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# World Of The Weird

**by Brad Steiger**

Witches! Monsters! Murderers!  
Unbelievable but real. Fantastic  
but factual. Incredible but true.



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## *Chilling Event*

In 1647, a ship was seen to disappear in full view of a crowd of people who were waiting its arrival on the wharves of New Haven, Connecticut. The ship had put out from New Haven five months before and had been feared lost. When the vessel was sighted coming into the harbor, word spread quickly that she was returning and the crowd gathered to greet her. But it appeared that the ship was acting queerly to those who watched. Though the sails and rigging looked in good shape, she sailed dead into the wind. Then, before their eyes, the ship began to fade from view, and the crowd was left staring at the undisturbed waters of the harbor.



# World Of The Weird

by *Brad Steiger*

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# BEWARE OF GREEKS

## 2700 YEARS OLD

"GET UP, get up, the sun is shining." The woman bustled around the small peasant dwelling of Pergusa, Enna Province, Sicily.

The man on the bed stirred slightly. His name was Concetto Buonsignore, 63, and the woman scurrying around him was his wife.

"You had too much wine at the festival yesterday," the woman said, shaking her finger at him. "An old man like you ought to know better."

Concetto Buonsignore shook his head as if trying to clear some confusion. His eyes opened wide, looking at the woman.

"What did you say?" the woman asked, after he had made some sound.

The man spoke again, but she did not understand.

"What's the matter can't you speak Italian?"

The man shook his head, not understanding. He spoke again, but the words sounded like senseless babblings.

"Too much wine and fiesta," the woman shook her head knowingly. "I'll fix that—come on, we'll get some cold water . . ." But as the woman approached the man got up and looked at her with confusion. She realized that he was definitely not drunk as he moved adroitly away from her, eluding the grasp of her hand.

She looked at him out of the corner of her eye. "Concetto, after all these years you're playing a trick on me. You should be ashamed."

But it was obvious that he did not understand a word of what she had said. Thinking that her husband had been overtaken by a spirit or at the very least

become insane, the woman motioned for him to follow her and led him to the priest of the small Sicilian town. The peasants, who greeted him along the way, were astounded to hear him babble back unintelligibly, as if he did not know them at all. After a moment's concern, they shrugged it off as the after-effects of the festival, just as the wife had.

After listening to the sounds come from the mouth of the man, the priest realized that they were not simply meaningless prattle. "Your husband is speaking in some strange language," he informed the wife of Buonsignore.

"What language?" the wife asked unbelievably. "He's never been off Sicily, and he does not even speak good Italian."

But the priest was convinced that the old peasant farmer was speaking in some unknown tongue. He sent for Father B——, who worked out of Palermo, was a professor of literature, and had great facility with languages. The man came to Pergusa and listened carefully as Concetto Buonsignore spoke. He immediately announced that the man was speaking in Greek—though it was a variety of a very old dialect that the scholar had only come across in the ancient Greek of Homer and his contemporaries. After listening for a while longer, Father B—— came to the conclusion that the Sicilian peasant was reliving a personality that was twenty-seven centuries-old!

Concetto Buonsignore had lived his entire life on the island of Sicily. The first time that he had even heard of Greece, was when his son was sent to the country with an expeditionary force of the Italian army in World War II. But, as he spoke to Father B——, he described the surroundings and the times of the ancient city of Athens. The house of the Athenian citizen was in front of the altar and the temple of Demeter, and the dwelling was shaded by a large tree. He de-



scribed a distinguished military career in which he had fought for his city state as a soldier and a sailor. One of the battles in which he had taken part, the priest was able to identify as the battle of Aegospotami of 405 B. C.!

The "voice" went on to describe in exact historical detail the manner in which the Athenians had lost the naval battle by not heeding the words of Alcibiades, and how, the following year, Sparta had been able to dissolve the Athenian empire because of the loss of the fleet.

Father B—— was astonished at the tongue in which the man spoke and the accuracy of his descriptions. The clergyman sent for a fellow university professor to confirm his findings about the dialect the entranced peasant farmer used.

Concetto Buonsignore quickly became a celebrity, and newsmen began to converge on the island of Sicily and on the town of Pergusa. Most of the reporters were fated to be too late for the story. The journal *La Domenica del Corriere* did print a long article reviewing the strange manifestation in its December 29, 1946 issue. The Milan reporter was one of the few who had arrived in time to hear the peasant use the ancient Greek tongue.

On the fifth day that the personality of the ancient Greek sailor had taken over the body of Bounsignore, it left as suddenly as it had come. The last words spoken in the ancient tongue were directed at his wife: "I feel hungry." From that time on, the peasant lapsed back into his original personality and to the Sicilian dialect of Italian that he had spoken from birth.

For many centuries, before modern times, Greece has had more than a casual relationship with Sicily. The island that was Homer's "land of the Cyclops," was later colonized by the Greeks in the eighth century B.C. Thus the possibility that the Greek person-

ality, which had manifested itself through Bounsignore, had lived on the island centuries before.

The actual conversations that occurred between Father B—— and the peasant farmer, while he was in the entranced state, were recorded, witnessed, notarized, and filed with the French Academy of Sciences in Paris. The language professor, which Father B—— called in from Palermo, also signed the document as a witness.

## THE NIGHT

### A DINOSAUR CAME TO CALL

THE MOON was big and almost full as it rose over the town beach of Clearwater, Florida on the evening of February 27, 1948. The trees on either side of a parked car were lit silver white and a light breeze moved the topmost branches in a hypnotic rhythm.

Temporarily, the young couple in the automobile had created their own little dream world. They talked of their lives and their hopes. He put out his arm and she slid across the seat and fell against his shoulder.

"What's that in the water?" the girl asked after an embrace.

"Who cares?" the boy sighed, moving his head toward hers again.

She pulled away. "I've never seen anything like it."

Reluctantly he directed his attention away from her and squinted into the water in front of the car. A long dark shape glided in and out of the reflection of the moon. The young man had never seen anything like it, either.

There was a loud splash from the water, and the young couple were soon speeding over the short driveway that led to the picnic area. Down the road a filling station's lights glowed into the sky. The tires squealed as the car slid to a stop next to the pumps. The two jumped out and ran for the door and the phone inside.

"Hello! Can you give me the police station?" The operator gave him the number and he dialed it.

"Hello, Clearwater main division." The all-night officer on duty was obviously sleepy.

"Can a private citizen borrow a high powered rifle? There's this thing in the water, and it's big, and. . . ."

"Wait a minute! Slow down. Where are you and what have you seen?"

"Across from the town beach. It's a sea monster I tell you. Someone ought to shoot it." His voice had lost none of the excitement.

"Fella, why don't you go and sleep it off?"

The phone clicked in his ear and he looked over at his girl friend, the excitement draining from his face.

To the police he was just another drunk looking at his own special brand of pink elephant. The only trouble was that this pink elephant left tracks. The tide had washed the beach clean of human footprints from the day before, and early comers to the beach that next morning were greeted by an expanse of sand criss-crossed by enormous three-toed footprints.

If this had been the only evidence of the mysterious beast, the footprints might have been written off as a hoax. But from February until October of 1948, sightings of an incredible creature that left identical tracks were reported from Tampa all the way up the coast to the Suwannee River.

The three-toed footprints gave evidence of a webbing between the toes. The stride of the beast averaged 25 inches, and the longest toe measured 13½ inches. The tracks were especially strange because they strongly resembled the fossilized imprints of certain dinosaurs, which were supposedly extinct sixty million years ago!

The longest single set of tracks were found along the swampy banks of the Suwannee river. The tracks moved over varied terrain for a distance of two hundred yards, giving investigators an opportunity to determine how the beast moved. It was obviously a two-legged creature, whose weight was estimated at being close to three tons.

Always suspicious of a hoax, the investigators tried to determine how such a deception could have been carried off. Intrigued by the stories of strange tracks and weird sightings, that he had been hearing all summer, Ivan T. Sanderson, world-famous zoologist, came to the area around the Suwannee in October to check the validity of the reports. After carefully examining the tracks, he found that if the whole business were a hoax, the following would have to be true:

The tracks would have to have been made by a machine which could “. . . be transported by a small boat up a river on which people fish for a living every day and night, without being seen and which could be brought by open sea from some port not less than 150 miles away; be unloaded on a 6-foot-by-3-foot sand shelf, then trundled through a forest, leaving imprints such as we have described, alter its stride either from side to side or both together, rise on its toes alone or move on its heels at will, have toes that move reciprocally both in and out and up and down, individually, pass under a tangle of dead bushes making a hole no more than 8 feet high and 4 feet wide, enter and return from a deep, muddy swamp, carry at least one man, weigh between one and three tons, and walk around small sticks and herbs without crushing them, but flatten a fallen tree.”

Three engineers were contacted and asked to design such a machine on paper. They came up with an apparatus that could do most of the things required by Sanderson's list, but the thing would have to have been over fifty feet high. The complexity of such a machine would have to be so enormous that its physical stability and mobility would be highly questionable.

Sightings had come from many sources and from people in all walks of life. Fishermen, tourists, and

residents had all claimed to have seen a huge bluntnosed, short-necked creature. The clinching description was made by four flyers from the Dunedin Flying School; Mr. Mario Hernandez, the school's director; and Mr. George Orsanides, the head of a sponge fishing fleet, who had seen the thing from the air. These men had intimate knowledge of the area and its wildlife and were able to give an exact description of the beast. Further sightings were made by a minister and his wife, an old fisherwoman, and a professional hunter. All described the same thing. A creature that, according to all previous evidence, had not walked the earth for several million years.

There are probably many animals in the natural world which have not been seen regularly enough to be named and categorized. Much of the land area of the globe has not been explored, and the almost incomprehensible area of the sea, which has an average depth of between two and two and a half miles and covers almost three-fourths of the surface of the planet, remains basically uncharted and unsurveyed, its inhabitants, unclassified and little known. A very rare sea beast could exist for centuries without a human eye falling on it. Many secrets are shrouded in the sea water off inhabitable shores and only rarely as in Florida in 1948—do we get any idea of what is under the surface. Perhaps man should be prepared in case a dinosaur comes to call.

## THE DEVIL RIDER OF CHISHOLM HOLLOW

THE FIRST settlers of the central Texas hill country were Scotch-Irish hillmen who had migrated from the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. God-fearing though they were, a vein of superstition and a healthy respect for the supernatural ran through their heritage. When advised by the Indians to avoid a small valley because of a strange apparition that appeared on horseback, they told themselves there was enough land to go around without trespassing on haunted ground and steered wide of the foreboding little hollow.

Mysterious sounds, like metal striking metal, came from the hollow and were heard by the Indians and a few white men, who had dared get near enough to the place to hear anything; but most reasonable folk had written off the reports as talltales. One of the "reasonable" people who had done so was a rancher named McConnell. A maurauding pack of wolves had been tearing at his herd, and he had tracked them to the draw that led into the hollow. Without hesitation, he pushed on into the little valley over ground that had seldom supported the weight of a human being. After going a hundred yards, he dismounted from his horse and bent near the ground to examine the confused animal tracks more closely.

The clank of metal and the sounds of hooves caused him to snap up his head. He was astounded to see an armored rider thundering down the hollow. Terrified, he jumped on his own pony and galloped out of the place toward his house. Shortly after the incident, the people of the hill country learned that

the army of General Zachary Taylor had crossed the Rio Grande and had violated Mexican territory. The Mexican war had begun.

The Devil Rider of Chisholm Hollow is a strange manifestation that the people of the central Texas hills have seen before every major conflict in which the United States has become embroiled. The strikingly tall, armored horseman on his magnificent, coal black steed is seen to thunder out of the little valley and make an appearance, then vanish without a trace.

The second recorded appearance of the rider was fifteen years after he had terrified McConnell. The report was given by Emmett Ringstaff, and this time the "devil rider" was more completely described.

On April 10, 1861, Ringstaff happened to be passing the hollow when the rider came by him at a steady trot. The horse he rode was taller than any that had been raised by the settlers of the area, and even though the hill folk thought the rider to be a manifestation of Lucifer, Ringstaff remained calm enough to observe that the spectre was wearing a kind of armor and carrying a shield. Iron gauntlets covered his arms, and he wore a helmet of Spanish design. From a buckler, which looked to be gold and bore an inscription of a crown and a lion, two brass pistols dangled. The pistols were of eighteenth century design and had the look of fine craftsmanship about them. Shortly after Ringstaff had seen the apparition of the rider, the first guns of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter.

After the war had ended, the hollow was christened, Chisholm Hollow, because of its geographical location on a spur of the Chisholm trail, which Texas cattle owners used to drive their stock to Kansas rail-heads. Though the rider never seemed to bother the cattlemen, the cowboys did happen to pick up a few



interesting articles out of the hollow, including a large silver spur which was Spanish in origin.

Still later, the settlers learned from historians that a Spanish fort had been located near the hollow when Texas had been under Spain's control. According to the historians, the garrison that had been stationed near the fort had been massacred by Comanche Indians around 1700.

Gradually, the theory that the rider was a manifestation of the devil gave way to the notion that he was the shade of one of the Spaniards that had been killed in the massacre of two centuries before.

Before the Spanish American war, the mysterious rider was seen by three men—Arch Clawson, Ed Shannon, and Sam Bulluck. Although the pattern of his visitation had not changed, a new twist had been added. Each one of the men who saw the rider felt, at that particular instant, a weird flash of personal animosity which the rider directed at him. The shade seemed to be sensitive about his Spanish heritage.

Though the strange horseman had remained neutral when portending other conflicts, this time his loyalty lay toward Spain, and it seemed to be showing. During the brief conflict with the European power, strange things happened around the central Texas hills. Though Texas had better than average rainfall in 1898, wells and creeks went dry in the hill country. Cattle died of thirst, and a strange and unexplainable disease began taking the horses. The local calamity is still blamed on the "devil rider" by the people who live in the area of the hollow.

Only one attempt was ever made to settle the hollow, and that was unsuccessful. Scoffing at the superstitions of the small ranching community, the settler began building a house so he could claim homestead right on the land in the hollow. He had just completed the structure when the entire building

seemed to erupt in flames. All that has remained is a crumbling chimney—the “devil rider’s” hollow is still unmolested.

After his appearance before the Spanish-American war, the apparition kept to itself in the secluded hollow. His next visitation was made in January of 1917 to a group of young deer hunters, who were tempting the fates by looking for deer signs within the hollow. Laughing at the wild tales of their elders, but glancing over their shoulders just the same, they had entered the hollow very cautiously. When the armored rider thundered out of nowhere, his armor and mail glinting in the January sun, the young men had scattered and ran. On February 3, 1917, the United States, which had been teetering on the brink of war, severed diplomatic relations with the German Empire, and shortly after was sending armies across the Atlantic.

The world was hypertense in 1941. Europe had been a battlefield for over a year and a half and the Western Pacific had been subject to Japanese aggression for even longer. Not insensitive to the precarious position of the United States in this world setting, the people of the central Hills of Texas had gathered to pray for peace on Sunday, December 7. Following the services, a group of settlers got into an automobile and started down the road that led to Chisholm Hollow. When passing the haunted chasm, the driver stopped the car, claiming that he had heard a horse. After a few seconds, the mounted apparition charged onto the road, stopped broadside to them for an instant, then passed off the road and disappeared in the cover on the opposite side.

The terrified group of men and women hurried home where they waited impatiently around the radio as the tubes warmed up. The first word they heard was of the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

## THEY CAME TO ACAMBARO

WHO WERE the first human inhabitants of the Western hemisphere? The standard answer is the Indians, who crossed the Siberia-Alaska landbridge and migrated south. But a persistent man of Acambaro, Mexico keeps digging up evidence that refutes this claim.

Waldemar Julsrud excavated 32,000 separate relics in an eight-year period. Julsrud is not an archeologist by profession, but a hardware merchant in the small Mexican town. The strange thing about the relics that turn up is that they are not of typical Indian origin. The strange little figurines have the style and flavor of ancient Near-Eastern artifacts. The range of articles uncovered in a field outside the town include human bones, skulls, ceremonial masks, flutes, rattles, jewelry, tools, grinders, and bowls.

Perhaps the first inhabitants of the Western hemisphere built a civilization which passed out of existence long before the first primeval Indian set foot on Alaskan ground. Impossible? Not only do many experts agree that Julsrud's relics are ancient Near-Eastern in style—including some features of Egyptian and Mesopotamian early art—but that the figures themselves show men in conflict with huge reptiles, almost dinosaurlike in quality. One statuette shows a man riding a huge reptile.

How long ago did the giant reptiles disappear from the tropical jungles of Central America? According to the ancient relics, perhaps man was a contemporary to the dinosaurs in some parts of the world.

As interesting as these artifacts may be, Julsrud has found that they take up space in storage. Thirty-two

thousand separate articles, which require careful handling, have filled up eight rooms in his house besides two more rooms which he has added on just for the purpose of storage.

Julsrud feels that an expedition of scientifically accredited men should set up their own diggings and unearth the artifacts themselves. He is sure they would be convinced of their authenticity.

Archeologists are hesitant to spend valuable time and scarcely available money on a project that seems so outlandish. But the Mexican hardware dealer has been successful in convincing a few reputable men that his project, and the area itself, is deserving of at least some archeological investigation.

Most of the unearthed artifacts have been made of rock and obsidian. The objects are found at a depth of from three to five feet. Test holes have been made at various places around the site, giving evidence of a general ruin in the area.

Julsrud believes that the valley in which the excavation site is located was once a lake or marsh, because some of the relics recovered have been shaped like fish, and a few of the bones recovered are from reptilian swamplike forms.

The finds of this obscure hardware dealer in Mexico have excited a scientific controversy. The interest stimulated in the area may eventually send a fully accredited team of archeologist and scientists to the area. Perhaps an extensive inquiry will uncover the solution of the origin of these relics, or perhaps the facts themselves will enshroud the little town of Acambaro, and its vestige of ancient history, in an even deeper mystery.

Who were the first men on this continent? Perhaps the citizens of ancient Acambaro were the first inhabitants. But if they were where did they go? Even

giving a hypothetical answer to the question leads to problems. But the civilization at Acambaro probably existed long before the first Indian set foot on North America.

## THE WILD, WILD ROCKS

FOUR YOUNG miners working the number eight pit at Gartlee, near Airdrie, Scotland, swung picks and lifted shovel after shovel of the black fuel into the waiting hoppers. The work was hard and dirty and the pay of 1848 was hardly worth the effort. They had just broken off a chunk about four feet in diameter. As they began to break the unwieldy chunk into smaller and more maneuverable pieces, they found that the usual brittle texture of the coal had changed.

"This is the hardest chunk we've taken out of this pit," one of the young Scottish miners said through gritted teeth. "Pretty soon they'll have the folks burning granite."

"You're right. It gets harder near the center." The miner who spoke lowered his pick. "Let's take it easy here, there may be something worthwhile in the middle."

The others scoffed at what he said, but they heeded his words and picked at the rock more carefully. The center of the rock was indeed hard; and when it was split in two, it revealed a curious brown spot. Closer examination determined that the brown spot was a frog. But the frog was not fossilized. As the miners carefully picked up the two pieces, the creature began to stir, and after a few clumsy movements, it came fully to life.

"I ain't never seen the likes of it," one of them said scratching his head. "How do you suppose he got in there?"

"How do you suppose he stayed alive in there?" another asked. "We're 35 feet underground level."

Puzzling over the find, the miners put the now quite lively frog into a pail of water where it swam around happily. They also set aside the hard chunks of coal that had encased the living fossil. After they had finished for the day, the frog was brought to ground level and, together with the rocks that had formed its chamber, was forwarded to the museum of the Andersonian University of Glasgow.

The fossilized remains of many amphibians and larger reptiles have been found in many parts of the world. But to find rock-encased insects and frogs which come to life after being freed is hard to imagine. Reports of such finds have become so numerous, however, that the reality of such strange discoveries has become generally accepted.

What is the secret of suspended animation which allows these lower life forms to live encased in rocks, perhaps for centuries?

A miner named Joe Molino, while working a mine near Ruby, Nevada in 1881, cracked into a solid piece of limestone with his pick. Working at a depth of about sixty feet, the miner was amazed to find that his pick had freed six or eight large worms. The worms were alive and crawling when the rock was split, and neither the bewildered miners nor local officials could figure out how the worms found their way into the rock.

A mineral specimen, which looked to be of interest, was presented to Z. T. White of El Paso, Texas. The specimen was taken from the Longfellow mine of Clifton, Arizona and appeared to be the rough shape of a fossilized insect. Mr. White cracked open the specimen and found that the iron ore rock surrounded a reddish-gray beetle. The beetle lay perfectly preserved. Happy with his find, though the beetle itself was as hard as the stone that had encased it, White brought the fossil to his home wrapped in a handkerchief.

When he unwrapped the specimen at his home, White was startled to find that a small beetle was easing its way slowly out of the dead parent's body. The young beetle was placed under a glass after it had extricated itself from its petrified mother. After a five-month growing period, the mineral specimen and the beetle that it had mothered were presented to the *El Paso Bullion*. Editors, who, in turn, presented the gift to a prominent scientific association in the East.

Live frogs were found in coal and rock started by two Welsh miners who were breaking coal in a pit near Bathgate in 1846. The two men were astonished to see a frog leap from a cavity in a piece of the rock that they had split. The cavity was found to be almost the exact shape of the frog, yet it did not seem to have any holes for air or food to enter. The frog's hind legs were almost twice as long as the hind legs of a normal frog, but the forelegs were so small that they were difficult to see.

