily for fans of Howard, this movie adaptation sticks closely to the tales and delivers muscle-bound heroics with a mixture of magic, action and plenty of blood.

*Solomon Kane* does well to bring a serious tone and burning intensity to what is quite a straightforward piece of pulp fiction - much of which is down to the screen presence of Purefoy in the title role and the benefit of supporting actors of the likes of Max Von Sydow and Pete Postlethwaite. The one downside was a villain who didn't manage to maintain any real threat even in a demonic role.

A mixture of *Conan* and *Van Helsing* seems to sum up the film appropriately enough, and if that is your kind of preference then this is one to watch. Strong stomach required!



**Clash of the Titans**  
 Directed by: **Louis Leterrier**  
 Cast: **Sam Worthington, Liam Neeson & Ralph Fiennes**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

One more for the remake pile... and surprisingly for an action epic with 3D seemingly thrown in at the last minute, this is one with plenty of realised ambition, great design and intense and enjoyable action set pieces.

The ultimate struggle for power in Greek mythology sees war break out among the Gods when Hades, the lord of the underworld, tries to topple Zeus from his throne and unleash hell on earth. Only Perseus, the illegitimate son of Zeus, can defeat Hades, but he must first battle unholy demons, terrifying beasts and his own destiny.

This is probably the first true example of the Greek mythological tales that hark back to the sword-and-sandal epics that were flooding out of the Italian Cinecittà studios from the late '50s. Basically this is a fun run through Greek mythology with enough digitally enhanced slaying of monsters to captivate the audience.

By no means does *Clash of the Titans* have a strong plot, script, depth or acting. But the lack of these things is almost forgivable as it has been replaced by a feeling of ambition and downright fun that is very often missing from films of its kind.

*Clash of the Titans* is a popcorn epic that may be guilty of taking itself too seriously at times with little difference from the 1981 original. But for all its script shortcomings, salvation lies in the stunning and fun action set pieces. And you can't beat a good gigantic CGI scorpion!



## Games



**Lego Harry Potter: Years 1-4**  
 Format: **DS, PC, PS3, Wii, XBOX 360**  
 Publisher: **Warner Bros.**  
 Developer: **TT Games**  
 Reviewed by: **Fergus McShane**

Developer Traveller's Tales launches a new franchise of Lego games in magical fashion as the Lego Harry Potter picks up his wand to solve puzzles and pick up as many Lego bits that your spells expel.

If you have played any of the previous releases - *Star Wars*, *Batman*, *Indiana Jones* - then you will already know that each of these games contain as much charm and light-hearted fun as they do quality and playability. And what could be more appealing to children than playing one beloved popular classic, *Harry Potter*, in the style of perennial favourite, Lego.

The game itself is based on the first four *Harry Potter* books (*Sorcerer's Stone*, *Chamber of Secrets*, *Prisoner of Azkaban* and *Goblet of Fire*) so there is plenty to sink your teeth into as you traverse the first four years of witchcraft and wizardry in Hogwarts, right up to battling Dementors with Patronus Charms and He Who Must Not Be Named in some great fun boss battles.

If you tackle the story mode head on, you will be finished in about six hours. But there is so much replay factor in the Lego games that you will spend hours going back to levels, searching for new spells in free play mode. And if you do, the best way is with a friend in co-op play as this increases the fun while also removing the impact of the questionable character AI you will encounter.

Like all the Lego games have been, *Harry Potter* is fun, charming and will have you hunting round Hogwarts for hours.