Frogs are not the only creatures that have the knack for living through the centuries. Their cousins, the toads, have been found in some surprising places. A saw mill in Acton, Ontario made a startling find. The Brown and Hall mill was cutting through a large pine log, chewing off some of the outside slabs preparatory to quarter-sawing, when a large toad was seen poking its head through a hole in the freshly sawed surface of the pine log. The log had been the fourth or fifth up from the butt of the tree, which placed the imprisoned toad about sixty feet off the ground. The cavity in which it was found was perfectly smooth and completely enclosed by wood. The only explanation for the toad's existence was that it had been imprisoned in infancy in the center of the tree and had resided there for hundreds of years.

One of the many persons, who became interested in the many finds of insects, toads and frogs encased in



rock, was a Mr. Craig, a lecturer on geology at the Andersonian University of Glasgow, Scotland. He inspected the finds of the young miners at Airdrie and became interested enough to communicate with other geologists on the subject. He found that others were as interested as he was in the subject, so he and a friend, R. Jamieson, began to perform a series of experiments with toads. They enclosed a toad in a bottle and sealed the entire enclave tightly around the toad's body with clay. They then buried the bottle 18 inches underground and left it so interred for twelve months. When the bottle was exhumed, the toad was still alive and found to be in fair condition.

If a toad can live for twelve months in an airless, foodless cavity of clay, Craig reasoned, why not for a much longer time in other cavities of natural origin?

What natural power gives these small creatures the ability to survive over centuries? Until more investigation is done, anybody's guess is valid. Although bones and trinkets of different sorts have been found encased in rock, the secret of survival has been left with the toads and insects.

## MISS MORTON'S PET GHOST

"WHAT ARE you doing on the stairs?" The question was directed by a maid to her young mistress, who was kneeling next to one banister, fastening a thin wire around one of its supporting columns.

"I'm going to run a little test on our ghost to find out what she's made of." There was a matter of fact air about the young woman as she stretched the wire across the steps and wrapped it securely around the opposite banister.

"You and that . . . that spook. You're two of a kind."

"Just go to bed, Millie. You won't be bothered."

"I'll be bothered a plenty when she comes marchin' down the hall. You don't think a little wire is going to stop her?"

"That's what I'm going to find out," the young woman said patiently.

Later in the evening, with only a candle burning in the upstairs hall of the house, neither of the women were disappointed when the mysterious black-cloaked female figure stole cautiously toward the stairs. The manifestation had put in a regular appearance at the house for many days. The housemaid and the young woman watched with wide eyes as the "black lady" proceeded down the stairs to the main floor without pause or hesitation. The shiny piano wire caught the reflection of the candle and was visible to the two women watching. It was still stretched across the expanse of the stairs just as it had been before the "black lady" had passed through it.

"I'm leavin' this house—I ain't got to work no place that's haunted!"

The young lady sighed. Millie would be the fourth housemaid in two months.

One of the most amazingly detailed records of a haunting was submitted to the Society for Psychical Research by a most amazing young woman, who never once showed the least indication of fear and who conducted her observations with coolness and emotional detachment that seems well-nigh unbelievable.

The young woman is known in the annals of psychic research as Miss Morton, though that was not her real name. The haunting took place in the small town of Bognor on the southern coast of England. The household of which she was a part, included her father, her invalid mother, three sisters, a six year old brother, a married sister, who was a frequent visitor, and a sixteen year old brother, who was seldom home. The Mortons first moved into the house at Bognor in April, 1862. The "dark lady" first appeared to them in June.

Miss Morton reported her first observation of the phenomenon in very explicit terms: "I had gone to my room but was not yet in bed when I heard someone at the door and went to it, thinking it was my mother. On opening it I saw no one, but going a few steps along the passage I saw the figure of a tall lady, dressed in black, standing at the head of the stairs. After a few moments, she descended the stairs, and I followed for a short distance, curious to see who it was. But I had only a small piece of candle, and it suddenly went out."

Besides visual perception of the feminine apparition, Miss Morton noticed that her movements made an audible, rustling sound. A shy spirit, she kept her face hidden behind a handkerchief held in her right hand.

Miss Morton was not to be deterred in her investigation of the nature of the visitor. Once she "... went up to her and asked if I could help her. She ... gave a slight gasp and moved to the door. Just by the door

I spoke to her again, but she seemed unable to speak. She walked into the hall and then disappeared by the side door, as before."

Miss Morton's studies as a medical student probably aided her in making acute observations of the characteristics of the "Dark Lady" that roamed the house. Her scientific curiosity led her to conduct many experiments. "I saw her pass through (the wires) at least twice," Miss Morton writes. "Also, I tried to touch her, but she always eluded me . . . if I followed her into a corner, she simply disappeared. During the two years, 1882-1884, the only noises I heard were of slight pushes against my bedroom door accompanied by footsteps, and if I looked out, I invariably saw the figure. The footsteps were light. I could hardly hear them except when on linoleum, and then only like someone walking with thin boots on."

Time and again, Miss Morton attempted to speak to the "Dark Lady," but the spirit could not or would not communicate with her. Once after observing her for quite some time, Miss Morton followed her from the room. "I spoke to her as she passed the foot of the stairs, but there was no answer, although she stopped and seemed as if she were about to speak."

The complete and detailed report filed by Miss Morton showed that all but one person in the household saw the phantom lady in her walks around the house. "On August 11, my eldest sister, Mrs. K— —, saw the figure outside the house looking in at the window. Soon after, it came into the drawing room. That same evening my sister E—— saw her on the stairs. On the following afternoon I saw her cross the orchard, go along the carriage drive in front of the house and in at the side door, cross the hall and enter the drawing room, I following . . . Soon my father came in but he could not see her, though he walked up to where I told him she was. She went swiftly around behind him,

crossed the room and went out and along the hall, disappearing as usual near the garden door. That same evening about eight . . . my sister E—— was singing in the back room. Suddenly she stopped and called me. She said she had seen the figure close behind her as she sat at the piano . . . I saw the woman in the bow window at her usual place. I spoke to her several times but got no answer. There she stood for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, then crossed the room into the hall and out the garden door . . . On this evening . . . four people saw her. Three days later, the parlor maid saw her while opening the shutters of the dining room at eight-thirty in the morning.”

Visitations by the “Dark Lady” became a rather common occurrence. For over seven years, she appeared and disappeared at varying intervals. Her visits grew in frequency toward the end of this period, then suddenly they fell off sharply, and she vanished completely from the Morton house.

Thanks to Miss Morton, the files of the Society for Psychical Research have one of the most objective accounts of a haunting yet made. Not only was the ghost adequately described, but experiments of limited nature were performed on the phenomena.

Miss Morton had a pet ghost. As the people at the Society for Psychical Research would say: everyone should be so lucky.

## HAUNTED CANTERBURY

THE DAYS for taxi cab driver W. C. Clayson often stretched into nights, and the misty air around Canterbury, England enveloped the cab as it crawled along the roads next to the historic monuments that had been erected centuries before. It was a familiar route for him—up St. Martin's hill, past old St. Martin's church, then turn off for his house.

The taxi driver glanced down at his watch. It read 1:30 A.M. When he brought his eyes back to the road, he could not believe what lay in front of them. He shook his head, wondering if what he saw was an illusion. But it remained distinctly visible to his eyes. Ahead of him on the road was the ghostly figure of a monk. He brought the cab to a stop and watched as the monk walked along an old stone wall, then across the road, where the figure vanished on a small piece of green.

It could have been a monk making a nighttime pilgrimage— there had been a monastery at the foot of St. Martin's hill. But the last living inhabitants of the monastery had passed out of physical existence early in the seventeenth century!

Canterbury is said to be the oldest inhabited city in England. Its history as a city predates the Roman invasion of England in the second century A. D. The Romans made Canterbury the seat of their government over Kent, but as the centuries passed, the importance of the old city shifted from politics to religion. As a center and symbol of unity, Canterbury assumed the role of leader of the Church in England.

It does not seem surprising that a place which has

been inhabited by deeply spiritualistic people for so long has become the center of ghostly activity. The old walls, halls, and roads of the city have carried the burden of many centuries of spiritual events large and small which have left their mark on the atmosphere of the city.

The ghostly phenomena is not by any means limited to apparitions. The Old House restaurant on Palace Street is near the Cathedral grounds. In this establishment, poltergeist (noisy ghost) phenomena has been observed for years. Though most poltergeists reflect the more ugly side of man, this particular phenomena seems to have a sense of humor. It confines its activities to the locking and unlocking of doors and occasionally rocking a bed or pulling the bed clothes from an unsuspecting guest. Other times, beds which have been neatly made are found with the covers disarranged.

It seems that no part of the town is immune to phenomena of one form or another. On one All Soul's Eve, a funeral procession of Augustinian monks was heard heading for the old cemetery. Though the procession was not seen, it was heard by an official of the Church of England. The sounds of chanting and shuffling footsteps were heard coming down the street and then passing through the ancient cemetery gate. The gate has been blocked off for centuries, and the last time any Augustinian monks were in England was during the time of the Tudors. Though the manifestation is not always as distinct, the chanting of the Augustinian monks can still be heard around the ancient gate leading into the cemetery.

Queen Bertha, wife of the pagan king Ethelbert, Saxon king of Kent, built the first Christian Church in England on the ruins of a Roman temple. The church, now called St. Martin's, has been associated with the apparition of the good queen for centuries. Another apparition, which is female in form, has been seen

across the city in the church of St. Mildred. This particular ghost has been described in great detail and has been seen by many of the present day parishioners and church workers.

The old and famous Canterbury Cathedral itself is not immune to the hauntings of historic apparitions. The so called Dark Entry has been haunted since the time of Henry the Eighth. The haunting itself has weakened in recent years, but often, at a certain spot in the entry way, visitors are chilled by an eerie feeling that overtakes them. A fascinating legend is told of a Canon, who lived near the Dark Entry of the cathedral, and of his housekeeper, whose name was Nell Cook.

The Canon seemed to have a tongue for fine foods and an eye for a graceful turn of the ankle. Nell was not only a fine cook, but a well-formed and youthful looking wench. She was a charming homemaker for the man, and the gossips of the town asked each other why the good Canon had picked such a good looking cook.

The Canon, however, had tastes which demanded variety. Nell's cooking was still the best in Canterbury, but one day the townspeople observed him in the company of a very attractive young lady whom he called his niece.

To anyone who asked, the Canon explained that the girl's father was "away in the navy" and that she needed someone to look after her. But the attention paid to the "niece" was more than one should expect of a doting uncle. Neighbors, who perked their ears and craned their necks enough, could clearly pick out a lusty soprano voice singing bawdy ballads.

The gossips were not the only ones to look askance at the new friend of the Canon. Nell Cook saw her duties diminish to the rank of cook and serving maid. She visited the apothecary, then made a special dinner for the Canon and his favorite niece. The pie was ir-



resistible, and Nell watched appreciatively as they ate heartily.

The next morning both the Canon and his niece were found dead. The Prior had the Canon and his young friend buried in the floor of the cathedral nave. Nell Cook was never seen alive again from that time.

In 1640, a hundred years later, the Dean of Canterbury noticed that a block in the Dark Entry to the cathedral had settled badly and ordered it replaced. On removal of the block, the workers found the skeleton of a woman sealed in a small crypt behind the stone. In the crypt with the skeleton were a pie plate and a pitcher. The immediate thought was that Nell Cook had been buried alive in the small crypt—the hard and immediate justice of the prior and his brothers.

From the time the skeleton was removed from its stone prison, the Dark Entry has been haunted by the presence of Nell Cook. Though the figure of Nell Cook is rarely seen, the eerie feeling of the haunt is felt as people pass through the Dark Entry into the cathedral.

# THE PHANTOM MARCHERS OF CRETE

"HERE THEY COME!" one of the men shouted and pointed to a spot far down the beach. Near the edge of the water, column after column of soldiers were forming and marching towards them. As the phantom army got closer, they appeared to be tall, proud men, unlike any soldiers the men watching had ever seen. They wore metal helmets of a classic design and carried short, flat swords. They kept coming toward the men as the predawn light increased.

"Where did that woman come from?" The man who spoke pointed at the much shorter and darker figure that seemed to be standing in the midst of the marching men.

"She works in the valley here during the day," someone said, recognizing her.

The observers watched and were amazed to find the woman walk indifferently through the midst of the marching horde, seemingly unaffected by their powerful stride. The strange army marched toward the crumbling castle of the ancient Doges, and as the light of the approaching dawn increased, the last column vanished near the sea on the far side of the castle.

The men ran to the woman and asked her why she had not been afraid.

"I no see any marching men," she said simply.

The Phantom Marchers of Crete comprise a strange army that people from all over the island come to observe during the last weeks of May and the first week of June. Who or what makes up this eerie army has been a much debated question by investigators of

the phenomena as well as the natives on the island. From the many descriptions of the spectral men which compose the army, the manner in which they are dressed, and the weapons which they carry, nobody has been able to fit them into any historical setting. As for explanations of the phenomenon itself, everything from the supernatural to a mirage has been postulated.

Known as the "shadow men" or the "dew men" by the natives of the island, the as yet unexplained phenomenon always occurs just before dawn or just after sunset and at approximately the same time of year. They seem to form out of the sea and march directly for the castle then disappear with the encroaching darkness of the night or light of the dawn. Any connection with the medieval Venetian castle has been written off as impossible, because the observers say that the men look like a company of soldiers marching their way right out of the pages of Homer's *Illiad*.

Reports of the phantom marches have been carried in the major Greek newspapers of Athens for almost a century. Not only Cretian peasants have reported seeing the phenomena, but also a number of reputable Greek businessmen, several German archeologists, and two English observers. An entire garrison of Turkish soldiers observed the ghostly marauders during the Turkish administration of the island in the 1870's and were frightened into calling out arms.

The possibility that the phantom army is a mirage has been considered and discarded by most of the theorists. A mirage has a maximum range of about forty miles and only occurs in direct sunlight. If it were a mirage, it would involve the annual staging of a secret show somewhere on the island for centuries every year at the same time without the detection of any of the populace. Furthermore, the phenomenon occurs

in the half light of dawn or dusk, thereby making the mirage theory untenable.

Sir Ernest Bennett, who was a classical graduate of Hertford College, Oxford University, not only believed the marchers to be a psychic manifestation of a bygone army of men, but maintained that the spectres belonged to an ancient culture that once lived on the island. Sir Ernest had collected all available reports of the phantom marchers that had circulated among the populace of the island and in the newspapers of Greece. Though he spent some time on the island trying to observe the phantom marchers they seemed to elude his detection.

The phantom column seems to be completely surrounded by a mysterious aura which makes them visible in dim light. A Cretian muleteer described them as follows:

*"I was engaged by some Germans, about ten years ago, to help in some archeological work near where they are seen. And it was while I was there that I and many other local people saw these Men of the Shadows. It was after sunset and dark when we saw this strange army of phantoms coming across the plain toward the beach where we stood. They uttered no sound. They seemed to be in armor. Some wore strange helmets. All carried weapons, shields, short swords and spears.*

*"They were all very tall men. As we looked, they seemed to vanish into the air as suddenly as they had come. Holy Virgin, how frightened we were! We were rendered dumb till the dawn came. Who can say what these Shadow Men are?"*

## THE MYSTERY OF LIGHTNING BALLS

"WON'T THIS RAIN ever end?" The young girl looked around at the twenty other youths who had sought shelter under the overhang of a Paris brownstone.

"I hope so," one bereted student said, looking at his watch. "I'm getting hungry."

Suddenly a great clap of thunder forced the little group to cower closer together.

"That must have been close! Hey, what's that?"

All eyes in the group riveted on a basketball-sized, dazzling ball of light that was descending toward them. Its color was blue-white, and it had the quality of an electrical spark. The students watched, unable to move as the ball closed in on them. It touched a girl who had been seated on the steps. She slumped as it passed over her and rolled along the ground in a little circle before heading inside the house. Once inside, the unheeding bundle of energy forced its way into the master bedroom. Careening off the walls, it smashed into a stove and sent the sooty pipe sailing across the room before it passed out a broken window.

The lightning ball had done great damage to the house, but the seventeen-year-old girl that it had touched lay dead on the front steps. A black, charred streak ran from her neck to her left hip.

Lightning balls have been reported for many centuries by a wide range of people in a wide variety of settings. Always a colored, dazzling ball, some float through the air, some roll along the ground, and others buzz along telephone wires. Some go down chim-

neys, come out of ovens, and float around the kitchen for a while before exiting through an open window or up through the chimney again.

What are these strange bits of spherical lightning? No one seems to know for sure. For over two centuries, skeptical scientists found it easier to scoff at the sightings rather than to take them seriously. But today the phenomenon has become a generally accepted fact. After a detailed analysis of many reports of lightning balls, Dr. Harold W. Lewis, professor of physics at the University of Wisconsin, said:

“Any normal, cynical scientist, on hearing of ball lightning for the first time, almost instinctively places it in the category of folklore, along with flying saucers and ectoplasm. A brief survey of reported events, however, quickly convinces the skeptic that enough reputable observers have seen and possibly even photographed ball lightning to leave no doubt that the phenomenon is real, although it is rare and as yet unexplained.”

Accounts of sightings of lightning balls come from all over the world. From over the frozen waste of Siberia, where a lightning ball melted the tip of the propeller of a Russian transport plane in 1956, to St. Petersburg, Florida where a lightning ball is thought to have almost completely cremated a woman in her sleep.

Recent reports of lightning balls have spurred scientists, who before simply had no use for such rare phenomena, to become very curious as to how they can reproduce such a bundle of electricity in their laboratories. The new investigations have probably not taken place only in this country. Certain information indicates that the Soviet Union is just as curious about the production and control of this phenomenon as the U.S. is.

Such a concentrated ball of energy, if harnessed,

could be put to hundreds of military as well as civilian uses. As a weapon, it would be awesome. It could not be shot down by any presently available firepower, and its concentrated heat could penetrate any normal armor. In civilian spheres, it could be the key to getting at the as yet untappable energy of hydrogen fusion.

The crew of the Russian transport plane, which came in contact with the lightning ball in 1956, gave a rather vivid account and description of the incident. It was August 12th, and they were flying near Komsomolsk in eastern Siberia. At 12:45 P.M. they entered a cumulous cloud that was thick and constituted a mass of rain. After ten minutes of flying in rather turbulent air the pilot, copilot, and navigator—all three at once—saw a “rapidly approaching fireball 25 to 30 centimeters (ten to twelve inches) in diameter.” The color of the ball was reported to be a dark red, and it headed directly for the plane until it was within a foot of the nose before it swerved off to the left. Moving down the side of the transport plane, the fireball collided with the propellor of the left engine. The collision caused an explosion which sent a “flaming band” along the left side of the fuselage. The plane rocked momentarily, but after a brief moment of apprehension, the pilot brought it back under control.

The explosion itself was described as a blinding flash. The radio operator suffered a severe electrical shock at the instant of the explosion, and when the crew landed, they found that the tip of the propeller of the left engine had melted.

A Russian scientist, Peter L. Kapitza, has given one theory in explanation of lightning balls. He contends that regular lightning ionizes pockets of air during electrical storms. The intensely energized air breaks up into even hotter particles. When put to-

gether, these hot particles naturally give off a glow because of their tremendous heat. He also postulates that nature creates a kind of magnetic enclosure which holds the particles together.



## SCIENCE AND THE SEA SERPENT

WHEN THE YACHT *Valhalla* spotted a sea monster off Parahiba, Brazil on December 7, 1905, it was fortunate enough to have among its passengers two expert naturalists who were taking part in a scientific expedition to the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

E.G.B. Meade-Waldo and Michael J. Nicoll were two Fellows of the Zoological Society of Britain who were not given to rash conclusions or improper observations.

Meade-Waldo prepared a paper on the sighting which he presented to the Society on its meeting on June 19, 1906:

*“. . . My attention was drawn to a large brown fin or frill sticking out of the water, dark seaweed-brown in color, somewhat crinkled at the edge. It was about six feet in length and projected from eighteen inches to two feet from the water. I could see, under the water to the rear of the frill, the shape of a considerable body—a great head and neck did not touch the frill in the water, but came out of the water in front of it, at a distance of certainly not less than eighteen inches, probably more. The neck appeared to be the thickness of a slight man's body, and from seven to eight feet was out of the water. . . .*

*“. . . The head had a very turtlelike appearance, as had also the eye. I could see the line of the mouth, but we were sailing pretty fast, and quickly drew away from the object . . . It moved*

*its neck from side to side in a peculiar manner; the color of the head and neck was dark brown above, and whitish below . . . Since I saw this creature I consider on reflection that it was probably considerably larger than it appeared at first, as I proved that objects, the size with which I was well acquainted, appear very much smaller than they really are when seen on the ocean at a similar distance with nothing to compare them with."*

Nicoll discussed the incident two years later in his book *Three Voyages of a Naturalist*: "I feel sure that it was not a reptile that we saw, but a mammal . . . the general appearance of the creature, especially the soft, almost rubberlike fin, give one this impression."

Captain R. J. Cringle, master of the steamer *Umfuli*, spotted his sea monster in that fertile area for serpent sightings off the west coast of Africa. He was not fortunate enough to have expert zoologists on board to substantiate his account.

"I've been so ridiculed about this thing that I've many times wished that someone else had seen that sea monster rather than me," he later wrote. "I've been told that it was a string of porpoises; that it was an island of seaweed; and I don't know what besides. But if an island can travel at the rate of fourteen knots, or if a string of porpoises can somehow stand fifteen feet out of the water, then I give in!"

The *Umfuli's* mate, Mr. C.A.W. Powell, logged the sighting as follows:

*"5:30. Sighted and passed about five hundred yards from ship a Monster Fish of the serpent shape, about eighty feet long with slimy skin and short fins at about twenty feet apart on the back and in circumference about the dimensions of a*

*good-sized whale. The jaws appeared to me about seven feet long with large teeth. In shape it was just like a Conger Eel."*

Captain Cringle ordered the steamer to give chase, but later said that the monster was "rushing through the sea at great speed and was throwing water from its breast as a vessel throws water from her bows." The head and neck were about fifteen feet long and sprouted from an enormous body with three discernible humps. After a twenty minute race, the monster had far outdistanced the steamer.

Skeptics often ask: "Why doesn't someone catch a sea serpent, bring it back to civilization for study, and prove its existence once and for all?"

In 1852, two whaling vessels did just that—unfortunately, the ship carrying the huge trophy in a pickling vat never made it back to shore.

Captain Seabury, master of the *Monongahela*, was brought out of his early morning reverie on January 13, 1852 by the lookout's shout of "something big in the water, half-mile off port bow."

Seabury sighed. A little excitement would be welcome. The *Monongahela* had been drifting slowly in the Pacific doldrums. If it was a whale, the longboats would have to take care of it. There wasn't enough wind to fill the sails of the ship.

When the captain brought his telescope to bear on the object, he could distinguish only a monstrous living creature, thrashing about in the tepid water as if in great agony. Seabury's immediate conclusion was that they had come upon a whale that had been harpooned by another whaler, had escaped, and was now surrendering to its death throes.

He ordered three longboats over the side to end the beast's pain and their own boredom. With fresh supplies of blubber to render, the men would not fret so

much about the doldrums. Seabury himself was in the first boat as the New Bedfordmen pulled alongside the huge "whale." He drove the harpoon deep in its flesh, and the crewmen pulled on the oars to get the longboat out of reach of the pain-maddened creature.

Almost as the harpoon struck home, a nightmarish head ten feet long rose out of the water and lunged at the boats. Two of the longboats were capsized in seconds. The terrified whalers realized that they were dealing with a creature the likes of which they had never seen, but they were too busy escaping from its violent lungings to theorize as to its identity.

Then the monster sounded. The heavy line smoked over the bow as the creature dove for the bottom. Seabury was able to tie on the spare coil with seconds to spare. More than a thousand feet of line were out before the sea monster ceased its descent.

The *Monongahela* had managed to creep alongside the longboat and pick up the frightened seamen who were bobbing about in the terror-thrashed waters. The line was made fast on the whaling vessel even though Seabury could not be certain that his prey was still impaled by the harpoon. The *Rebecca Sims*, under the command of Captain Samuel Gavitt, pulled alongside her sister ship; and the little community of New Bedford Whalers began discussing the strange beast with wide-eyes and wild speculations.

The next morning, Captain Seabury ordered the line taken up. The crewmen had pulled in only about half of the line when the massive carcass suddenly popped to the surface. The great sea beast was like that from another time—a time long before man had even begun to emerge as a species.

It was much greater in length than the *Monongahela*, which was over one hundred feet from stem to stern, and had a thick body about fifty feet in diameter. Its neck was ten feet in diameter and supported

a head that was ten feet long and shaped like that of a gigantic alligator. The astounded crewmen counted ninety-four teeth in its jaws. The saberlike teeth were each about three inches long and hooked backward like those of a snake.

The color of the beast was a brownish gray with a light stripe about three feet wide running its full length.

The ever-practical Yankee, Captain Seabury tried to render the creature as if it were a whale. He was disappointed to learn that the monster was possessed only of tough skin and no blubber.

Fully aware of the ridicule which readily attached itself to sailing masters who saw "sea serpents" without any verification, Seabury ordered the men to chop off the hideous head and place it in a huge pickling vat so that it would be preserved until they reached land. In addition, Seabury wrote out a detailed report on the *Monongahela's* capture of the beast and a complete description of the creature that they had landed. The report he gave to the homeward bound Captain Gavitt.

The account of Captain Seabury arrived safely and was entered into the records along with the personal oath of Captain Gavitt, but the *Monongahela* never returned to New Bedford with its incredible cargo. Years later her name board was found on the shore of Umnak Island in the Aleutians. The sea was not yet ready to yield up the answer to its most stubborn riddle. If Seabury had transferred the grisly head to Gavitt's vessel along with his report, the world would have had its first mounted sea serpent's head over one hundred years ago.

A popular theory of the sea monster is that it may be a survival of one of the giant sea reptiles of the Mesozoic Age. No one has ever offered a satisfactory explanation for the "race extinction" of the giant rep-

tiles—dinosaurs on the land, pterosaurs in the air, and huge ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs and mosasaurs in the sea.

Philip Gosse, the famous nineteenth century naturalist, was an avid exponent of the plesiosaur theory. While the Mesozoic Age ended tens of millions of years ago, Gosse argued that there was no *a priori* reason why one of the descendants of the great sea reptiles could not have survived.

Gosse's theory has been given added credence by the discovery in our own century of crossopterygian fish off southeast Africa which have survived almost unchanged for seventy million years—from a time even before the Age of Reptiles.

Other scientists maintain that the sea serpent stories may be attributed to sightings of giant eels. In his book *Living Fossils*, Dr. Maurice Burton points out that in recent years eel larvae three feet long have been discovered. Comparing the relative sizes of the larvae and adults in eels of normal size, Burton states that there is no reason why the giant larvae should not reach a length of 36 feet when full grown.

To top Burton's eel larvae, Dr. Anton Brunn has recently announced the capture of an eel larva more than six feet long with 450 vertebral plates. The only known eels have only 105 plates. Again, working on the comparative sizes of larvae and adults in eels of normal size, the larva could grow into a monster 90 feet long and weigh several tons.

Still other marine zoologists favor the undiscovered existence of an aquatic mammal related to the whales as their candidate for the sea monster mantle. They argue that the mane often reported on sea serpents would be an unlikely appendage for a reptile; and, quite convincingly, they maintain that only a warm blooded mammal would be able to survive in the

cold waters of the North Atlantic where so many sea monster stories have had their origin.

Certain zoologists have expanded the theory of the monstrous sea mammal and combined it with another possible survival of prehistoric times. They argue for the survival of an ancient species of whale known as *Aeuglodon* or *Basilosaurus*, whose fossil remains are well known. Well equipped for the role of sea monster, the *Basilosaurus* was known to be a huge beast with a slim, elongated body measuring over seventy feet in length. The skull was long and low and the creature propelled itself by means of a single pair of fins at its forward end. The group is known to have survived into the Miocene Epoch just over thirty million years ago. If the coelacanth has survived for seventy million years, it seems possible that the comparatively "young" *Basilosaurus* could still be inhabiting our oceans.

## PREMONITIONS OF KENNEDY'S DEATH

AMAZING SIMILARITIES exist between the assassinations of President Lincoln and President Kennedy.

Both were concerned with Civil Rights. Lincoln was elected in 1860, Kennedy in 1960. Both were slain on a Friday in the presence of their wives. Their successors were both named Johnson: Andrew Johnson was born in 1808, Lyndon Johnson in 1908. John Wilkes Booth was born in 1839; Lee Harvey Oswald was born in 1939. Both assassins were slain before they could be brought to trial.

Lincoln's secretary, whose name was *Kennedy*, advised him not to go to the theater the night he was killed. President Kennedy's secretary, whose name was *Lincoln*, advised him not to go to Dallas.

And, just as many people claimed to have premonitions concerning Lincoln's assassination, there are those who today claim to have experienced an eerie warning of harm to President Kennedy.

Mrs. Jeane Dixon, the famed seer of Washington, D.C., who forecast the deaths of Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy and Dag Hammarskjold, flatly predicted in October 1963 that the president would die in office.

Billy Graham, the well-known evangelist, tried to reach President Kennedy to urge him not to go to Texas. "I wanted to talk to him," Graham said later. "I had the strongest premonition that he should not go to Texas."

It is also possible that Kennedy, like Lincoln, had premonitions of his own approaching death.



The Hearst Headline Service reported the late President's remark while leaving church during the summer of 1963: "I wonder if they'll shoot me in church."

While a newspaperman friend was still gasping at the thought, the President added: "Well, if they do, they'll probably get one of you fellows first."

March 3, 1963, while on a visit of Arlington National Cemetery, President Kennedy said: "The view up here is so beautiful. I could stay here forever."

Astrologists point out that every president since William Henry Harrison, who has been elected in the 20-year interval periods with the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, has died in office.

The record reads as follows: William Henry Harrison, elected 1840; Abraham Lincoln, elected 1860; James A. Garfield, elected 1880; William McKinley, elected 1900; Warren G. Harding, elected 1920; Franklin D. Roosevelt, elected 1940; John Fitzgerald Kennedy, elected 1960.

## THE GIRL WHO LIVES ON BEE STINGS

THE YOUNG GIRL lifted a jar containing a bee. The noisy insect inside was flying madly at the glass walls. Julie Ann Gott shook the jar violently, then uncovered it and replaced the lid with her arm. The furious insect settled on her flesh. Only a slight grimace crossed the little girl's face as the bee stung her.

Julie Ann Gott, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Irma Gott of Salmon, Idaho, though allergic to bee stings, must submit to a bee daily in order to save her life.

In the summer of 1965, eight-year-old Julie was stung in the foot by a bee. In most cases this would not have been a serious mishap, but things were different with Julie. Her body reacted violently to the venom. She turned bright red and broke out in hives. The reaction was so strong that she temporarily lost her sight. The swelling made normal breathing impossible, and she was put in an oxygen tent.

During her three-day stay in the hospital, Julie Ann was never out of an oxygen tent and was using anti-histamines constantly.

After Julie Ann had recovered from the initial sting, her doctor advised regular injections of diluted bee venom. Gradually the concentration was increased until she was sent to a neighboring bee farm to subject herself to the real thing. The plan was to build up Julie's immunity to the stings.

The first sting after her stay in the hospital put Julie in bed for a week. When she was up and around again, she went back to the bees for another sting. This time she could stand the reaction, and, ever

since, she has been going back to the bee farm to be jabbed again.

Julie's doctor hopes the strange treatment for her allergy will last for a long time—eventually for her entire life—but until that time Julie will be taking weekly stings to make sure that another busy bee doesn't put her in the hospital again.

## TUT, TUT, KING TUT

THE EGYPTIAN natives called the pet canary of Howard Carter, English archeologist, the magic bird. They delighted in watching its bright yellow form dart around the cage and in hearing its charming song. Carter was director of the expedition of Lord Carnarvon and had accidentally stumbled on the steps of the tomb of the ancient Egyptian king Tut-Ankh-Amon. Realizing the archeological importance of the find, he had gone back to Cairo to get some extra equipment, leaving the pet canary behind.

During his absence, several of Carter's servants were relaxing in the garden of a small home near the excavations. They had brought the "magic bird" with them, but after a while their attention had turned from the bird to their own conversation.

Suddenly one of them stood up and pointed at the cage. He could not speak at first, but the expression of horror on his face forced the others to look at the cage.

"The ancient snake of the pharaohs!" one of them said, fear trembling his voice.

They watched as the black snake moved slowly inside the cage with the bright yellow bird. The serpent rolled on its side as it passed between the rungs of the cage, and the bird, sensing the danger, began fluttering madly about, trying to escape the wire trap.

Fearing their own lives, the servants were unable to help the canary as the small, hooded cobra glided into the cage. It had been the symbol of power for the pharaohs of the ancient land.

When Howard Carter returned from Cairo, he found that all his servants had abandoned him and that he no longer had a pet canary. Wild rumors circulated around the excavations that the curse of the ancient pharaoh was on them—the pharaoh's power had destroyed the Englishman's magic bird and would destroy anyone who disturbed the ancient tomb.

Just native superstition? It would be comforting to pass off the thought of ancient curses and warnings as superstition but the events following the opening of the tomb of King Tut-Akh-Amon may make this famous curse something more than mumbo-jumbo.

The English Archeological expedition came on the famous tomb by accident on November 4, 1922. What they had discovered was the ancient pyramid of a not-so-famous king of ancient Egypt. King Tut-Ankh-Amon died at the age of eighteen, more than 3300 years ago. Today he is not famous for anything, except the fact that he died and was buried.

The religious practices of Ancient Egypt made the pharaoh at once king and god. Believing in immortality of the body and the soul, these ancient kings had to prepare for death almost from birth to assure the existence of the *Ka* (soul) throughout eternity. Though the embalming art was lost with the death of the ancient Egyptian culture, the tombs themselves show the craftsmanship of the Egyptian artisans. The *Ka* of the dead king was provided with much gold and silver and many fine gems, so it could spend eternity in luxury. Thus the rich tombs of the ancient pharaohs became the targets of grave robbers, who relieved the dead kings of their riches.

Great precautions were taken to insure that the tombs would not be pilfered. Slaves, who broke their backs building the royal sepulchres, were put to death. Priests, who held the funeral services, were sworn to secrecy; and the men, who had worked so diligently

decorating the tombs, had their eyes put out as their reward. The final protection placed on many tombs was the curse.

Some have argued that the tomb of King Tut did not have a curse placed on it at all, but Prof. J. C. Mardrus, a French Egyptologist, not only declared that there was a curse, but maintained that he translated it from a tablet found at the entrance of the tomb. The "Stela of Malediction" read: "Let the hand raised against my form be withered! Let them be destroyed who attack my name, my foundations, my effigies, the images like unto me."

What has come of the ancient curse? Howard Carter's canary was eaten by the cobra a few days after the opening of the tomb. Lord Carnarvon, the sponser of the expedition was bitten on the face by an insect shortly after the opening of the tomb and was dead within three weeks of pneumonia, which had complicated an infection. An Egyptian present at the opening of the tomb, Sheik Abdul Haman, was dead within a few days after he had left the excavation site. Jay Gould, a tourist and friend of Lord Carnarvon, who had visited the tomb, died shortly after the Egyptian, Haman. Woolf Joel, who kept a yacht on the river Nile and had become a friend of some of the men of the British expedition, died six months after visiting the tomb. A man, who did not visit the tomb (Sir Archibald Douglas Reid) but was about to X-ray the mummy, died before he had the chance, in February of 1924. Six years later, in 1929, Lady Carnarvon died of an insect bite exactly as had her husband.

When the rumor of the curse began to spread, it was immediately communicated around the world. People in England, who had kept Egyptian artifacts in their families for centuries, readily turned them over to the British Museum. The ship on which the body of Lord Carnarvon was to be transported back to England with

his wife had an almost complete cancelation of its passenger list.

The tally on King Tut's curse did not end with the immediate deaths of the several people mentioned above. The grim record of deaths continued. Professor Casanova, the College of France, Georges Benedite, of the Louvre in Paris, both died in Egypt and were associated with the excavations. Albert M. Lythgoe, present at the opening, died of a stroke on January 25, 1934, at the age of 66. Sir William Garstin, also present at the opening, died in 1926. An American, A. Lucas from the Museum of Natural History, died in 1929 at the age of 77. He was to have begun his retirement after assisting Carter in the field.

A tourist, Arthur E. P. Weigal, died of an unknown fever in 1934 at age 53. The half-brother of Lord Carnarvon, who was present at the opening, the Hon. Mervyn Herbert died at age 48. Richard Bethel, who assisted in opening the sepulchre, was 48 when he died in 1931. He had been in perfect health but died in his sleep during the month of November. It is impossible to follow all of the tourists and newsmen who visited the tomb, so an accurate account of all the violators of King Tut's privacy has not been kept.

Are these deaths the result of a series of strange coincidences, or does the mummified body of the young king project the icy fingers of death on those who enter his sanctuary? There is little reason to doubt that the pharaohs placed curses on their tombs to frighten away grave robbers from the fabulously wealthy treasures buried with them. But more than one observer has declared that perhaps the art of embalming was not the only thing which was lost with the Ancient Egyptians.

Dr. J. C. Mardrus, Oriental scholar and authority on the Near East, while declaring he did not ascribe to the occult has said: "I am absolutely convinced that

they (the Egyptians) knew how to concentrate upon and around a mummy certain dynamic powers of which we possess very incomplete notions. . . . The Twentieth Century has treated as nonsensical superstitions those beliefs which existed during the thousands of years of civilization, which were the most intellectual that ever flourished on the globe, and forgets the profound words of our master, Pasteur, on the occasion of his reception at the Academy: 'He who only possesses clear ideas is assuredly a fool.' "



## ABE LINCOLN'S WHITE HOUSE SPOOKS

THE WINTER of 1863 was harsh. A new Union general had taken command of the haggard Yankee forces. The morale of the troops was at its lowest ebb since the war had begun. Sensing the critical situation, Washington had taken on a serious, almost solemn air.

In the drawing room of Cranston Laurie of Georgetown, Pennsylvania, the firelight from the hearth flickered across the floor and faintly off the faces of several people. All attention in the room was riveted on the frail body of Nettie Colburn, resting easily in a leather chair. Her breathing was shallow and, from a distance, almost imperceptible. A man swung a gold watch in front of her eyes and counted softly with the pendulum-like swings.

Finally he stuffed the watch back into his vest pocket and let the chain drape across his brightly colored vest. "All we can do now is wait." His voice was subdued but not a whisper.

The atmosphere in the room grew tense as each moment passed. The silence became a burden to the ears of the people waiting. Then, after five minutes, the head of the semiconscious girl moved slightly. In another instant her whole body had begun to quiver.

"Remedy the situation by going in person to the front with your wife and family." The voice, a startlingly deep bass, rolled out of the mouth of the entranced girl. Those in the room were initially astounded by the voice, then began to pay close attention to the content of the speech that was coming out of Nettie Colburn's mouth.

The people in the room formed a tight, intense circle around the high-backed leather chair—Cranston Laurie, a Mrs. Miller, Daniel E. Somes, Mrs. Laurie, and President Abraham Lincoln.

The president, who sought to heal his divided country, listened intently to a plan for increasing troop morale as it came from another dimension through the mouth of a frail young woman. The next day, plans for Lincoln's visit to the wintering Union troops were announced.

Abraham Lincoln, one of the most revered presidents of the United States, was constantly chided by the newspapers of his time for his consultations with the spirit world. The Cleveland *PLAIN DEALER* lashed at him shortly after his election to the presidency for "consulting spooks."

The president-elect's candid reply was: "The only falsehood in the statement is that the half of it has not been told. The article does not begin to tell the wonderful things I have witnessed."

Openly and admittedly, Abe Lincoln consulted mediums and spiritualists of his day. Historians and biographers make little fuss about recording that he had a strong spiritual heritage from his mother and her family. His consultations varied from those received from backwoods gypsies, when he was in his youth, to the most famous mediums and telepaths of the day during his tenure as president. Reared in an atmosphere where people hearkened to advice from the spirit world, he was never a skeptic, but used these contacts in shaping his policies as chief executive.

Nettie Colburn or other mediums, whom Lincoln kept in close communication, would allow their bodies to become the vehicles for whatever force took them over, spewing forth information which the thoughtful president considered with all the energy of his serious nature. Other participants in these spirit summoning

sessions were Senator Richmond, Colonel S. P. Kase, Major Vanvorhees, and the first lady, Mary Todd Lincoln. Daniel E. Somes, a frequent seance partner was a congressman at the time.

In times of great crisis, the president's wife would arrange seances to calm her husband. Some of the gatherings took place in the White House itself. In December of 1862, the Union cause was on the brink of defeat. Lincoln was under great strain and Mrs. Lincoln called several people together in the Red parlor. Once again Nettie Colburn was the medium. In her own words (recorded in a volume now resting in the Library of Congress), the following took place:

*"For more than an hour, I was made to talk to Mr. Lincoln. I learned from my friends afterward that it was upon matters that he seemed fully to understand, while they comprehended very little until the portion was reached that related to the forthcoming Emancipation Proclamation."*

Lincoln had been under great pressure from all sides to drop the rigid enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation. Through Nettie Colburn's mouth, he was charged not to compromise the terms at all, but to resolutely carry out all the implications of the announcement he had made. According to Nettie Colburn, after she had come out of the trance, she found the president looking intently at her, his arms folded across his chest. A gentleman present asked Lincoln if he had noticed anything familiar about the voice and delivery of the message.

"Mr. Lincoln raised himself as if shaking off a spell. He glanced quickly at the full length portrait of Daniel Webster that hung over the piano and replied, 'Yes, and it is very singular, very!'"

It seems that Lincoln heeded the spirit world's ad-

monition, for the Emancipation Proclamation became effective a few weeks later in January of 1863.

Lincoln admitted that the messages he received from the spirit world enabled him to come through crisis after crisis. His influence extended to other figures of the time, and even the hard-nosed U.S. Grant later turned to spiritualism. Never before or since has the spirit world had so much influence in Washington.

## SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH

### COMES TO FARMWIFE

HORROR BLANCHED the face of Mrs. Cedric Larson of Montevideo, Minnesota as she watched the tractor her husband had just parked fall on him with crushing force.

Mrs. Larson had just spent twenty-seven days in a hospital recovering from a back injury in that summer of 1965. She was pale and weak from the many bed-ridden days, and physicians had warned her not to exert herself with any but the mildest of exercise.

"But all I could think of was to get Cedric out from under the tractor," she said later.

She had been sitting in the front seat of the family car. She jerked open the front door and ran to the overturned machine. Her husband was still conscious but was grimacing in pain. He had one foot caught in the steering wheel, and his body was pinned under the tractor's fender.

Taking on superhuman strength, Mrs. Larsen grasped the big wheel on the back of the tractor and lifted and pushed at the same time. Miraculously, the tractor moved and her husband contorted his body from under the fender. Then she let the tractor fall back to the ground.

But there was still more to do. She worked her husband's foot loose from the steering wheel, then dragged him away from the overturned machine. Next she yelled to Mrs. Ruben Ronstad, who had been watching the strange drama with unbelieving eyes, to call an ambulance.