Book, DVD & Game reviews from back issues can be found online at:  
[www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk](http://www.paranormalmagazine.co.uk)





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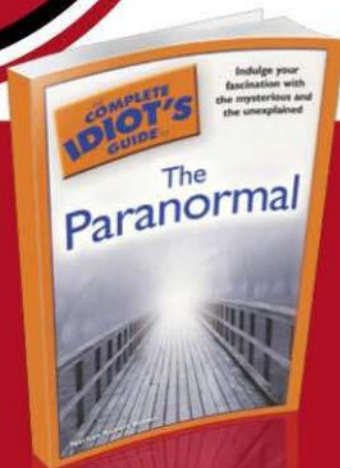
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**WIN**Closing date for **Weird 10** competition is **Monday, August 9**. Closing date for book competitions is **Monday, August 23**.

## The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Paranormal

Imagine the editor's glee when this title arrived in the post - at last, a book designed just for me, he thought.

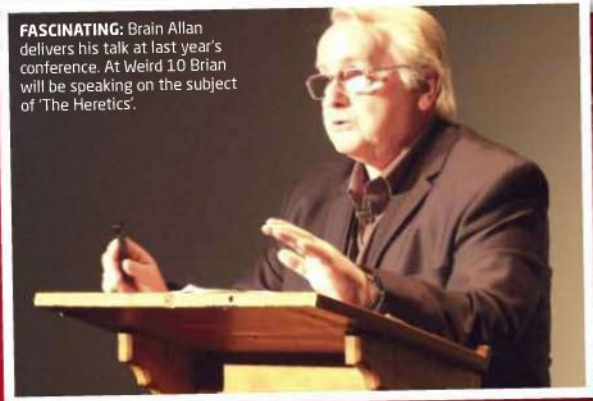
In fact, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Paranormal* is simply the latest in a very successful series of volumes which aim to take complex subjects and to present them in an engaging, readable and clearly understandable way. The series originally focused on technical subjects like statistics or web design but has expanded to include philosophy, business practice - and now the supernatural.

*The Complete Idiot's Guide* has been compiled by Nathan Robert-Brown, an expert on world mythology and religion, and he has done an excellent job in condensing the whole gamut of the paranormal, including ghosts, spiritualism, aliens, weird creatures, magic and mysticism, into one handy, readable package.

Thanks to publishers Alpha, we have **THREE** copies of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Paranormal* to give away. For your chance to win the set, log on to [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions) and be prepared to answer this question:

**What does ESP stand for?**

**FASCINATING:** Brain Allan delivers his talk at last year's conference. At **Weird 10** Brian will be speaking on the subject of 'The Heretics'.



## Weekend passes to *Weird 10* conference

**Weird 10** is the greatly anticipated follow-up to a highly successful event last year dedicated to UFOs and the wider world of the paranormal. Subjects covered at the conference will be as diverse as the Angels of Mons, conspiracy theories, magic as a useable technology and 'UFOs and Stonehenge in an Electric Universe'.

Hosted by UFO expert Malcolm Robinson, speakers will include Nick Pope, David Clarke, Claran O'Keefe, Andy Roberts and Phillip Mantle. ASSAP will also have a strong presence at the event.

**Weird 10** will be held at the Athenaeum Theatre, Warminster, Wiltshire, over the weekend of August 21 and 22.

Warminster is legendary in UFO circles: in the 1960s the area round the town became Britain's busiest UFO hotspot. The phenomenon was originally dubbed 'The Warminster Thing' and took the form of weird noises before unidentified lights in the sky began to appear.

The event concludes with the annual Warminster Skywatch on Cradle Hill. There will also be many stands and stalls at **Weird 10**, with book launches and special guests adding to the exciting mix.

Thanks to organisers **Weird Events**, we have a prize of **TWO** weekend passes for **Weird 10**. For your chance to win the passes, just log on to [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions) and be prepared to answer this question:

**Who wrote *The Warminster Mystery*, the first book on the Warminster 'thing'?**

## Twenty to Make *Knitted Aliens*

Now here's a fun book and quite unique in our experience. Fine artists and fabrics specialist Fiona McDonald has shown considerable imagination in coming up with **20** of the strangest and cutest little creatures you could hope to meet.