Ed Husby, a Montevideo lumberman, went to the

farm afterward to right the tractor. He walked to the overturned vehicle and tried to lift it. The big, burly man could not budge it. He shrugged when he unwound the powerful winch that he eventually used to pull the tractor to an upright position. "It's a good thing Cedric didn't have to rely on me to lift the tractor," he said. "I couldn't have moved it an inch."

Cedric Larsen suffered a fractured pelvis because of the farm accident. If his wife had not been empowered by that superhuman burst of strength, his injuries would have been greatly multiplied.

When queried how a woman who had just returned from a month's stay in the hospital could lift a massive farm tractor, Mrs. Larsen said: "I guess a person gets mighty powerful in cases like these."

## PHANTOMS OF THE OCEAN

“SAIL HO!”

The officer on watch of the H.M.S. *Bacchante* glanced up at the mizzentop lookout perch. “Where, away?” he asked at the top of his lungs.

“Five hundred yards off the port bow,” the cry came back.

“Are you crazy man? You can’t see more than fifty yards in the dark, even with the stars . . . I’ll be busted! I see it, too!”

The officer pulled his watch from his pocket, then held it next to a lantern so he could read it. The time was 2:14 A.M. When he looked up again, more than the sail of the ship could be seen. Glowing and eerie, it was flying full sail and looked like it would cross their bow within three hundred yards.

The *Bacchante* was under the command of Captain Lord Charles Scott and had two very distinguished crew members, young prince George, who was later to become George V and his brother, Duke of Clarence. The officer on watch awakened as many people as he could to verify the sighting of the strange, glowing ship. The deck was furious with activity as men fought for advantageous positions along the bow rails. Then they grew silent as the ship, with every inch of sail set and all aglow, passed at a distance of two hundred yards.

“It’s the *Flying Dutchman*,” one old sailor said. “And that ain’t a good omen.”

They continued to watch until the glowing ship vanished in the night.

On July 11, 1881, the 4 A.M. entry in the log of the H.M.S. *Bacchante* reads:

"The *Flying Dutchman* crossed our bow. A strange red light as of a phantom ship all aglow, in the midst of which light the mast, spars and sails of a brig two hundred yards distant stood up in strong relief. Thirteen persons altogether saw her, but whether it was Van Dieman or the *Flying Dutchman* must remain unknown. The *Tourmaline* and the *Cleopatra* (the sister ships), which were on our starboard bow, flashed to ask whether we had seen the strange light."

Legends, which would seem to stretch the imagination of even the most drunken sailor portside, have circulated among mariners for centuries. The sea has long been a source of mystery for men. Human beings, by nature alien to the oceans, have much to learn about what moves across the surface as well as in the depths. Perhaps this mystery reaches its peak in the phenomena of phantom ships.

Phantom ships are by no means an exclusively Western phenomena. In the Chatham Islands, a small chain four hundred miles southwest of New Zealand, a craft has terrorized the natives at irregular intervals. The mysterious boat brings death in its wake. After one sighting, eleven fishermen drowned in the capsizing of a fishing boat.

Though many of the phantom ships have omens connected with them, some have just mysteriously appeared and disappeared. In Reykjavik, Iceland in April of 1927, a fishing cutter with two boats in tow entered the harbor alongside an Icelandic trawler. A port official, who noticed the routine entrance of the two vessels, signaled the port doctor to go aboard the cutter and make the usual examination before permitting the docking of the fishing vessel. The identifying letters on the cutter's bow were "F.D.," showing it to be from Fugleford. It had followed normal procedure and had



anchored alongside the five cutters already at rest in the harbor.

But when the doctor, on board a police boat, headed for the vessel fifteen minutes later to make his inspection, the astonished harbor officials found that the vessel had completely disappeared. The scene was open daylight, and nobody could explain what had happened to the fishing cutter.

In 1647, a ship was seen to disappear in full view of a crowd of people who were waiting its arrival on the wharves of New Haven, Connecticut. The ship had put out from New Haven five months before and had been feared lost. When the vessel was sighted coming into the harbor, word spread quickly that she was returning and the crowd gathered to greet her. But it appeared that the ship was acting queerly to those who watched. Though the sails and rigging looked in good shape, she sailed dead into the wind. Then, before their eyes, the ship began to fade from view, and the crowd was left staring at the undisturbed waters of the harbor.

Another disappearing ship had been reported putting in a yearly appearance at Cape d'Espoir, in Gaspé Bay, Canada. The ship is supposedly the ghost of a British gunboat that was sent to harrass the French forts along the Eastern seaboard of Canada. Many men are reported standing on its decks, and at the wheel is a man with a woman at his side. As it approaches, the ship's lights gradually go out, and the vessel sinks at exactly the same spot that the old British gunboat had sunk two hundred years before.

## THE WHITE LADY OF LOVER'S LANE

TWO LOVERS embraced in a lovers lane. They had come from a summer movie in White Lake Rock, Texas, a small town just outside of Dallas. Though the young man's attention was locked to the girl at his side, the driver could not help catching a glimmer of white moving down the narrow road toward them.

"Maybe it's the cops," he said in a low voice.

The couple watched as the shimmering white light grew in size and intensity.

"Good lord!" he said in a hoarse whisper. The shimmering white had become a figure—the figure of a woman. The girl at his side screamed as the ghostly woman walked directly toward their car. She appeared to be dripping wet.

The couple watched in horror as the figure approached the side of the car opposite the steering wheel and reached for the door handle.

The driver turned the ignition with shaking fingers and stepped on the gas, sending dirt and stones flying into the branches behind the car. When he glanced in the mirror, he could no longer see the white lady.

The "Lady of the Lake" wanders about frequently in the area of White Lake Rock, Texas. Bob Sloan, staff writer for a Dallas newspaper, has collected many reports of the spectral appearances.

Most of the stories of the apparition come from lover's lane couples or late night drivers, who see her appear along the side of the road. She seems to be

jealous of lovers and frightens them out of their amorous activities. Drivers who have stopped to investigate, say she vanishes, leaving only a puddle of water where she had stood at the side of the road.

## THE STRANGE DANCERS

### WHO PERFORM WHILE ENTRANCED

“YOU MEAN those kids are going to perform the dance?” The American asked the question softly to his English anthropologist friend, so he would not disrupt the ceremony that was taking place. The “kids” he referred to were two native Balinese children.

The anthropologist nodded, staring intently at the ritualistic preparations for the dance.

“But I thought you said the dance was polished—executed precisely. These girls can’t be over five years old.”

“Just wait. You’ll see that what I said was true.”

Unbelieving, the American watched as the two girls fell into a kind of trance. After a few minutes, they began to move again and the frenzied chanting of the people of Bali began to mount. The girls’ bodies moved with the chant and the beat of the drum. In the intensified atmosphere of the ritual, the American could almost feel the movements of the dance himself, but his mouth dropped as the dance was executed with the skill of polished performers by the girls in the center of the circle of natives.

Most of the dances done by the Balinese are of ancient origin and require years of laborious practice before a public performance is presented. Though the dances were probably of religious origin, as new influences have come over the island of Bali the dance has taken on secular significance and is performed not only for the gods, but also for large and appreciative audiences.

The Balinese dances are performed largely without

the use of the legs and consist of a series of intricate poses in a strict sequence. The most well-known and probably the most difficult of these dances is the *legong*, a rite performed for the young girl's entrance into womanhood. Observers have testified to the difficulty of this ritual dance, and the Balinese themselves spend years practicing its complex set of movements.

But in a dance similar to the *legong*, called the *sanghyan dedari*, many of the same complex figures are performed by girls who have never practiced such a dance! Little girls of five and six years old perform the dance, and each performance is not only done without practice, but without flaw. Where do these girls get this miraculous ability? Perhaps the explanation lies in the ceremony that surrounds the dancing.

The *sanghyang dedari* is a very old and magical dance of exorcism. Once the ritual is completed, the legendary witches of the island are thought to be driven off.

The dance itself is performed in the death temple before an elaborately constructed altar. The people form a circle around the girls and chant in low and hypnotic tones until both dancers fall to the ground in a faint. Realizing that the first and most essential part of the ritual is complete, the Balinese chant louder until the dancers are awakened.

Though the little girls move with great skill, it is obvious that they are entranced, and as the torchlit scene rings with louder and louder chanting their movements become very precise and regulated. They pick up coals from the fire pots in the temple yards and let the glowing red embers fall over their bodies without suffering harm.

The singing and chanting builds in volume and intensity until the entire community is worked into a frenzy, but the dancing remains flawless and precise.

Although the girls are small of stature and not physically strong, the ceremony and the strenuous dancing continues for three hours. After the girls have performed their solo dance, they are lifted to the shoulders of native men where they continue the precise movements, keeping perfect balance while swaying wildly with the chanting and the drums.

When the diminutive dancers come out of the trance, they are not tired. According to Balinese tradition, the bodies of the girls have been taken over by spirits of goddesses. Their explanation is simply that goddesses never tire.

## THE GHOST

### WHO WAS PHOTOGRAPHED

TED HENTY, an ex-cop from Brighton, England, has formed his own small group of scientific "ghost hunters." Armed with such essential items as gloves, flashlights, first aid kits, and wool slippers to muffle their own footsteps, their truck contains a dozen microphones, six cameras of a conventional design, an infra-red camera, four wire recorders, and an electric eye hookup—over ten thousand dollars worth of phantom tracing equipment. Although most of the homes Henty is called upon to "exorcise" turn out to be haunted by pigeons, mice, tree branches and imagination, the ghost hunter has come to believe that something else—call it a spirit or a ghost or mark it a tentative anonymous "X"—does exist.

Henty changed his mind about psychic phenomena early in 1950 when he and his group were called by a desperate house owner who could not keep help because of the visitation of a ghost, a female Indian.

"I'm still a cop at heart," said Henty, "and I don't fool easily. I like to know the facts: time, date, place, description. And I like to get the facts from impartial witnesses. I made a few discreet inquiries in their neighborhoods, trying to establish their reliability. Here we had three good independent witnesses who made the same charge. It was a severe economic strain for two of them to quit the jobs, yet they quit anyway out of fear of something that they couldn't understand."

Henty made a preliminary visit by daylight, men-

tally planning camera and microphone placement. Then . . .

"There it was," he said, "what looked unmistakably like the blurred figure of a dark-skinned lady dressed in white, somewhat smallish, smiling, walking toward me. I was stunned. The very thing I had always privately argued against seemed to be approaching, and I could see it in fairly clear light with my own two eyes. I had no camera with me then and so all I could do was stand there, open-mouthed, until this thing went through an open door into a large bedroom and disappeared without a trace.

"Was this what people identify as a ghost, a spirit, an apparition? I didn't know. All I know was what it wasn't. It wasn't a human being because it was without much substance and seemed transparent. It was something outside my own ken until that moment, a small, soundless, vague shape, clearly defined, moving at an even pace. All of a sudden I lost my feeling against psychic phenomena. Something existed I could not comprehend."

Henty briefed his twelve-member group thoroughly and they busily installed microphones, infra-red cameras and dozens of other electronic bugs. They watched and they waited, eagerly hoping to catch another glimpse of the phantom which they could record on film. Nothing happened. Nothing that is, until a member of the crew developed what he thought were some innocent pictures of the crew loading their equipment into the truck. There, on film, was the image of a small, vaguely defined figure dressed in white with a dark Indian Face.

A trick photograph to "prove" his story? Henty was quick to retort: "We have strict laws involving fraud in this section and all of us present at the time are perfectly willing to offer sworn notarized statements that this was no trick! While we were loading,



none of us saw the figure. Yet it appeared on the film, just as I had seen it that week inside the house. The three caretakers later looked at copies of the print and told me it was exactly what they had seen when they worked there."

## A SEA MONSTER DIES IN TASMANIA

BEN FENTON, Jack Boote, and Ray Anthony are all cattlemen with spreads on the Northwest coast of the island of Tasmania, located off the southeastern tip of Australia. Working together is a necessity in the rugged land, and the three men were riding down a deserted stretch of beach together when one of them spotted a curious, unnatural looking hump sticking out of the sand.

The three men rode over to investigate the inert mass that mounded out of the beach. To their astonishment, it was clearly the form of what once had been a living thing. Considering it from all angles, the men decided that it was no form of animal or fish that they had ever seen. The surface of the creature was tough and covered by a ragged hair-like substance. The dimensions were guessed to be twenty-eight feet long and eighteen feet wide. Jack Boote estimated the weight of the thing to be between five and ten tons.

The men spread the news of the monster in August of 1960, but nobody seemed very much interested. They drew pictures of the thing that the sea had coughed up on the shore near their ranches, and although a few people looked, nobody did more than that until a representative of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) gave ear to some of the rumors. Through this official, Bruce Mollison, who was an employee of CSIRO, saw some of the sketches of the strange creature and became interested in it. Although he was leaving his job with the organization, he urged that an expedition

be financed for an investigation of the monster. Two years later, in March of 1962, it was Mollison who gave credibility to the story of the Tasmanian Sea Monster.

Tasmania is a land of many strange creatures. Two of the land animals—the Tasmanian Tiger and the Tasmanian devil—are considered the most elusive creatures on earth. New species of fish have been found in its coastal waters, and is not unlikely that more will be found.

Partly because of this, and partly because it is his job as Curator of vertebrate mammals for the Tasmanian museum to keep track of the animals within the island's bounds, Bruce Mollison took a special interest in the reports of the monster first sighted in the winter of 1960.

Mollison was amazed that the creature had not deteriorated into nothingness over the two years that it had lain exposed to the air and sea. When he walked on the beach in 1962, the humped shape that had greeted the ranchers in their first ride past the spot remained intact to greet him.

His first concern was to establish whether the thing was of some known species. After carefully examining it for a day, taking into consideration all varieties of whales, squids, rays, and the like, Mollison became convinced that the thing he studied was not of any known species of fish or mammal. Though much of the creature had rotted away, the curator was able to estimate that the creature had been almost circular in shape with a diameter of nearly twenty feet.

The surface was hard and rubbery of consistency, covered with a greasy, straggly kind of hair. Before any deterioration had set in, the cattlemen, who had first seen it, described six gill-like openings and four lobes, which were suspended from the front. Between these lobes was a mouthlike aperture. Several rows

of spines, mounted on flanges, skirted the rear of its form.

Where had the monster come from? Mollison could only guess. From the spot where he stood on the beach, the sea stretched 1,500 miles south to Antarctica and 3,000 miles west to Africa. Such monsters could reside in underground caverns in the untraveled waters of these oceans and come to the surface of the sea only at death.

There were several unexplainable things about the Tasmanian monster that bothered the men who looked at it. They wondered how a dead creature could survive so long while being directly exposed to the rough climate on the coast of the island. However, the dimensions that Mollison estimated were not those given by the ranchers in the earlier sighting. The possibility that there had been two monsters became apparent to them.

Ben Fenton, one of the first men to have seen the monster, said that a few months after the first sighting, the ranchers could no longer find the huge corpse. When it had reappeared on the beach, they had reasoned that the sea had covered it with sand, and that it was slowly being uncovered. The ranchers had found the monster again in 1961, but it did not look the same to them. All these facts set Mollison to wondering whether there had been more than one monster lurking off the lonely coasts of Tasmania, and, more importantly, whether there were several others swimming about in the ocean.

Determined not to let the opportunity pass, the curator took samples of the flesh of the creature to the CSIRO. He was disappointed when the researchers announced that the samples were too small for any definitive conclusions.

Without hesitation, Mollison headed back for the spot on the beach where he had examined the mon-

ster. This time he took an axe and a photographer. He hacked off several healthy chunks of flesh, wrapped them in plastic, and packed them back to civilization again. When he had returned, Mollison found that he and the monster were in the news and creating quite a stir. Newspapermen from Sydney and Melbourne were waiting to find out what new evidence there was in the attempt to identify the mystery beast.

Reactions from scientific stations around the world were communicated to the island town, and as was to be expected, most of them were skeptical. Experts at the Royal Prince Albert Hospital had been unable to identify the flesh of the monster as belonging to any known species, but this still was not enough to satisfy CSIRO officials. Even with the added samples, they decided that a field expedition was necessary to establish conclusive facts about the creature and its identity.

Meanwhile, the excitement raised by the stories of the monster stirred some old memories, and an account of a similar creature that had been found on the beaches of Tasmania in the year 1936 was recalled. Another description of such a monster came from Rottnest Island, off the coast of Western Australia.

The team of scientists that was selected to make the field tests on the monster was headed by an eminent mammalogist from Zeehan. They were flown in by helicopter and set up a temporary laboratory within a canvas tent. After a day of hacking and testing, their immediate report was that they were not able to identify the creature.

Mollison was shocked when, sometime later, the official CSIRO report described the flesh as being somewhat like blubber, making the entire discovery sound as if it were part whale. The ranchers, who had first seen the creature, were irate at this report and de-

clared that they knew what a whale looked like, and that this beast did not even resemble one.

What mammoth sea creatures live off the coast of Australia is only a matter of speculation, but that a strange and unexplainable monster was washed up on the shore of Tasmania is an undeniable fact.

## CRAZY COINCIDENCES

AS A WRITER of crime and mystery fiction, I am constantly combing the newspapers in the hope of finding ready-made story material.

Although I still earnestly believe that a newspaper is one of the writer's best textbooks, I find to my dismay that 90 percent of the "gems" I discover rely on a fantastic coincidence for their impact. And, in spite of the fact that past generations may have delighted in unusual stories that relied upon coincidence for their climactic unravelment, such tales are deemed much too contrived for contemporary tastes.

Take these, for example:

A heavy storm, which marooned Mrs. Arthur Horton, of Chicago, in Clinton, Iowa, must be credited with helping her find her father, W. J. Murphy, from whom she had been separated for twenty-nine years. While waiting out the storm in Clinton, Mrs. Horton happened to mention her long lost father to a restaurant owner. The restaurant owner tipped her off to a Mrs. Murphy, who turned out to be a cousin, and through her she was able to trace her father.

Adolph Leiderman, 54, deaf and mute since childhood, was employed by a basket factory in Burlington, Iowa. When he noticed that a spark had set paint fumes afire, he stood up and shouted "fire" several times from the paint booth in which he was working. His immediate warning was given the credit for enabling fellow employees to quickly extinguish the flames without costly damage being done to the fac-

tory But his voice left him just as suddenly as it had returned. The next day he was back to communicating with his fellow workers by sign language.

Just a few days before the Villanova football captain was found hanging lifeless from a basement beam on the campus, he had won first prize in the college's essay competition. His subject: "Suicide."

While browsing through an army surplus store in Centralia, Illinois, an ex G.I. found his old tunic on a counter. The faded serial number identified it as the one he had returned to supply on his discharge. The manager returned the tunic with his compliments.

In England, Mrs. Gene Crump decided to take her three children on a surprise trip to visit their father in Toronto, Canada. When they arrived, they found an empty apartment. Mr. Crump had left to surprise them in England.

Mrs. Magdalene Vanover was chatting idly with a grocer in Corbin, Kentucky while he filled her order. The grocer remarked that her German accent reminded him of his days as a soldier in World War II. He pulled out an album of pictures that he had snapped while he was on leave in Germany. One photograph was a close-up of Mrs. Vanover as a young girl.

Marcello Nardini had been doggedly superstitious all of his life. He collected good luck charms, tossed salt over his shoulder, obeyed all occult advice. One day he decided that this was a primitive attitude and resolved to change his way of life. He deliberately walked under a ladder on a Rome, Italy street. A workman above lost his grip on a hammer and the tool promptly fell on Marcello's head. While he lay recu-



perating in the hospital, he decided that his former philosophy of life had been right all along. Within an hour after his discharge from the hospital, he was horrified to see his father-in-law drop his hat on the bed—a terrible sign of bad luck! He leaned over to pick up the hat; the bed collapsed; and he was back in the hospital with a broken nose.

## SHE REMEMBERS A PAST LIFE

"I WISH I could see my husband again." The words floated strangely out of the mouth of a small girl who played in the streets of Delhi, the old capital city of India.

"Shanti's talking about her husband again," one of her playmates teased.

"But I do have a husband," the little girl protested. "And a son, too."

The more the girl protested, the more laughter came from the children around her. She had become used to scorn for telling about the things she remembered. Even her parents had warned her not to talk of her "husband" and "son" so persistently. But sometimes the feelings within her little being were so strong that she could not keep them bottled up inside.

Shanti Devi, from her earliest childhood, claimed to remember things from a life lived in another city. Most of her family and relatives ignored the child's claims to such knowledge and attributed the minute descriptions of the place where she had grown up and lived in the city of Muttra, India to the overactive imagination of the child.

By sheer persistence, the little girl piqued the curiosity of Professor Kishen Chand, her granduncle. To satisfy himself and perhaps to put an end to Shanti Devi's insistence on the husband she had in Muttra, the professor itemized the information that he had gained from listening to the girl and sent a letter off to a man named Kedarnath, the man whom Shanti Devi contended had been her husband in Muttra.

Professor Chand was mildly surprised when he found that such a man did live in Muttra. Shanti had never been near the city of Muttra, yet she had given him not only the correct name of the man she contended was her husband, but also the correct address of his house. Chand was not one for jumping at conclusions, but he had to admit to himself that these were at least very strange coincidences.

Kedarnath, the man who received the letter, was puzzled, too. He had a son, but his wife had died nine years before. Cautiously, Kedarnath decided not to go to Delhi himself to talk to Professor Chand, but to send a friend to find out if some attempt were being made at fraud. After the friend had made contact, he wrote to Kedarnath that the case merited some investigation, for the little girl came from a respected family.

After turning it over in his mind for some time, Kedarnath decided to look into the business for himself. He and his son traveled to Delhi to meet Professor Chand and Shanti Devi. Still openly skeptical about the truth of what had been related to him, Kedarnath was amazed to find that the girl knew as much about him as his former wife had. Shanti went directly to the man's son, embraced him and spoke to him in the terms that his wife had used nine years before! She also assumed the same attitude toward him that his wife had taken before her death. The next day, Kedarnath left Delhi in great confusion, in spite of the protests of Shanti Devi that she wished her "son" to stay with her.

The incident could not avoid publicity, and it was picked up by several of the newspapers in Delhi and adjacent cities. There was, of course, much ridicule of the whole story. Indeed the idea of a reincarnated life sounded highly fictional, but at least one important newspaper man took it seriously enough to put the story and the girl to a test.

Desh Bandhu Gupta, then the president of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, as well as a member of parliament, prepared a scheme which he thought would determine the validity of the girl's claims. Mr. Gupta, and other prominent people interested in the case, escorted Shanti Devi by train to Muttra. The girl was put on a tonga and asked to direct the party to the house in which she had lived with her husband.

The instructions Shanti Devi gave were clear and precise and led the party unerringly through the tortuous and narrow streets of Muttra to the front door of a dwelling.

"I used to live in this house," she said resolutely to the men. "But when I lived here the building was painted yellow." The men looked at the white exterior of the building then back at Shanti. Finally one of them knocked on the door of the dwelling.

To the girl's surprise, the occupant of the house was not Kedarnath, but a family unknown to her. The skeptics in the crowd thought they had finally caught the girl in her sham, but Shanti Devi asked if she could be taken to where her "husband" lived.

Kedarnath listened wide-eyed to the story and confirmed that the house that the girl had led the crowd to had been his nine years before. He explained that shortly after the death of his wife he had moved to a smaller dwelling. The first letter from Professor Chand had been forwarded to him from that address.

To prove her contention that she did remember the past life of Kedarnath's wife, the girl then led the party of investigators to her former mother's house. Once again she did not err in her directions. Mr. Gupta asked the girl if she noticed anything different about the building, as she had noticed the difference in paint on the former house of her "husband." After looking about briefly, she told the small party that there had been a well located in a certain corner of the property.

The ground was turned over and the casing of a long unused well was uncovered. Even the most skeptical in the crowd began to wonder what strange powers the girl possessed.

Shanti Devi found her "mother" inside the house and identified her immediately, though the old woman was bent over with age. The group of men could no longer deny the validity of Shanti Devi's claims. They witnessed statements that testified to what they had seen, and these, together with the testimonies of Kedarnath and the girl's parents, were enough to create an immediate sensation.

The newspapers made as much as they could of the girl's miraculous ability to recall the life of the woman who had died shortly before Shanti's birth. It seemed that the girl had a continuum of consciousness that extended one entire life span before her birth. She could recall events in her past life as easily as she could recall the events of the life she was living at the present.

## AMERICA'S HOME-GROWN MONSTERS

"WHAT WAS THAT?" The Lebanon, Pennsylvania farmer looked up from the magazine he was reading.

"I didn't hear anything, dear," his wife said. The light burned on the table next to her where she was doing some needle work. "It's probably just the wind you . . ."

"There it is again!" This time the woman heard it and sat bolt upright. It could have been the cry of a human baby amplified many times.

The couple waited tensely in the hot August night of 1946. Then the sound came again, knifing through the thick night air. It was a high, eerie cry. After a moment's hesitation the man walked across the room toward a glass-enclosed cabinet that held several varieties of firearms. He picked out a rifle, jammed a full clip in the underside of the weapon.

"I've got to see what's out there," the man said resolutely. "We've got stock in the yard."

He proceeded cautiously toward the barn. The night was too quiet. Not a bird or a cricket chirped. His flashlight ran over the familiar outline of the barn, then the board gate that led to the yard. The stock were huddled in one corner, wild-eyed with fright. A noise attracted the farmer's attention. It was not the almost human cry that he had heard before, but a sound like the tearing of paper or cloth. Quickly he flashed the light in the direction of the sound, and the beam lit up a gory scene. Bent over the carcass of a dead animal, was a beast which looked like nothing he had ever seen before. In the brief instant that the light blinded

it, the farmer was only aware of a massive, blood-covered muzzle. Then, in his astonishment, he let the flashlight slip to the ground. When he had picked it up again, the beast was retreating from the scene of his kill. He fired vainly at it, but it vanished in the darkness and all was silent for a few seconds. Then the same, haunting cry floated over the night to his ears.

In our modern world, the thought of monsters is easy to laugh off. After all, who takes them seriously? But for over two weeks in Lebanon, Pennsylvania in August of 1946, the rural communities were put on the defensive by a monster that destroyed livestock and poultry. It is difficult for anyone to laugh off the destruction of his property. Mrs. Lulu Brown heard the animal again on August 25. A professional hunter, Harry McClaim, was engaged to either kill or capture the beast.

Earlier that year, on February 14, 1946, a monster of a similar variety was reported to have appeared near Coatesville, Pennsylvania. Though a good physical description was lacking, the monster was said to wail like a woman. On November 14, 1945 a report had come of an animal or beast that "cried and screamed like a baby" from Pottstown, Pennsylvania. This beast was given various descriptions.

In South Dakota, a different kind of monster has been reported. A high school student at Frederick, South Dakota, Don Neff, found some strange looking teeth on the banks of the Elm River. After doing some investigating, the inquisitive student found the remains of a giant 28-foot marine lizard buried in the shale and mud along the river.

When first brought to his attention, Professor James D. Bump, director of the museum of the State School of Mines, in Rapid City, South Dakota, said that the remains had probably been there for "several million years." This first estimate was later revised when the

species was identified as mosasaur, which have been supposed extinct for 130,000,000 years.

Though the excavation was considered a great archeological find, the residents have some misgivings about the evidence that such huge creatures are long extinct. In 1934, a farmer reported that he had to "take to the ditch" when his tractor was forced off the road by a four-legged serpentine monster that moved down the road at him. No estimated dimensions of the creature are given, but if it were of the size that could force a tractor off the road, it is not of any known variety.

The tracks of the monster were followed across a muddy field until they came to the edge of Lake Campbell. Here the monster eased itself into the water and disappeared. Similar tracks have been seen frequently since the 1934 sighting of the monster, and disappearances of many lambs and pigs have occurred in the community for years without any explanation.

Although the lakes of Scotland are famous for their monsters, in central Minnesota, the community around Big Pine Lake, has one of their own. The creature, which resides in the lake, is affectionately known as "Oscar" and many of the residents of the community have seen him on or near the surface. Many hypotheses have been given concerning his appearance, including the idea that he might be a giant sturgeon. (The largest sturgeon ever taken weighted 360 pounds.) But this theory has proven unconvincing to many of the residents, as it does not completely fit the descriptions of those who have seen "Oscar."

American monsters have been described in many forms. On June 9, 1946, Orland Parker, from Kenton, Ohio was riding a horse through a small section of woods near his house when his horse became frightened and threw him at the sight of a gigantic snake, eight feet long and *four* inches in girth. The snake wrapped



itself around the leg of the prostrate man and broke his ankle. It then bit his horse. A search party was formed and went in pursuit of the snake, but it had disappeared in the dense cover.

This proved to be just a taste of what was to come in the Middlewest, for on July, 1946, Williard Tollinger of Flat Rock, Indiana, along with several members of his family, saw a snake about twenty feet long coiled up in the shallow water of a river. In the fields around the Indiana town, the trail of a large and heavy snake was often seen, and pigs and other small animals were found missing. A snake this large has not been thought to be native to the North American climate, but perhaps in the lowlands along the Midwestern rivers, such monsters have lived and died for centuries.

## MAN'S FINE-FINNED FRIEND

ALICE can find her way through an underwater maze blindfolded. Alice can whistle and talk. Alice can operate sonar better than the United States Navy. What's so great about that? Alice is a porpoise!

The U.S. navy is very curious about the ability of porpoises to navigate so well underwater. The office of naval research hopes to be able to find out how the porpoises are able to perform the miraculous feats in order to help perfect their own underwater weapons and guidance systems.

Alice is a very willing partner in all the tests that the scientists can think up. She's seven feet long and weighs three hundred pounds, and like most porpoises, is amusing, intelligent, and very loyal. Her present home is a big saltwater tank in the University of California at Los Angeles. She swims swiftly, performs her duties cheerfully, and amazes the scientists with the ease in which she navigates the underwater obstacle courses they set up.

In the last two decades, much scientific interest and study has been stimulated by Alice and her fellow porpoises. One of the few varieties of mammals which make their home in the water, the porpoise has been found to be a very brilliant creature. This extraordinary intelligence has prompted the use of porpoises as show animals, and the cooperative animals entertain visitors at marineland shows and through a popular television series. Great excitement was aroused when it was determined that porpoises communicated with one another in a language as yet not understood by humans.

It was recently observed, that among their many other talents, the porpoise has an uncanny skill at navigation. This interested naval scientists and prompted the tests with Alice the willing "guineaporpoise."

Time after time, she would swim around the salt water tank at UCLA by-passing dozens of obstacles to find the target. The navy wants to duplicate her great mobility and speed. Some of the scientists suspected that the porpoise did not navigate with the use of its eyes, so they blindfolded Alice and sent her through the maze again. The willing porpoise swam through the obstacle course again without a miss and hit the target with its beaklike nose.

It was found that Alice navigated with the use of natural sonar. Technically, sonar is the apparatus which detects the presence and location of underwater objects with the use of sound waves. Much like an echo coming from a far hill, soundwaves are sent out from the apparatus, and the sensitive device picks up the echoes, or returning waves, from any solid object near the receiver.

Sonar is used in antisubmarine warfare, and thus the navy is interested in improving its own apparatus. Naval scientists were surprised, and perhaps a trifle embarrassed, when they uncovered the fact that Alice's sonar was better than any that man had yet produced with a machine. The sonar used by the porpoise has two advantages over the man-made variety. First, the porpoise does not need to use pure tones, but can use mixed frequencies for the location of objects under water. Second, the porpoise can focus its sonar beam. According to scientists the latter is "a feat which man is now trying to achieve."

## FROM OUT OF THE SKY

A FARMER gazed intently over the flock of sheep that were huddled beside his barn near North Devon, England in November of 1950. Instinctively, he knew that something was wrong. After a quick count, he realized that one of the small flock was missing.

Without hesitation, he set out for the pasture in the cold November wind. After a short search, he found the missing sheep. It was stone dead. Scattered around it were chunks of ice. Scratching his head as he tried to figure out the circumstances that had killed the animal, the farmer finally decided to save some of the ice. One of the fragments weighed fourteen pounds!

The farmer reported the incident to local officials, wondering what had been the cause of the ice fall. When reporters asked him about it, he said, ". . . there was no doubt that the sheep had been killed through being struck by a lump of ice."

This was the first incident in a long chain of ice falls that plagued Great Britain for more than a month. Besides the ice scattered around the part of the pasture where the sheep had been killed, there were large chunks found in adjacent fields. They were partially melted on discovery, but were still abnormally large. The first explanation that anyone thought of for this mystery was that ice, which had formed on the wings and fuselage of some airplane, had fallen off over the North Devon farm; but an RAF spokesman said that the weather had not been severe enough to cause planes to ice up.

When the question was put to the Meteorological Office, the immediate response was that the falls were unexplainable in view of current weather conditions. By November 10, ice blocks had been scattered over many farms near North Moulton and Simonsbath, England. The official meteorological report: "Conditions at North Moulton do not suggest that this was any normal meteorological phenomena."

The next report of an ice fall came from the city of London. "A block of ice a foot square" crashed through the roof of a garage in Wandsworth, a section of London. According to the November 25 newspaper reports, the block was "brown in color" and was confiscated immediately by the police. An official from the office of Meteorology of the Air Ministry of Britain stated, "I do not think that a lump of ice that size can be any normal weather phenomena."

When the possibility that it had fallen from a plane was raised again, the weathermen stated frankly that no icing conditions existed anywhere over the British Isles.

As the falls continued, an increase in the numbers of unidentified flying objects seen over Britain prompted some people to do some speculating on the connection between the two sets of occurrences.

But whether there was any connection or not the ice falls continued to occur. On November 28, 1950 a large block of ice fell into the garden of J.C. Holmes of Hampstead, Norris, Berks. It made a hole about six inches deep and melted quickly. On November 26, a block of substance which looked like ice was found in the garden of Reginald Butcher, an engineer. ". . . It was no substance known to me," Butcher explained, ". . . I really have no idea why the police want me to keep it a secret." On December 3, a piece hit a kitchen roof and shattered near Wandsworth. On December 7, a piece nine inches square

fell very near John Collins, a student, on his way to a London School. On December 26, a block weighing a hundred pounds fell in the street of Helensburgh, a suburb of London. Though no plane was seen or heard, the chunk bore "unmistakable signs of rivet marks and slots which are identical with an aircraft wing."

Though an occasional chunk of ice falling from the sky might be written off as a coincidence, the number of occurrences of icefalls in the area around London in so short a period of time cannot be explained away by appealing to natural causes.

Ice is not the only thing that has fallen mysteriously from the skies. During a heavy rainstorm, bullfrogs were reported dropping from the sky in Memphis, Tennessee by a member of the city's police force.

In Marksville, Louisiana, fresh water fish of all varieties native to the district rained from the skies. The residents picked them up from their yards and gardens. The largest reported was one about nine and a half inches long. Although such falls as these could possibly be explained by sudden atmospheric disturbances scooping fish into the air, in Marksville, the day the fish fell, October 23, 1947, the weather was described as calm and foggy with the maximum wind velocity at about eight miles per hour. No possibility of a tornado or gusts was reported by the weather bureau.

Because there was a rash of ice falls in Britain in 1950 does not mean that the country has cornered the falling ice market. On July 11, 1958 a "hunk weighing about twenty-five pounds" crashed into the sidewalk of O.B. Moore, of Arch Street, Brownsville, Pennsylvania. Though the fall occurred during a storm, the local officials attributed it to planes passing overhead. A chunk weighing seventy pounds penetrated the roof of Dominic Bacigalupo of Madison Town-

ship, New Jersey. Even though planes had been heard overhead, the officials in New Jersey rejected the theory that the ice had fallen from planes, saying simply that “. . . airliners do not carry ice.”

Though many strange and unexplainable objects have fallen from the sky, including pieces of metal, wire, salamanders, crabs, and unidentifiable strips of flesh, perhaps the weirdest fall ever recorded was that of a bomb that fell near Naples, Italy in 1958. When the bomb was found, it was immediately turned over to explosive specialists who disarmed it. The bomb, whose casing bore the date of 1942, was identified as one of the variety that Allied planes had showered over that area in Italy during the Second World War. Where had the bomb been for sixteen years?

## HEADQUARTERS OF THE SPOOK CHASERS

BEHIND the Renaissance facade of the well kept building at No. 31, Tavistock Square, London is, among other things, one of the weirdest files ever maintained. The records date back over eighty years and provide the most complete information available on ghosts, spiritualists, modern prophecy, psychokinesis, and a host of other unlikely topics.

The Society for Psychical Research has been in the business of chasing ghosts and exposing phony mediums since the late nineteenth century. Its main office is more than a repository for the files; it includes a ten thousand volume library, and a museum-like storehouse for specimens collected by society members from famous cases that they have investigated. On the first floor of the building is a seance room where many a fake spiritualist has been exposed. Other facilities include a small lab for chemical analysis and a dark room.

Several famous names are included in the annals of the society's investigators. Robert Browning, the poet, was traveling in Italy where he met and became friends with the clairvoyant, Count Guinasi. One day the poet showed a pair of cufflinks to his friend.

Immediately on seeing them, the Italian muttered, "Something here cries out 'murder.'"

Browning later told society investigators that the cuff links had been removed from the body of a great uncle of his, who had been violently killed eighty years earlier.

The immediate reaction to the idea of such an or-



ganization as the Society for Psychical Research is that it must be filled with crackpots. But a look at the membership rolls of the past and the present will quickly prove such an opinion to be false. The Society was begun by Professor William Barrett, a Fellow of Britain's Royal Society of Scientists, and its first president was Henry Sedgewick, a celebrated lecturer in moral philosophy at Cambridge University. The rolls continue to read like a "who's who in science"—Dr Alfred Wallace, Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Camille Flammarion to name a few. Other distinguished members have included Mark Twain, Professor Gilbert Murray of Oxford University, Professor William James of Harvard, and Professor Henri Bergson of France.

The goal of the Society is to investigate any unexplainable phenomena which is observed. With such a credo, the interests of the Society's members are naturally very diversified. Besides investigating ghosts and phony mediums, their activities include testing telepathy, divining, gathering reports of unidentified flying objects, and rigorously studying the laws of chance.

Although the Society is most adept at uncovering fakes and frauds, its files are filled with cases which have, as yet, no explanation. In January of 1926, a seance was held in the Society's special room with the medium Willy Schneider. The meeting was organized by Dr. E. J. Dingwall, now a British Museum official, and was attended by Douglas Dexter, a professional magician, and Dr. C. G. Lamb of the Engineering Laboratory at Cambridge.

Schneider was observed very carefully by Dingwall the minute he set foot on the society's premises. The clothes he changed into before the seance—a set of pajamas and a dressing jacket—had been kept overnight in the Society's headquarters. Every precaution

was taken to make sure that whatever happened would not be a hoax. He was led by both hands to a seat, and luminous strips were taped around both his ankles and his wrists so that any movement he made could be easily seen. During the seance itself, his hands were held by the spectators.

Several feet in front of the medium, and enclosed in a gauze cage, were a luminous cardboard ring and a tamborine. As the seance progressed, the observers saw the two enclosed articles lift into the air and "dance about like snowflakes." Dexter and Lamb both found the phenomena unexplainable. Dingwall concluded his report of the investigation with these words: "We are driven to the conclusion that the only reasonable hypothesis is that some supernormal agency produced the result."

Even more striking is the society's files on Willy's brother, Rudi Schneider. A firm of building contractors inspected the seance room to assure the observers that there were no hidden apparatus to produce effects of one sort or another. With the help of a Society member, Lord Rayleigh, and the Imperial College of Science, infrared equipment was installed in the room so that even the minutest movement of Rudi's limbs could be detected.

French scientists had claimed that Rudi had moved objects by sheer will power. The Society for Psychical Research was now going to put the medium to the test. In 1932, he was prepared for the sitting much as his brother had been six years earlier, but when he was seated and began concentrating, his respiration increased to the astounding rate of 250 to 300 times a minute. He kept this up for two hours. This fact was almost as amazing as his ability to flutter the curtains across the room.

Though the installation of the infrared equipment had enabled C. V. C. Herbert, the man behind the

controls, to see that Rudi did not move his limbs at all, he observed that the machine was acting strangely. It seemed that the Austrian medium was generating a strange force which made the infrared beam oscillate at exactly twice the rate of his breathing.

Of course, not all mediums produce authentic effects. A Polish medium was becoming famous for his ability to produce strange lights around his face. Accepting an invitation to the society's seance room was his undoing. It was found that one of the lights he produced was "materialized" with the use of a pillow that he was able to pull from behind his head by twisting his neck and closing his teeth on it. The other strange lights were produced by phosphorescent bulbs which the medium regurgitated from a throat pouch—a trick which Indian fakirs also use.

Since the late Forties, an infra-red telescope has been part of the permanent equipment of the seance room. Since its addition, mediums, who produce physical effects, have been reluctant to sit in the Society's spirit summoning chamber. Other equipment in the room include cameras, floodlights and spotlights, special color filters, photographic apparatus, bells, and buzzers. It is also soundproof, and its lights are connected to a rheostat so they can be gradually dimmed to zero.

Although the Society has many and diversified interests, the common goal of all its members is the investigation and explanation of strange phenomena. In spite of the fact that the general public is prone to look askance at some of their claims, the members of the Society take their investigations very seriously. Their procedure is as scientific as they can make it, and sooner or later, the special pains they take may be rewarded by significant breakthroughs in the field of parapsychology.

## WITCHES' HOLIDAY

PEASANTS of Medieval Europe long awaited the celebration of St. John's eve. They dressed in cloaks and gathered as if called and instructed by a single voice that floated enticingly over the dusky evening. In the atmosphere of the dying day, the crowd of cloaked figures grew in number. Then, at the cackling behest of a haggard woman, the mob walked out of the village toward the edge of the encroaching forest, spitting at the church steps as they passed. Where were they going? To celebrate the forbidden *Black Sabbat*.

The medieval population of Europe had descended from the central Asian plateau. Centuries ago, they had strained against the barriers that the Roman legions had set against them until they had finally broken through and flooded the continent. Christianity and "civilized" ways were unknown to them at first, and they brought their own gods, customs, and rituals into the land. At the dissolution of the Roman empire, the civilizing force became the church, and even though the ecclesiastical institution made great inroads into the pagan culture, it could not completely wash away the old rituals.

Surviving the Roman Empire socially was the oppressive feudal system. The once proud warriors were reduced to the role of serf farmers and resented it, although they were forced by necessity to accept it. Partially because of this and partially because of the tenacity of long conditioned customs, the institution of the witch and the celebration of the *Black Sabbat*

lingered on from pagan times into the Christianized Europe of the Middle Ages.

The *Black Sabbat* was the day of ascendancy for the witches and the practitioners of the occult. In the countryside, the festival took on an immense importance as everybody attended the yearly festival. The Christian influence, so visible during the day, seemed to vanish as thousands of people gathered and began professing their allegiance to the great god of nature, Pan.