Set your needles clacking to create jolly tentacled, bug-eyed, antenna-topped critters in striking colours. The book is designed for experienced knitters but the steps to follow are clear and logical and supported by delightful colour photos.

The finished Aliens will enchant any child as well as the enthusiastic knitter and Fiona has added to the fun by coming up with facts about the strange life-forms - those on the cover, for example, are Zurks and we are told that they are 'wise and enigmatic' and 'spend their long lives stargazing and contemplating the mysteries of the universe'.

Thanks to publishers Search Press we have **FIVE** copies of *Twenty to Make Knitted Aliens* to give away. For your chance to win one, just log on to [paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions](http://paranormalmagazine.co.uk/competitions) and be prepared to answer this question:

**What planet do Martians come from?**



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.



# BOOKEND

## THANKS TO THE MEMORATES

By Jack Hunter



**JACK HUNTER** is a recent anthropology graduate from the University of Bristol. He is particularly interested in the way that paranormal experiences are interpreted and lived with by experiencers. His website is at [www.paranthropology.weebly.com](http://www.paranthropology.weebly.com)

**A peculiarity of the history of human thought is our apparent preoccupation with conceptions of unseen forces and invisible entities that would today be classed as supernatural, paranormal or even religious. Right across the world, from antiquity to the present day, human cultures have been built around metaphysical notions of an invisible world inhabited by spiritual beings, gods, fairies, demons, ghosts and so on.**

Life has been structured around paying homage to these entities, whether through offering sacrifices to gods and ancestral spirits, worshipping deities in ritualised ceremonies or through refusing to enter haunted houses. These activities serve to solidify ideas that are otherwise entirely abstract and invisible. The supernatural influences our behaviour.

Now, what I find so interesting about our species' widespread fascination with the supernatural is that despite its utter invisibility (for the most part) we continue to be besotted by it. Even in our so-called 'modern secular society' the paranormal continues to play a significant role in our day-to-day lives. Our popular culture is riddled with references to the supernatural and our everyday thoughts are often captivated by it.

Our enchantment can easily be seen when the supernatural arises in conversation: the discussion soon becomes a hotbed for the exchange of personal experience narratives, local ghost stories, and debate about the reality of the paranormal. We cannot help but be intrigued when we hear someone describe their encounter with divine beings; their abduction by extraterrestrial beings; or their having seen an apparition of a deceased grandparent on the day they died.

These multifarious impressions provide clues that suggest the existence of an order of reality that supersedes and permeates the world of everyday concerns.

For most of us, however, such

experiences are infrequent, if they occur at all. So how does the notion of the existence of a supernatural order persist, on a broader scale than the personal, in the intervals between these relatively rare experiences?

In my opinion it is through private conversation, and the exchange of personal experience narratives, that the supernatural continues to play an important role in our thoughts. Stories keep the notion of the supernatural ticking over in the intervals between direct encounters. Traditions of folklore, urban legend and belief develop which help to keep the experiences of others firmly embedded in our consciousness, even if we haven't had any such experiences ourselves.

Within the discipline of folklore studies, stories of events believed to be true are referred to as 'memorates'. Magazines such as this also help to perpetuate the idea of the supernatural on a broad scale through allowing memorates to be shared and disseminated.

And here we find another interesting element of the supernatural's wider influence: those who have not had any encounters of their own, but who are nevertheless captivated by the *idea* of these experiences; those who, in the words of Fox Mulder of the *X-Files*, 'want to believe'. The experiences of others give us something to hold on to in a world that might otherwise seem devoid of mystery, a world that is geared towards financial gain and material possessions.

The idea that there is a supernatural order of reality may be taking the place in our minds that was once, in centuries past, occupied by religion. This fact has led many theorists to question the idea that the process referred to as secularisation has even been occurring at all. If anything, paranormal beliefs appear to be more widespread than ever, although the form these beliefs take has altered slightly.

Perhaps our society is not so secular after all!

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