Though it was impossible for observers of the rites to identify all attended, the cloaked figures who passed out of the castle and gathered at the edge of the chaotic nighttime forest, included most of the lesser nobility, who hid their finery under cloaks of coarse wool. The witches were in complete control of the entire affair and all activities were very stylized through centuries of practice of the black rituals. Still, it was a deliriously frenzied event, as only two rules were enforced: no one could bring weapons and no one could attend without bringing a member of the opposite sex.

The worshipers gathered around a massive statue of Pan. To staunch Christians, he was the living image of Satan. It was a black, grotesque figure that was fiendishly lit by the roaring fire in front of it. In the flickering light, the torso of the figure appeared to be human while the head, hands, and feet were shaped like those of a goat and covered with coarse, black hair.

The only sound that marred the approach of the witches and wizards to the ceremonial altar was the soft wind and the sputtering of the hundreds of torches that the worshipers held aloft. The altar was constructed of stones, and the ceremony performed was intricate and accomplished without error. Those attending the ceremony for the first time had to be re-

baptized with filthy water and be marked by the claw of the devil before they were properly initiated into the cult of believers. They confirmed their presence at the ritual by swearing to cleave only to the devil and his ways.

Although there was plenty of food and beer so none of the celebrators were antagonized, each celebration of the ritual had to include the eating of the flesh of the newly born and of the newly dead. Superstitious parents, eager not to affront the powerful forces of Satan, gladly handed over the living bodies of their newly born infants for ceremonial sacrifice.

The witches took advantage of the entranced state of most of the worshipers and spiked the drinks with belladonna. The crowd was then easily whipped into an intoxicated frenzy, which tended to free the inhibitions of the celebrants. At the peak of the collective emotions, the crowd acted as a single person and began almost automatically to dance the hypnotic witches' round. As the dance continued, the cathartic influence of the entire celebration telescoped the energy of each individual until he forgot his own personality in expression toward the great god Pan.

The celebration lasted the entire night, and the crowd did not disperse until the crowing of the cock the following morning. To the witches, the end of the celebration marked the end of their surface activity, as they would have to go "underground" for another year.

For the serfs, the observance of the old nature worship was an expression of his conscious or unconscious yen to throw off the yoke of feudalism. The Christian God and the Christian ethic had been foisted upon them by the rulers of the land that their forefathers had conquered. The nobility and high church officials realized that such celebrations could only lead eventually to a rebellious and uncontrollable pop-

ulace. The popularity of the pagan celebrations rose to its greatest height in the period of 1200 A.D. to the Renaissance. During this period, Europe was devastated and depopulated by famines, the ill-fated Crusades, and the Black Death.

Reports of regular celebrations of the *Black Sabbat* came from all over Europe. An estimated 25,000 attended such rituals in the Basque country of southern France and around the Black Forest of Germany. As rumors of even larger gatherings spread throughout the land, the nobility and the churchmen decided to squelch such expressions out of existence with the use of the hideous machinery of the Inquisition.

Even the most innocent amusements of the serfs were taken away. Some of the activities within the Sabbats became mild by comparison with the rituals of torture that were inflicted on anyone even suspected of communing with the devil.

The entire Inquisition became a kind of hideous industry. It employed judges, jailers, torturers, exorcists, wood-choppers, and experts to destroy the evil ones who were threatening the ruling powers. Finding that one witch would gladly name her accomplices when under torture, the trial of one witch could soon turn into an ordeal for over a hundred. One inquisitor boasted: "Give me a bishop, and I would soon have him confessing to being a wizard!"

The number of people executed for the practice of witchcraft has been estimated as high as nine million during the four centuries of active persecution. In the face of such large scale exorcism, the mass meeting celebrations of the *Black Sabbat* were made impossible. But even through great pressure was brought to bear on such outward manifestations, the *Black Sabbat* was still performed in a modified version in the private homes and cellars of the peasants. By

the middle of the fifteenth century, the *Black Sabbat* had become the synonym for debauchery and perversion. The jaded nobility had begun to practice the rites as an exciting respite from boredom.



## WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

THE YOUNG MAN and his sweetheart were strolling arm-in-arm down the street when she, in a coy, feminine way, began to steer him toward a florist shop. On such a lovely spring afternoon, she reasoned, it was only fitting that she should have a small bouquet of flowers for their promenade.

When he realized her intentions, he began to balk.

"Buy me some flowers, Harry," she begged.

"How about some candy instead?"

"Silly! I'm not hungry. I would like some flowers. Isn't this a lovely day just made for flowers?"

The young man began to dab nervously at pearls of sweat beading his forehead.

"Well? Won't you buy me some flowers?"

"I'd rather not."

"Then I'll buy some for myself."

"Must you? I mean, please don't. I mean . . . sorry, I have to run. I'll call you later tonight!"

Is the young fellow a cheapskate? After all, who wouldn't buy such a lovely—and bewildered—girl a small bouquet of flowers?

Don't be too hard on the guy. He suffers from anthophobia—a morbid dread of flowers. That's right. A dainty bouquet of violets is enough to give him a very bad case of the shakes.

But before you snicker, what are you afraid of?

Careful now, don't deny it. Unless someone is reading this book over your shoulder, you're all alone and can be completely truthful.

Psychologists tell us that everyone has some phobia—some unreasoned fear which haunts him.

Is it acrophobia—a morbid dread of high places?

Or what about claustrophobia—fear of being shut in? Never have enjoyed elevator rides, eh? Those doors slide shut and there you are in that little box!

Scientific research on phobias seems to prove that almost all of them stem from an intense fear-producing experience in childhood.

An experiment in “creating” phobias was conducted by psychologists using an eleven-month-old child as the subject.

The baby had previously demonstrated no fear when exposed to a large white rat. The psychologists began to place the rat beside the infant to the accompaniment of a loud noise. Immediately the child cried and shrank back from the rat. The research team repeated the process until the child was terrified of the rat without the accompanying noise.

Similar experiments were conducted with other children using dogs, cats, and wool blankets. In other words, each child was taught fear. A phobia had been introduced.

Other research has demonstrated that we can conquer most of our fears or at least develop certain levels of control. Understanding the source of the phobia places it in proper perspective and greatly decreases the emotional reaction. Once one has accomplished this, his next step is to expose himself to the phobia situation so that he might gradually condition his mind to face it without fear.

So be brave—face that phobia. And if you still insist that you don't have one, read over this list and see if one might not appeal to you.

Nyctophobia, fear of darkness.

Androphobia, insane dread of the male sex.

Pharmacophobia, fear of drugs.

Aphophobia, morbid dread of being touched.

Thanatophobia, fear of death.

Autophobia, insane dread of solitude—or one's self!

Automysophobia, insane dread of personal uncleanness.

Reptilophobia, fear of snakes.

Ichthyophobia, morbid dislike of fish.

Necrophobia, morbid dread of dead bodies.

Ombrophobia, fear of rain.

Stasibasiphobia, insane distrust of one's ability to stand or walk.

Taphephobia, insane fear of being buried alive Remember what Edgar Allan Poe did with that phobia in "The Premature Burial"?

Then, to keep pace with the modern world, one may also have less common phobias such as fear of birds, picnic paper plates, balloons at parties, brown shoes, crew-cuts on men, fountain pens, or flickering neon lights.

In our fast-paced modern world with its emphasis on conformity, it is in a strange way reassuring that one may still have his very own private fears.

## AN ASTROLOGER'S APPRENTICESHIP

HOW DOES one become an astrologist? Is it a gift like second sight? Is it some little understood function of mind like telepathy? If it truly is a science, can it be taught to others?

For the answers to these questions, I contacted H. Douglas Miller of Detroit, Michigan. Miller, an articulate, college-educated astrologist, who is beginning to make a name for himself, was happy to supply some of the answers by citing his own experiences.

"Astrology is taught like any other subject of which man claims knowledge.

"I became an astrologer in 1963 when I received my certificate from the American Federation of Astrologers in Washington, D.C.

"I had to take an eight hour exam. And it was a stiff one!"

Miller stated that his interest in astrology began in 1957 when a friend told him of the efficacy of this science in solving human problems.

He was given an opportunity to take a course from a practicing astrologist who had been in the field for many years. Later, he signed up for a correspondence course from England. To increase his knowledge of the field, Miller acquired an astrological library of well over one hundred volumes. In 1960, he felt capable of doing good work and began working earnestly for his certificate.

"People ask me if I foresee all of the major events

of the century," Miller said. "Actually no astrologer does. An astrologer must examine a horoscope in order to make an assessment of the future. An astrologer is as much interested in the present as he is in the future.

"If we do predict, it is in general terms. The purpose of astrology is not prediction, but guidance. If knowledge of when or what is going to help the astrologer make his client's life richer and fuller, we are all for it.

"We make no claims to infallibility, but we do claim about 80 to 90 percent accuracy in our work. We think this is demanding enough of any science.

"I once foresaw by six weeks a near state of war between Egypt and Israel which proved true at the time I said.

"I foresaw November, 1963 as a bad month for the late President Kennedy.

"When someone asked if he could be assassinated in November, I answered that he could.

"I have found that I can increase my betting chances in athletic contests by 50 percent.

"In one instance, the odds were twenty to one against a certain boxer. But the stars disagreed with the fight buffs. When the underdog won the match, he proved their cosmic correctness.

"A woman once asked me if her father, who had been very ill with cancer, would die soon, thus relieving her of further responsibilities.

"The horoscope told me that her father would manage to keep going for a number of years yet, but that a lady friend of hers was going to have a health crises in about six weeks and could die."

Here Miller paused to explain that an astrologer does not actually predict deaths. "For one thing, man has free will; we can needlessly shock a person; it is illegal—and should be!"

“Within two days from the expiration of six weeks,” Miller continued, “the lady friend died, thus verifying what I had said.

“I had not solved anything, but I had been helpful.”

## THE FOX SISTERS

### AND THE MYSTERIOUS KNOCKING

ON ONE of the last days of her life, in February of 1893, Margaretta Fox dragged herself to a sitting position and demanded a pencil and paper from Dr. Mellin, the woman doctor who had been commissioned to care for her. She began writing at a tremendous pace, and before she had finished she had filled twenty sheets with clear handwriting. After handing the written sheets back to the doctor, she fell back in to the coma. She died without regaining consciousness.

Dr. Mellin was amazed to find that Margaretta Fox had filled the sheets with an accurate and detailed biography of the doctor's own life. It included many events that Dr. Mellin had not divulged to anyone. After the incident had long past, Dr. Mellin described the incident to the Medico-Legal Society of New York. She concluded her remarks about the manuscript by saying: "To my surprise, I found she had written down a detailed story of my life. The most startling thing did not appear till near the end where Mrs. Kane (Margaretta Fox) mentioned the will of my mother and several persons at Manchester, Indiana. I wrote at once to my brother. He sent a friend to Manchester and the missing will was recovered."

The story behind this tragic ending of a strange life parallels the history of modern spiritism. Most prominent in the development of what is now called "spiritualism" were the sisters Margaretta and Kate Fox.

When the mysterious knocking and window rattling had first come to the Fox house in Hydesville, New

York in the winter of 1847-1848, the family had thought it merely one of the unattractive features of their new house that they would have to put up with until the shutters and doors could be tightened. After the first night, Mr. Fox spent the next day securing everything that even looked like it would vibrate, but the following night, the knockings and rappings were even louder.

One of the family ventured a guess that it was a prankster playing a trick on them, or some neighbor trying to frighten them away; but as much as they tried to catch the supposed practical joker in the act, they never saw him.

Mr. and Mrs. Fox gave up running after the rapping and tried to live with it, but the children were frightened by the continual knocks echoing through the house at night. As if sensing that the only serious attention paid to the knocking was coming from the children, the strange noises began centering around the bedroom of nine year old Kate and twelve-year old Margaretta.

"Mother, Father, they're here again," Kate announced fearfully.

"It's nothing," Mr. Fox said. "Look, it's just this loose window sash." He banged the window shut, making a loud thump. The thump was immediately followed by two others.

"They answer you, Father," Kate said.

For a minute, nobody moved in the room, then Mr. Fox cautiously rapped on the window sash again. There was an answering knock from somewhere in the room. Kate was more excited than frightened. As if it were all some thrilling game, she commanded the sounds to follow the snaps of her fingers. They did so perfectly, even when she made the snaps inaudible to human ears.

Mrs. Fox was more cautious. "Count ten!" she



commanded in an authoritarian voice. Ten distinct knocks rang out in the room.

The usually stalwart Fox family was being shaken to the roots of its emotional foundation by the unusual noises that seemed to obey their commands. Whatever was doing the knocking possessed an intimate knowledge of the Fox family. Any question that could be answered with a "yes" or "no," was rapped out solidly on the wall.

After experimenting for sometime with the phenomena, Mr. Fox wanted to determine whether or not his whole family was deluded. He went next door and brought a neighbor, Mrs. Redfield, into the children's bedroom. Although the lady laughed at the thought of knocking spirits, she went away greatly disturbed by the fact that she had not only heard the knocks but that whatever was producing them knew very much about her past, also.

As word spread about the curious phenomena that was occurring in the Fox home, people from all over Hydesville came to hear the mysterious rappings. It seemed that the spirits were more than willing to cooperate, for they dutifully manifested themselves with much rapping in the presence of the other guests. The Fox family grew weary of all the attention they were getting both from the spirit world and from the populace of Hydesville. They thought that they might be able to get rid of the strange noises by sending Kate away from the house. Mr. Fox had become convinced that the sounds seemed to be attracted by the presence of her alert and believing young mind. Kate was sent to relatives in Rochester, New York, but the sounds continued to plague the family in Hydesville.

At her aunt's residence in Rochester, Kate soon brought the mysterious knocking ringing from the walls. During her stay in Rochester, an observer of

the phenomena suggested that they try fitting a key to the knocks so that the alphabet could be communicated. This suggestion was greeted by a great number of knocks which came from all over the room. Once this had been done, the first in-depth communication with the "spirits" was possible.

Kate eventually left Rochester for her home in Hydesville, where new things were brewing. Some of the more skeptical members of the community had challenged the validity of the claims of the Fox family. Though Mr. Fox did not like the notoriety, he could not stand to be called a liar. He consented to allowing committees of townspeople to examine his house and the noises which came from it. After three such committees had tried to outdo the others in exposing the phenomena as a hoax, none of them managed to come up with any evidence against the validity of the "spirits." The noises themselves seemed to be incensed by the presence of so many skeptical people, and the volume of the sound increased greatly.

The fame of the rappings that centered around the two Fox sisters grew. A public lecture about the rappings, along with a physical demonstration, was given in Corinthian hall at Rochester. More than four hundred people listened to the sounds that manifested themselves from all over the lecture hall at the direction of the two young girls.

Investigators of the same sex stripped the mediums of their clothes and placed a pillow under their feet, so they could in no way produce the noise with their bodies. Sensitive stethoscopes were placed to their bodies to show that the sounds were in no way internally produced. Even when every possible precaution that anyone could think of was observed, the sounds still rang out, loud and clear.

The strange knockings did not leave the two Fox sisters as they left their home in Hydesville. Kate

traveled across the ocean where the celebrated scientist and inventor, William Crookes, studied manifestations that obligingly produced themselves in his laboratory. After a thorough investigation, he stated that he was unable to find any suggestion of a hoax.

## THE WOMAN WHO SAW WITHOUT EYES

A MAN who had been hired by Mr. Louis Sherk to hang a picture in the house of a lady in Brooklyn, New York glanced carefully at the house numbers as he walked down the street with the framed artwork under his arm. After ringing the correct bell several times and receiving no answer, he followed his instructions and entered the house. Sherk had told him where to hang the picture.

He set about his task quickly, and after he had the nail secured in the stud, he placed the picture carefully on the wall.

“What’s the matter with you, don’t you know how to do a simple job right?”

The man whirled around. The living room of the small house was empty. He shrugged it off and looked critically at the picture. It was tilted slightly in one direction. He adjusted it and stepped away from the wall.

“You aren’t going to leave it like that, are you? It’s still crooked.”

The man looked around again; this time he was angry that the person who was criticizing him so severely was not showing himself. But the room was still empty. He looked under the piano and behind all the couches and chairs, but he was still unable to locate the source of the voice. After a thorough search, he turned his attention back to the picture and noticed that he had overadjusted it. Now it was tilting in the opposite direction. He moved the frame

slightly, and just as his hand left it, the voice came again.

"You are incompetent! Why don't they hire somebody decent to do this job?"

Without stopping to consider the picture at all, the man picked up his tools and hurried out of the house. When he reported back to Sherk, he told him of the strange, disembodied voice.

"I wouldn't go back to that house for any money," the man said.

Sherk informed him that the voice which he had heard giving him instructions on hanging the picture had come from a blind, invalid woman, who was upstairs at the time!

True clairvoyance is radically different from any kind of thought-transference of telepathy. The clairvoyant has the ability to see objective situations without the aid of another's mind. Mollie Fancher was born in 1848, and as a child, sustained severe head injuries in two falls. Besides causing blindness, the falls produced a paralysis in her body that confined her to her bed. This did not mean that Mollie's childhood was uneventful. On the contrary, the excitement came from the strife within her own personality and the development of very peculiar powers, including clairvoyance.

Mollie's case was studied by Judge Abram H. Daily, who published a book in 1894 recounting the many experiences he had had with the woman. A reviewer of the book for the Society of Psychical Research said that Judge Daily had "recorded the narratives of many witnesses whose truthfulness no one would question."

Although Miss Fancher's eyesight was never restored, she was able to compensate for it with her clairvoyance. She invariably knew exactly what was

going on in the room around her and could describe the minutest movements of her guests.

One of her friends, Mr. Herbert Blossom, said that he would take newspapers to her, and Mollie had only to touch them to be able to tell him every bit of news that was inside.

Dr. S. Fleet Speir had many opportunities to examine Mollie's eyes. The doctor was able to say conclusively, that if she saw, in any sense of the word, it was not with her eyes. The pupil of the eye did not change in size at the approach of light, and her eyes were not sensitive to any light stimuli. In Dr. Spier's words: "She has always explained, when asked how she saw without the use of her eyes, that she saw out of the top of her head."

It seems that Mollie Fancher saw very distinctly "out of the top of her head." She was able to do intricate needlework while holding her hands above her head. She could pick out colors by bringing the threads to the top of her head, and her best work was done in light that would have ruined normal eyesight.

In one case, a group of people were present at the house, including Judge Daily, when a letter was received for one of the guests. Before the letter was opened, Mollie had related the entire contents to the assembled guests.

Besides immediate cognition of her surroundings, Mollie's "vision" was sometimes able to go beyond the bounds of the room in which she happened to be lying. She was able to "look" around the city and find out what was going on, and then remember exactly what she had seen. To Judge Daily, she once described a man, whom she had never met, but whom she had "seen" at the Judge's house a few days before. The judge remembered the man and sometime later brought him to visit the lady. He asked the man if

they had ever met, and the man's immediate response was that they had not.

Miss Fancher's case of clairvoyance is one of the most thoroughly documented in the history of psychical research. Hundreds of witnesses saw the feats which she could perform, and the reality of the phenomena was undeniable.

## THE BEAST OF LE GEVAUDAN

IN THE RUGGED mountain country of south central France, a small area, known as Le Gevaudan, is suited only for the raising of goats and dairy cattle. On January, 15, 1765, Jean Chateauneuf, fourteen year old son of a hardy peasant family, was tending the family's livestock. The January wind was cold as it whistled out of the mountains and passed around his body, but he was bundled up and well prepared for the temperature. The scene in front of him was peaceful. Weak winter sunshine fell on the backs of the animals that grazed the gentle incline. The boy's favorite dog lay at his feet.

Then the dog's ears perked and its body tensed. Jean wondered what the animal had sensed, but he did not turn his head. The dog snapped to its feet, whimpered once, then set off running down the hill, faster than the boy had ever seen it run. This puzzled him, and when he looked at the cattle, they were all staring up the slopes past where he sat. He turned his head, curious as to what had spooked the dog and the cattle.

A tall, hideous beast was moving deliberately down the slopes toward him. It had a coat of shaggy hair and walked on its hind legs. Its head had a piglike snout and the pointed ears of a small dog.

The boy stood stock still for a minute, too frightened to move. Then he began to rapidly back away from the grotesque brute. The uneven terrain caused him to trip. A horrible scream rang through the thin mountain air, and then all was silent.



From the year 1764 to 1767, an epidemic of murders took place in Le Gevaudan. The populace of that area were a very hardy lot and used to fighting off wolves, but the depredations of the terrible monster threw them into a state of panic.

The murder of Jean Chateauneuf was one of the many cases reported the first winter that the Beast of Le Gevaudan prowled the mountainside looking for victims. When his father had missed him late in the afternoon, he had gone in search of the boy. Father Chateauneuf found his young son's body on the slopes next to the cattle. Like the other victims of the beast, the boy's heart had been ripped from his body, and the monster had drunk of his blood. Mournfully, the father carried the body of the boy home. There, the rest of the family was informed, and the atmosphere in the Chateauneuf house was that of a grief-inspired hush.

As the sun moved toward the western horizon, Chateauneuf was disturbed from his reading of the Bible by a sound at a window. He looked up to see the hideous head of the beast leering in at him. He called for help, but in the failing light of dusk, it was impossible to follow the monster.

The traditional occupation of the children in Le Gevaudan is that of family herdsman. This made the children the prime targets of the beast. Its first appearance in the mountainous province was in mid-July, 1764. The monster claimed its first victim, a girl, near the village of St. Etienne de Lugdares. Her body was found with the heart ripped out. In the following week, five more children from villages near St. Etienne de Lugdares were found dead, each with his heart torn out of his body. Even though no one had seen the creature, the rest of the families pulled the herds and their children out of the summer grazing grounds.

In September, Jean-Pierre Pourcher, a peasant of the village of Zulianges, saw a strange looking figure shuffling along the road. As it approached his house, Pourcher became convinced that it was the killer of the children. He got out his musket and fired at it. In the half-light of dusk, he missed, and the beast vanished. Proucher's description of the beast matched the one that had been given by the old peasant woman, who had sworn that she had caught a glimpse of the monster. Pourcher described it as being as large as a donkey, with reddish hair, and powerful legs, which appeared to have something like horse shoes on its feet.

After this time, as if seeking vengeance for the attempt on its life, the monster grew much braver and daily stalked the countryside, leaving murder in its trail. The grisly creature became bold enough to attack groups of people, and survivors described the same monster every time.

A small child, Jean Panafieux from the village of Chanaleilles, was among a group of older children when the beast snatched him from their midst. Andre Portefaix, an older boy, attempted to rescue the terrified child. He attacked the monster with a pitchfork. The others gained courage by Andre's example and began to join in the battle, using knives tied to long sticks as well as other implements. Although they succeeded in driving the beast off, it was not without the loss of Jean Panafieux and another of their company.

The situation in Le Gevaudan was becoming desperate. An appeal for help was sent to the winter court at Versailles, and Louis XV, who was a trifle bored with this particular winter season at court, was glad to have something bizarre to divert his attention. The King gave Andre Portefaix, who had acted so bravely, a commission and dispatched a company of dragoons

and light cavalry under a Captain Duhamel to hunt down the killer of the mountains.

The troops reached Le Gevaudan in February of 1765 and began at once to hunt the beast. On February 6th, they picked up its tracks in the snow and followed it until they located it the next day in a dense thicket. They fired five shots at the figure, and a great howl rose from the thicket. They were distracted from pursuing the beast when they found the body of a young girl, who had been missing for some time.

The killings abated after that, so Duhamel returned with his troops to their station in the far south of France. If the beast had been wounded, however, its wounds were superficial enough to allow it to resume the terrible killings a month later. The beast prowled day and night, until the frightened villagers abandoned their land and fled to other districts and provinces, so they would not end up being prey of the beast. The situation did not change for months. The peasants had grown so afraid of the monster that they would not even fire their muskets at it, even though it had presented itself as a target within easy range many times.

A second appeal to Versailles had gone unheeded, as the King had become interested in his newest mistress, Madame Du Barry. The reign of terror continued throughout the months of 1766 and into 1767. After much delay, a second expedition was dispatched to hunt the beast of Le Gevaudan. Antoine, the personal gun bearer of the king, headed this expedition. He shot a large wolf while enroute to Le Gevaudan, returned to Versailles at once to display it to the King as the Beast of Le Gevaudan. Satisfied, Louis officially ended the crisis.

Unofficially, the beast was still prowling and killing. In June of 1767, a huge army of peasants was

organized by a noble named the Marquis d'Apcher, who lived on the edge of the area. The men vowed to remain banded together until the beast was destroyed. On the evening of June 19, the men surrounded the monster in the open woods at Le Sogne d'Auvert and tried to flush it out of the cover. An old peasant named Jean Chastel had loaded his gun with silver bullets. He had leaned the double-barreled musket against a tree and was paging through a prayer book, trying to find some spiritual comfort in the time of great trial. As he looked up, he found the beast walking toward him. He calmly put two bullets in the monster's chest and killed it.

There was much rejoicing as the reign of hideous murders had ended, but an aura of mystery shrouds the actual identity of the monster. The carcass of a huge wolf paraded victoriously through the mountain villages, according to old records, but it appears that the records have been purposely distorted. The early descriptions of the beast had not made it appear wolflike at all. The carcass of the beast was shipped to Versailles, but in the summer heat, it began to decompose and was buried along the way.

Some authorities have speculated that the beast was actually a man, the last of a line of perverted sorcerers, who lived in the region. Perhaps the truth of the monster's identity was too hideous for the men who killed it to reveal, but the grisly record of what it did stands for all to read.

## THE INCREDIBLE

### EUSAPIA PALLADINO

ALTHOUGH most seances are conducted in complete or semidarkness, bright lights burned above a small table that had been placed diagonally in the center of the room. The medium was a frail-looking woman, who had already closed her eyes in concentration. On either side of her were two men, each of whom held the medium's hand which was nearest him and kept physical contact with her legs and feet. As investigators watched, the table began to rock and bounce around on the floor. Before their incredulous eyes, it rose from the floor completely and hovered about six inches in the air. The people at the sitting passed wires between the woman and the table. The men at the medium's side affirmed that she had made no overt movements.

One of the figures watching the weird, hovering table stood next to the table and pushed on it. Its position was not rigidly fixed, but it was held flexibly and would give slightly at initial pressure. Then the medium opened her eyes, and the table crashed to the floor.

Without a word passing in the room, Hereward Carrington, a noted psychic investigator and author, got in a kneeling position on top of the table. The medium closed her eyes and the table lifted easily from the floor with its passenger. After a few seconds in the air, it settled to the floor again.

Eusapia Palladino was one of the most cooperative and thoroughly investigated physical mediums in the history of psychical research. Although she could

barely sign her name, her ability to tap strange powers was demonstrated hundreds of times before hundreds of skeptical men.

Her home was in Naples, and she was discovered by the famous Professor Lombroso. Her seances were not bound to any city or geography, however, for she sat with groups in Paris, St. Petersburg, Turin, Genoa, and New York. In each location, Eusapia Palladino was able to produce astounding effects. Because of her willingness to have a seance in a laboratory or almost any place investigators desired, she was a great aid to psychological research.

In 1908, a committee of men known for their skepticism was picked by the British Society for Psychological Research to investigate the claims made on behalf of the celebrated medium. The committee was composed of Hon. Everard Fielding, Mr. W. W. Baggally, and Hereward Carrington. Each of these men had exposed many false mediums, and each was an amateur magician.

The small group of professional skeptics journeyed to the medium's native city of Naples. Their investigation lasted several weeks, and the men had a chance to observe the medium in action many times. Each one of them came away from the series of demonstrations firmly convinced that Eusapia Palladino had the ability to tap a supernatural power.

In each seance, a small closet was formed by stretching two black curtains across one of the corners of the room. Inside this enclosure was a table upon which musical instruments and other articles brought by the people at the sitting were placed. The medium sat directly in front of the closet with at least a foot of space between her chair and the curtains.

After initial demonstrations of table levitation, the lights in the room would be dimmed, and the medium would bring the articles brought to the seance floating

out of the closet. If a musical instrument or noise-maker were included, the sound of the article was distinctly audible to those seated in the room.

The weirdest feat which Eusapia Palladino was able to accomplish was the manifestation of parts of physical bodies. This always came last in any seance, as if it took time for her to build up to that level of psychic prowess. She could often materialize hands that would perform various acts, including the grasping of those people sitting for the seance.

The team of men from Britain found Eusapia Palladino to be completely innocent of fraud. At one sitting, after the usual preliminary procedures, she asked Carrington to replace the small table that had flown out of the closet behind her. It was semidark in the room, but Carrington said that he could see what he was doing. He pushed aside the curtains and tried to place the table on the floor where it had been originally stationed. He was amazed when some force resisted his doing so.

Outside the closet, the rest of the psychic investigators were keeping a close watch on the medium. One of the men had crouched under the table and had clamped both his hands around the woman's feet. Two men were stationed at her side. They all assured Carrington that the medium had not moved since she had instructed him to replace the table in the closet.

Again and again Carrington tried to replace the table, and each time he was repelled. Finally, as if tired of playing games, the force threw him and the table out of the curtained enclosure and sent them both tumbling to the floor.

Carrington was so struck by the woman's extraordinary power, that he convinced her to cross the Atlantic with him to demonstrate her abilities in New York.

At one of the sittings in New York, Eusapia Pal-

ladino suggested that the people at the sitting bind her arms and legs to the limbs of the men at her side. After this had been done, the medium was still able to perform all her usual feats. Toward the end of the sitting, a small hand was seen to materialize in the air in front of the observers. It looked white in the half light and was visible up to its ethereal elbow. The forearm section of the manifestation was sleeved in black, while around the wrist was a lacy cuff—all plainly visible to the people in the room.

The hand that had appeared over the seance table moved to the medium and the cords that bound her to the two investigators. Slowly and deliberately, it began to untie the knots. The two men announced to others in the room that both of Eusapia's hands were still in contact with their own. No one in the room saw the medium's hands make any kind of movement, yet the small hand loosened one of the cords and flung it at one of the seated observers. The coiled rope hit him in the chest. Then the hand loosened the other cord and flung it against a wall of the room.

Eusapia laughed. "I'm sorry, it's not my fault. Tie me up again."

She was bound the second time, and immediately the hand was working at the knots again. After the cords were loosened they were once again flung aside. During this time, both of the men who were bound to the medium had plenty of time to confirm that both of her hands were firmly in their grasp. It is no wonder that Eusapia Palladino shook the rigidity of the most confirmed skeptics.



## THE PEEPING TOM WHO NEVER LEFT HOME

ON A SUNDAY evening in November of 1881, Miss L. S. Verity, age 25, and her younger sister, age 11, had gone to bed in the front bedroom of their house located at 22 Hogarth Road, Kensington, England. Miss Verity slept fitfully for a while and found herself wide awake at one 'clock.

At that time, a strange figure appeared in her room. At first she felt that she must have been dreaming, but as she looked, she realized that she was quite awake and that the figure was that of her fiancé, Mr. S. H. Beard. Terrified, she began screaming, and these screams awakened her sister. When the little girl was awake, she was able to see the figure, also. At the chorus of screams, the figure began to disappear until it had vanished completely.

Three days later, Beard called on his fiancée, and she related the entire story to him. He listened intently until she had finished, then announced that he had willed the occurrence. In his own words, he described what he had intended to do at the time of his experiment:

“On a certain Sunday evening in November, 1881, having been reading of the great power which the human will is capable of exercising, I determined with the whole force of my being that I would be present in spirit in the front bedroom on the second floor of a house situated at 22 Hogarth Road, Kensington, in which room slept two ladies of my acquaintance . . .”

In the journals and reports of the investigators of

psychic phenomena there are more than sixteen well-documented accounts of people who have been able to project a spirit body by the force of their will. In most of these cases, psychic investigators were asked to be present to verify the occurrence of the phenomenon. One of the people, who had this incredible ability, was Mr. S. H. Beard of Kensington.

The performance of his first experiment was quite a spontaneous decision on the part of Beard. The idea seemed to have simply come into his head. A psychic investigator, Edmund Gurney, became interested in the case and interviewed all the people involved. According to Miss Verity, there was nothing ethereal about the appearance of the apparition, she testified:

"I distinctly saw Mr. B. in my room about one o'clock. I was perfectly awake and was much terrified. I awoke my sister by screaming, and she saw the apparition herself . . . it was some time before I could recover from the shock I had received, and the remembrance is too vivid to be ever erased from my memory." Miss Verity's sister attested to the statement. Gurney crossexamined the witnesses carefully and his opinion was that there was no attempt at a hoax. He asked Beard to inform him the next time he planned to do any experimenting.

The next time Beard attempted to project his "astral self," it was once again aimed at the house of his fiancée. He tried twice on the same evening and had the sensation of falling into what he termed a "mesmeric sleep." He claimed that he was completely conscious, and yet could not move any part of his body. Later in the evening, he set about concentrating again and that time he had no such sensation.

The results of that evening's mental activity were even stranger than the first night in 1881. Unknown

to him, his spiritual presence had been seen both times at the Verity house—not by his fiancée, however, but by her elder, married sister. Beard had met the lady only once, two years before.

As in the first attempt, his appearance was very vivid. On the second occasion of his visit, the phantom paid the lady quite a bit of attention. He walked next to the bed and stroked the long hair of the lady. Before leaving, the self-induced phantasm had taken her hand in its own. In describing her own reaction, the woman said, "I was not nervous, but excited . . ."

On March 22, of 1884, Gurney received a short note in the mail from Beard. The note informed him that Beard would try another experiment that same night. Once again, the target of his projection was Miss Verity's house, perhaps because Beard found it easy to concentrate on his fiancée.

Though many people, who have the power of projecting an apparition, are conscious of the transference, Beard was never aware of the success or failure of his attempts until he heard from somebody at the Verity house.

On April 3, 1884, Miss Verity wrote a letter to Gurney, the investigator, which described the occurrence as she recalled it:

"On Saturday night, March 22, 1884, at about midnight, I had a distinct impression that Mr. S. H. B. was present in my room, and I distinctly saw him whilst I was quite widely awake. He came toward me, and stroked my hair. I *voluntarily* gave him this information when he called to see me on Wednesday, April 2, telling him the time and the circumstances of the apparition, without any suggestion on his part. The appearance in my room was most vivid and quite unmistakable."

Gurney reported that Miss Verity had not observed all the apparitions without being affected: ". . . Her

nerves had been much shaken, and she had been obliged to send for a doctor in the morning." This was the last known such experiment that Beard tried. Though it probably disheartened the psychic investigators, it probably relieved his fiancée.

## THE GURKHA GHOST

WHEN NIGHT comes to the mountains of Kashmir, the men of Khamba Fort are tense. No sentry dares sleep on duty.

The Indian army men, who guard this fort, believe that they are watched over by the "Ghost of the Gurkha Havildar." And he is a harsh taskmaster.

In these mountains, the legend of the Gurkha ghost has become famous. Educated army officers, although disbelieving the legend, are content to let it grow because the Gurkha ghost solves many disciplinary problems in Khamba Fort.

Indian troops swear the spectre prowls the fort at night, slapping the faces of sentries who aren't alert and using his best parade ground language to berate slovenly soldiers.

The ghost is said to be that of a Gurkha havildar (sergeant) who performed a heroic one-man assault on Khamba Fort during the bitter 1948 war between India and Pakistan for Kashmir. The fort, held by Pakistani forces, had fought off Indian troops for weeks. Then, the Gurkha havildar found a crack in the Fort's steep, thick stone walls, and one night, armed only with grenades and a knife, crept inside. He killed all the defenders but was fatally wounded himself.

Lance Naik (Corporal) Ram Prakash is among the fort's current defenders who say they have met the havildar's ghost. It happened one night in June, 1965 when firing broke out along the cease-fire line.

A terrifying voice rose, he says, from a turret

on the fort's wall: "I have given my life for this post. Why are you so slack?"

Then, reported Prakash, came the sound of a face being slapped.

It was learned later, Prakash says, that a sentry in the turret was nodding over his rifle and was punished by the stern ghost.

The men of Khamba Fort say that they know the Gurkha ghost well. Each can describe in detail the clothing worn by the weird figure that strides the ramparts at night. The troops agree that the apparition invariably appears wearing only one shoe. The other apparently was lost in battle seventeen years ago.

"The ghost of that man is very alert," says Naik Karam Singh. "He is a very good soldier. And I guess we're really not afraid of him because we know he is on our side."

The men of Khamba Fort are very careful to put out cups of tea and sweets for the lonely Gurkha ghost who maintains his vigil throughout the night.

And, they say, the tea and sweets always are gone by dawn.

## NORTH CAROLINA'S RIVER OF PENICILLIN

THERE APPEARS to be a strange stream in North Carolina that has mysterious powers of healing. No vision of angels or a deity has ever been reported stirring the waters as in Lourdes or other holy shrines. The miraculous attributes of this stream seem to be caused by a peculiar natural phenomenon.

The stream, called the Shalotte Inlet, is located sixteen miles from Shalotte in Brunswick County in southeastern North Carolina. Joseph F. Hufham wrote a glowing tribute to the powers of the stream in the March 29, 1964 issue of the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*.

According to Hufham, a dip in the stream improved the vision in an eye that had been suffering from an ailment of long-standing. After he had reported this incident, which had been rather accidental for him as he had simply bathed in the stream while on a fishing trip, he was flooded with testimonials from others who had experienced marvelous cures after washing their wounds with water from the stream. It seemed that regional folklore had known of the curative power of the stream for many years.

One man testified that a cupful of water from the Shalotte Inlet had rid his arms of mysterious pea-sized swellings, which split and oozed watery blood. Four days after he had moistened the festering bumps with the healing water, they had disappeared.

A farmer told of an ugly wound on his calf which had not healed for months despite various applications of medical treatment. He had gone wading in the

stream and had brought about an almost immediate healing.

Several other testimonials of infections being healed by the mysterious powers of the stream are available. Hufham says that a clue to the curative properties of the stream may lie in a unique, tall grass with a bread-like core which grows on the banks of Shalotte Inlet. When the grass seed ripens, the heat of the sun causes the core to swell, ooze out, and begin to mold. The high tide brings salt water to wash off the mold, and low tide deposits the mixture of salt water and mold in the stream. The combination of seed mold and salt water seems to create a substance quite similar to that of penicillin in its power to combat infection.



## LAND OF ZOMBI AND VOODOO

HAITI, according to many, is a magic island heavily populated by devil dolls, zombies, evil sorcerers and adherants of a blasphemous, pagan cult . . . Voodoo.

What, in fact, is Voodoo? Those anthropologists who have undertaken the study of jungle rituals tell us that Voodoo is a strange admixture of African beliefs and rites with Catholic practice. The early slaves, who were snatched from their homes and families on Africa's West Coast, brought their gods and religious practices with them. Plantation owners, who purchased the slaves for rigorous labor, were compelled by order of the lieutenant-general to baptize their slaves in the Catholic religion. The slave suffered no conflict of theology. He accepted the white man's "water" and quickly adopted Catholic saints into his old jungle family of nature gods and goddesses.

The connotations of evil and fear that are associated with Voodoo originated primarily from the white's obsession with the threat of slave revolts. As the demanding taskmasters, the plantation owners and their overseers were outnumbered sixteen to one by the field hands which they worked unmercifully in the broiling Haitian sun. As the black population increased and the white demand for slave labor remained unceasing, Voodoo began to take on an anti-white liturgy. Several "saviours" occurred among the Blacks who were subsequently put to death by the whites in the "big houses." A number of laws began to be passed forbidding any plantation owner to allow "night dances" among his Negroes.

In 1791, a slave revolt took place under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture which was to lead to

Haiti's independence from France in 1804. Although Toussaint L'Ouverture died in a Napoleonic prison, his generals had become sufficiently inspired by his example to continue the struggle for freedom until the myth of white supremacy, along with the whites, was banished from the island.

After the Concordat of 1860, when relations were once again reestablished with France, the priests who came to Haiti found the vestiges of Catholicism kept alive in Voodoo. The clergy fulminated against Voodoo from the pulpits but did not actively campaign against their rival priesthood. The people seemed devout enough; the Catholic clergy concluded that, with the passage of time, Voodoo would be forgotten.

In 1896, an impatient Monseigneur tried to organize an anti-Voodoo league without success.

It wasn't until 1940 that the Catholic church launched a violent campaign of renunciation directed at the adherents of Voodoo. The priests went about their methodic attack with such zeal that the government was forced to intercede and command them to tamper the fires of their campaign.

In 1966, Voodoo is tolerated in Haiti. Enterprising members of the priesthood have even taken to the staging of watered down rituals for the tourists who want to see some "real Black Magic." Perhaps this self-mockery, more than zeal of Church or regulation of State, will decrease the influence of the "religion of the people."

A male practitioner of Voodoo is called a *hungan*, his female counterpart, a *mambo*. The place where one practices Voodoo is a series of buildings called a *humfo*. A "congregation" is called a *hunsu* and the *hungan* cures, divines, and cares for them through the good graces of a *loa*, his guiding spirit. It costs a *hungan* a great deal of money to get set up in practice; however, he does not have the problem that a

conventional doctor often faces in convincing delinquent patients to pay their bills. If someone he has cured refuses to pay, the *loa* quickly causes a relapse.

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

The Haitian adamantly refuses to accept the Church's position that the *loa* are the "fallen angels" who rebelled against God. The *loa* do good and guide and protect mankind, the *hungans* argue. Certainly there are devils, but a decent *hungan* has nothing to do with Black Magic.

The good will of the *loa* is not obtained for nothing. The person on whom he smiles must not fail to oblige him with numerous sacrifices and offerings at regular intervals.

The *loa* communicates with his faithful one by incarnating himself in his body during a trance or by appearing to him in dreams. The possession usually takes place during ritual dancing in the *humfo*. Each participant eventually undergoes a personality change and adapts a trait of his particular *loa*. The adherents of Voodoo refer to this phenomenon of the invasion of the body by a supernatural agency as that of the *loa* mounting his "horse."

There is a great difference, the *hungan* maintains, between possession by a *loa* and possession by an evil spirit. An evil spirit would bring chaos to the dancing and perhaps great harm to the one possessed. The traditional dances of Voodoo are conducted on a serious plane with rhythm and suppleness but not with orgiastic sensuality.

Twins are believed to be endowed with supernatural powers in Voodoo. Some people go so far as to claim that they are as powerful as the *loa*. Woe be unto the parents of twins. Just discipline is accepted by the

duo, but they determine in their own infantile minds just what is just or unjust. A spanking by a hasty father may result in sudden illness or failing strength that the man can only restore by placating his offended children. If a child follows the twins, he is regarded as having even greater powers. A child who precedes the twins is not looked upon with any deference at all.

All Voodoo ceremonies must be climaxed with sacrifice to the *loa*. Chickens are the most common "victims" of these sacrifices although the wealthy may offer a goat or a bull. Participation of all in the taking of the blood is required. Often spices are added to the vital fluid, but usually it is drunk "straight."

The zombi, those dread creatures of the Undead who prowl about at night doing the bidding of Black Magicians, are, of course, a well known element of jungle sorcery and folklore.

Some impressionable writers and tourists have perpetuated the myth of the zombi after they have witnessed an elaborate Haitian funeral. At the conclusion of a series of rituals, the *hungan* waves away spectators and approaches the corpse alone for the purpose of setting the *loa* free from its servant. The *hungan* straddles the corpse; and, at his sharp command, the cadaver raises his head and shoulders in a convulsive shudder.

Sincere eyewitness accounts have testified to seeing a dead body suddenly sit up and release its *loa*. Other reports have mentioned seeing the *hungan* jerk the body upright by his own hands. Mystical hanky-panky on the *hungan's* part is not intended, some authorities maintain. The entire act is to be regarded as symbolical.

Voodoo lore actually has two types of zombi: the Undead and those who died by violence. A Haitian is most cautious in his approach to a cemetery for it is

there that one is most likely to meet one of the unfortunate wraiths who died without time for proper ritual. Another spirit classified as zombi is that of a woman who died a virgin. A terrible fate awaits her at the hands of the lustful Baroh-Samedi, Master of the Nether-world. Her woeful spirit waits in lonely places, condemned to haunt the jungles in an attempt to escape her fearful ordeal.

For the Haitian peasant, zombies, the living dead, are to be feared as very real instruments of *hungan* who have succumbed to the influence of evil *loa* and become sorcerers. It is as terrible a thing to become a zombi as it is to become its victim. The dead are meant to rest, not to prowl about at night as the slaves of Darkness.

The people of the villages believe that the sorcerer unearths a corpse and wafts under its nose a bottle containing its soul. Then, as if he were fanning a tiny spark of life in dry tinder, the sorcerer nurtures the spark of life in the corpse until he has fashioned a zombi.

The deceased are often buried face downward by considerate relatives so the corpse can not hear the call of the sorcerer. Some villagers take the precaution of providing their departed with a weapon, such as a machete, with which to ward off the evil *hungan*.

Haiti is filled with terrible tales of the zombi. Even among the educated, one hears "eyewitness accounts" from those who have discovered friends or relatives, supposedly long-dead, laboring in the field of some native sorcerer. One story even has the zombied corpse of a government executive—officially dead for fifteen years—as having been recognized toiling for a old *hungan* in a remote village in the hills.

Upon investigation, such zombi usually turn out to be idiots, imbeciles, and other mental defectives who bear a strong resemblance to the deceased. It is a

fact that some unscrupulous *hungan* do take advantage of morons and turn them into virtual beasts of burden. It is also well known that uneducated people have always regarded the insane with awe and fear. The zombi is described as being glassy-eyed, mumblingly inarticulate, and moving about in a spasmodic, jerky manner. Such a description would fit many mental defectives.

Then, too, it is quite likely that the *hungan* has discovered the secret and utilization of many powerful native drugs in the course of his magic. Modern science owes a heavy debt to native sorcery for some of its most effective pain-killers and tranquilizers.

It seems very possible to this writer that a *hungan*, who is seeking his own vengeance or that of another, could mix a powerful drug into his victim's food and produce a deep state of hypnotic lethargy in the man. This, too, could easily be the blank-eyed, shuffling, obedient zombi.

One last word on zombies—and this in the nature of a warning. If you should be confronted with what you feel is the genuine article—not a lunatic, not a moron, not a drug-enslaved wretch—be assured that the zombi is generally docile unless you should happen to give him some salt. Even a single grain of salt will penetrate the sorcerer's mist, and the zombi will suddenly realize that he is a corpse without a grave. With this terrifying knowledge bursting in his shriveled brain, the zombi goes berserk in his attempt to return to the tomb. Nothing can stop him—and certainly not you!

## THERE'S A HAUNTED HOUSE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

A LONG HISTORY of strange happenings in the corridors of the Octagon, a stately mansion in Washington, D.C., have earned it the title of "the Capital's favorite haunted house."

Caretakers and maintenance men tell eerie tales of moans, groans, and shifting furniture; and the old Georgian mansion even has a legend of a tragic death which took place at the foot of its elegant stairway.

Built in 1800 by Colonel John Tayloe, the Octagon was used as a temporary executive mansion by President James Madison when the British burned the White House during the war of 1812. Today the brick mansion on the corner of New York Avenue and 18th Street is the national headquarters of the American Institute of Architects and a historic shrine.

Robert Bradley, the gardener, has said that occasionally he has heard "groans of distress that followed me up the stairs."

A former caretaker would readily tell of the sounds of invisible feet, which he often heard walking up the stairs. Whenever he would investigate, he reported, there would never be anybody there.

The seat of the haunting definitely seems to be the stairwell. Legend has it that one of the young women of the Tayloe family either fell or threw herself to her death down the magnificent stairwell.

A maintenance man has often complained that upon opening the mansion in the morning, he finds the rug turned back at the foot of the stairway. According to

tradition, this was the spot at which the young woman died more than 150 years ago.

"I make a point of checking that rug every night before I leave," the man said. "It's right in place when we close, but many mornings I get there to find that it has been turned up."

Mrs. Velma May, hostess at the Octagon, says that she has seen no ghosts, but she admits that she has observed the chandelier in the stairwell sway as if a hand had moved it. There is no wind in the mansion or any type of vibration that could set the huge chandelier to swaying. Mrs. May is at a loss to offer a rational explanation for either the swinging chandelier or the other mysterious happenings in the house.

"A few years ago," recalled a maintenance man, "all the bells in the place would ring at a certain hour every night. At least that weird disturbance finally stopped."



## THE GREAT CARDIFF GIANT

IN 1868, George Hull, a cigar manufacturer with the soul of a con man, was visiting a sister out in Ackley, Iowa when he attended the tent revival meeting of a fiery Methodist minister. Never a religious man, Hull had gone primarily to observe the proceedings and perhaps to heckle the minister if the occasion presented itself.

When the minister chose for meditation the section from Genesis that tells of "giants walking the earth," Hull suddenly decided to take a very real interest in the sermon.

It had always been his private contention that people could be made to believe anything. He felt that P. T. Barnum had made a vast understatement when he declared that there was "a sucker born every minute."

Hull left the tent meeting struck by an inspiration—more demonic than divine, however. The next day he made a trip to Fort Dodge, Iowa, obtained a five-ton block of gypsum from the stone quarry. He broke down several wagons and a number of small bridges before he got it to Chicago, where he turned it over to an artist and a stonecutter with instructions to make a "naked giant."

Four months later, the artisans had fashioned a "giant" that stood over ten feet tall with proportionately impressive measurements. The skin pores were simulated over the entire surface by using needle-pointed mallets. The gypsum naturally bore dark streaks that looked very much like human blood veins.

Hull was pleased with his giant. He paid the men generously and swore them to secrecy.

His next step was to get the "find of the century" discovered—quite by accident, of course.

The crafty cigar manufacturer had a cousin, a farmer named William Newell, who wasn't above making some quick cash. Hull cut his cousin in on his scheme, rehearsed him in how to react when the "great discovery" was made on his farm near Cardiff, New York.

The first phase of the plan was to have Newell vocally complain that he needed a new well and would set out to dig one just as soon as he could scrape up some extra cash. The stocky farmer kept up his mournful dirge for over a year before he finally hired some men to dig for water. Then, while the workmen bent shovels to their task, Newell left for town to try to swing a loan for the new well.

The day was October 15, 1869—a day that will forever hold special significance in the golden pages of rascality. A day that all practical jokers and hoaxers observe with reverence—the day they dug up the Cardiff Giant.

When Newell returned from town, he carried off his role with the aplomb of an Oscar winner. What in the world was that? he wondered loudly. Forget about the well, boys, there might be a whole lost race of the giants!

But the next day, Newell had a tent pitched over the "big Indian" and was charging fifty-cents a peek at the petrified giant. The price was soon up to a dollar, but no one complained.

Reporters and scientists flocked to the farm, both groups smelling the news story of the decade, the scientific find of the century. Although there was some speculation as to whether the brute was really a petrified man or an ancient statue, no one was bold enough to suggest that it might be just an elaborate fake.

Several celebrated scientists of international repute

declared the Cardiff giant to be without the slightest doubt a true fossil of a man. Religious leaders solemnly repeated the very verse that had given Hull his idea as Biblical proof of the giant's validity. The most distinguished paleontologist of the era, Professor James Brator of the New York State Museum, took issue with the human fossil faction, but expressed his opinion that the giant was a genuine ancient statue from some lost and forgotten American civilization.

P. T. Barnum, the great showman and creator of some magnificent hoaxes himself, tried to buy the giant from Newell. The now wealthy farmer had been instructed by his cousin to refuse all offers. Only slightly disgruntled, Barnum returned to New York City and hired a sculptor to make him an exact replica of the Cardiff giant.

Within a few weeks, Barnum was exhibiting the "genuine Cardiff Giant." The Old Master had been correct in his assumption—there was enough market for two giants. Crowds would pay their dollars to view Newell's gypsum giant then rush over to study Barnum's fake fossil so they could argue amongst themselves over which one was truly the genuine petrified man.

It was a small band of skeptical newsmen who finally put the bash on Hull and his giant. They bearded the cigar-puffing con man in his tobacco factory and presented him with a complete reconstruction of the "crime." They had it all—his visit to Iowa, his purchase of the gypsum, the shipping records of the heavy "machinery," the confessions of the stonecutter and the artist.

Hull heard them out patiently, blowing smoke rings while they confronted him with the results of their painstaking research. When they had rested their case, he merely laughed at them. He freely admitted all,

congratulated them on their perseverance. He had made a bundle and had long ago sold three-quarters interest in the giant to a group of businessmen. Besides, the lines were thinning out. They had just about milked all they could out of their slab of gypsum.

For once Hull was wrong. For once he had misjudged human nature. When the newspapers headlined the story of the hoax, people turned out to see old "Hoaxey" like they never had before. Sun-burned farmers and slab-shouldered long-shoremen turned out in droves to laugh long and loud at the chiseled-out hunk of stone that had fooled all the big-domed scientists. For one dollar they could purchase intellectual superiority over the eggheads. That, they considered, was a fine investment indeed.

# THE MYSTERY OF THE MEDICINE WHEEL AND THE STONE CIRCLES

TWO MYSTERIES exist in the western United States that have resisted all attempted solutions. Anthropologists have declared that their very existence in America seems contrary to every known fact that we have learned about our early inhabitants. Archeologists have not even been able to come up with a suitable culture on which to pin either of the two giant enigmas known as the Medicine Wheel of the Big Horn Mountains and the Stone Circles of Mount Shasta.

The Medicine Wheel forms an almost perfect circle seventy feet in diameter and 245 feet in circumference. Its "hub" is twelve feet in diameter with a seven-foot opening in its middle. Twenty-eight stone "spokes" reach out from the axis to the outer rim of the wheel. Six large monuments are located around the rim and other monuments are built on high points of land at some distance from the medicine wheel. The whole thing is located high on the tops of the wind-swept Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming.

No one knows who built the wheel, not even the Indians.

"It is of prehistoric origin," said a well-educated historian of his people. "The Shoshone say it was there long before their fathers came to the land. The Crows believed the wheel was the work of the Great Spirit, who dropped it down from the sky."

Authorities have fixed the date of the wheel's construction all the way from 15,000 to 1,000 B.C. The

Aztecs, the Mayans, even the Druids of Great Britain have been named as possible constructors of the strange wheel. One thing is certain—the Indians did not build it. The Indians of the mountains and the plains never built anything with stone—not houses, not forts, not temples, not shrines, not even tombstones.

Who did build it? Perhaps we'll never know. If it had been discovered in the Alps, the mystery would not have been so undecipherable. Such an artifact would more easily fit what we know about the primitive inhabitants of Europe. But a huge stone wheel in the Big Horn Mountains is an alien as a stretch of desert at the North Pole.

"Them circles ain't no problem to me," said an old-timer. "The little people made 'em and they stand watch over 'em. I leave 'em be."

"We had all kinds of folks up here poking around for a while," declared another long-time resident of the Mt. Shasta area. "Geologists, fellows from the Forest Service, and then the nuts. We had some real kooks up here with long beards and flowing robes trying to establish communication with the descendents of Atlantis!"

The objects of such a wide range of "scientific" inquiry are odd earth formations that cover over six hundred acres of prairie near the northwestern foot of Mt. Shasta. Each mound is the same—sixty feet in diameter, rising to a crest approximately two feet above the level of the surrounding terrain. Each ring is surrounded by stones that are arranged in a curious manner with smaller stones at the bottom and large rocks at the top.

Nothing in geology can explain them. They were certainly not formed by any natural causes. But who built them and why? And, more importantly, some in-

investigators ask, "How?" Not a single tool or artifact has been found in the area.

"It seems incredible that anyone could construct sixty-foot circles covering over six hundred acres without using a tool or implement of any kind," noted an exasperated anthropologist. "We don't have any idea who built them. The Indians don't have a thing in their folklore to explain them. I'm just about ready to accept some of this talk about 'little men with green lights.'"

## THE LEGEND OF THE DRAGON

ONE OF THE MOST universal monster myths is that of the dragon. The awesome, reptilelike beasts appear in the folklore of every country. And the fact that the creature was truly regarded as actual monster rather than myth can be demonstrated in several scientific writings of the day.

Edward Topsell, writing in his *Historie of Serpents* (1608), commented: "Among all the kindes of Serpents, there is none comparable to the Dragon, or that affordeth and yeeldeth so much plentifull matter in history for the ample discovery of the nature thereof."

As one examines the "true accounts" of dragons in the folklore and records of several cultures, he is immediately confronted with the question: why is the dragon so universally known? Were there really dragons prowling the earth, devouring hapless villagers, receiving periodic sacrifices of young maidens, spreading terror into the hearts of all and being thwarted only by courageous knights?

What child has not been exposed to St. George's combat with the dreadful dragon? Or, on the other hand, what child has not been read tales of reluctant dragons, kindly dragons, affectionate dragons, and timid dragons as well?

Behind every myth smolders some spark of truth and reality. First, let us note the theory held by many sober and responsible scientists that a few dinosaurs might have survived into the Age of Man. Pick up any book on dinosaurs and you will quickly agree that a *Tyrannosaurus Rex* would have made a dandy dragon



in anyone's legend. Such a huge reptile thudding about the countryside of an early Europe could certainly fit even the most dramatic descriptions of a dragon.

Now this is not to say that dinosaurs existed in anything approaching abundance. But even half a dozen such ancient reptiles existing in isolated lakes and forested valleys would not have gone unnoticed even in the sparsely populated Europe of 1500 B.C.

Another theory, perhaps more palatable to the average reader, is that the ancient historians were actually describing huge snakes such as the python, which often reaches a length more than thirty feet.

A number of dragon stories bequeathed to us from the Middle Ages tell how the dragon wound himself about his prey and slowly crushed it. This, of course, fits precisely the *modus operandi* of the python or the boa constrictor.

This theory does not, however, account for the dragon's feet or his ability to walk on all fours.

Some species of giant lizard would fit this description and satisfy many theorists. There is the great lizard known as the Komodo dragon that attains a length of ten and twelve feet, but it resides in the East Indies. St. George and his fellow dragon-killers would have had quite a time venturing to the tropics at this point in Western history. In fact, fighting a dragon would probably have been much less of an ordeal than that of making the trip.

If, however, such a species of lizard once existed in Europe—as indeed it might have a few million years ago—and survived well into the Age of Man, this would nicely solve the mystery of the dragon myth.

A third theory, and a very believable one, has the adventurer of the Middle Ages coming upon a cave filled with the bones of the giant cave bear and mistaking them for the skeletal remains of a dragon. Workmen excavating earth for a cathedral might even

have unearthed the fossil remains of a dinosaur. It was not until the nineteenth century that scientists realized that the age of fossil bones often ran into millions of years. Previously, the skeletons were considered to have been the remains of some giant creature only recently dead.

If, at the time the dragon legend was flourishing in Europe, a discovery of fossil remains was unearthed or sighted in a cave, the find would seem to offer conclusive proof for the existence of dragons.

Let us theorize that some villagers unearth a cache of mammoth bones while digging a well. They instantly conclude that they have found the burial ground of the dragon. Where there are remains of one, there is bound to be another! How to keep the huge beast from descending upon them and devouring them all? A sacrifice! The priests say such things are wrong, but sacrifices worked with the old gods!

They select a lovely young girl and tie her to a tree deep in the forest in an attempt to appease the dragon.

We can only feebly imagine her terror when, that night, wolves or bears come to end her struggles forever.

The next day, a party of the bravest men from the village venture into the forest to investigate. They were right! The "dragon" has come and devoured the maid!

A month passes. The sacrifice has worked. The beast does not come down into the village to prey upon them. The flesh of the young maid appeased him. If they continue to offer periodic sacrifice, perhaps this time a young calf or goat, the dragon will leave them alone.

It is very likely that the bones of the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and the giant cave bear could be found in great abundance in early Europe. We have proof of this in that the tusk of the mammoth was often called for in the recipes of medieval love potions.

In the market place of the Austrian city of Klagen-

furt, there is a statue of a giant killing a dragon. The dragon's head has quite obviously been modeled on the skull of a woolly rhinoceros. The connection can be proven by the fact that old records note the discovery of a "dragon's skull" in Klagenfurt in the sixteenth century, thirty years before the statue was constructed. The skull has been preserved these many years by the city fathers and can be identified today as that of the Ice Age rhinoceros.

# THE PHANTOM MONK

## OF BASILDON

A GROUP of women who do cleaning at night at a factory in Basildon, England have been telling some eerie tales about the figure of a phantom monk which they often see as they pass Holy Cross Church.

"We usually finish work about 4 A.M.," said Kay Bull. "It's as we're leaving the factory and walking past the old church that we often see the ghost. It is definitely that of a monk, and it walks across the church road and disappears among the graves in the churchyard."

"One time I ran right through the spook on my bicycle," Mrs. Rita Tobin recalled with a shudder. It seems that one morning Mrs. Tobin was pedaling down the road when the figure of the red-cowled monk stepped directly into her path. "I wasn't able to put on my brakes in time and I passed right through him.

"I didn't feel any impact at all, but the air was cold and clammy. That was the second time that I've seen the ghost—and I hope the last!"

Mrs. Sylvia Smith, who told of a face-to-face encounter with the monk, described the phantom as being "transparent."

"He was just floating when I saw him," said Mrs. Catharine Kistruck. "His feet didn't really seem to be touching the ground at all."

"And he's no little spook," Kay Bull told newsmen. "He's at least six feet tall, and he has a chalk-white face that's grim as death."

According to the cleaning women, nine of their group

had reported seeing the ghostly monk entering the six hundred year old churchyard.

“All together now,” one of the ladies said, “we’ve seen the monk over a dozen times. Each time is just as creepy as the last.”

## CURSE OF THE VAMPIRE

IN THE eighteenth century, the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau wrote: "If there ever was in the world a warranted and proven history, it is that of vampires; nothing is lacking, official reports, testimonials of persons of standing, of surgeons, of clergymen, of judges; the judicial evidence is all-embracing."

The vampire legend is universal. In Poland, vampires are called *Upirs*; in Greece, *Brucolacas*. The villagers of Uganda, Haiti, Indonesia and the Upper Amazon all have their local variety of nocturnal blood-seeker. The American Indian, the Artic Eskimo, the Arabian tribesmen know the vampire well and have as many elaborate precautions against the undead as do the inhabitants of Transylvanian villages.

Theories to explain the universality of the vampire myth are many and varied. All cultures, of course, regardless of how primitive they may be, recognize the basic fact that blood is the vital fluid of life. To lose one's vital fluid is to lose one's mortality—the spark of life. Such knowledge would be a powerful stimulant to fear in the primitive mind and the creation of hideous monsters intent on draining man's blood would not be long in coming.

While vampires of jungle communities are usually demonlike and horrifying in their appearance, the European variety differs not one whit in personal appearance from that of his victims—when he is out of the tomb, that is. It is for this reason that he is much more deadly than his primitive cousins. He is usually suave, sophisticated, handsome, well-dressed, and fits

right in at the very best parties. It is because of his worldly appearance that he has captured the imagination of dozens of writers and millions of readers and viewers—the menace of an “enemy among us” is always more horrifying than a hairy beast that exists somewhere “out there.” The ever-present gnawing thought that your congenial chess partner, who always arrives so late at the club, or that pale-complexioned man, who kept trying to get you to dance with him out on the terrace, might be a brethren in the society of vampires can be a sobering one. How can man fight his foes if he can’t tell them from his friends?

Bran Stoker’s description of Dracula, in his famous novel, sounds as much like a member of the decadent aristocracy as a bloodthirsty member of the undead:

*“His face was a strong—a very strong—aquiline, with a high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; with lofty domed forehead and hair growing scantily round the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache (Bela Lugosi, in his famous characterization of Dracula, never wore a moustache; John Carradine, did) was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years.”*

The beastly black powers of the European vampire grew with each succeeding generation. He was as strong as a dozen men. He was able to transform himself not only into the conventional bat, but also into a wolf and command the rat, the owl, the moth, and the fox. He was able to see in the dark and travel on moon-

beams and mist. At times, he had the power to vanish in a puff of smoke. His hypnotic powers were irresistible.

Now, of course, when one knew that a vampire was flapping about during the night, there were a number of precautions that one could take. Wolfbane, the lotus flower, wild garlic, and sacred objects such as the crucifix and Sacred Water rendered the fanged fiend powerless. Place a branch of the wild rose on his coffin and he had to remain there; or, when he was on a nocturnal hunt, destroy his coffin and the rays of the early morning sun would scorch him into ashes. If he were already secure in his coffin, the vampire hunters could drive a wooden stake through the monster's heart. For best results, the pointed end would have to have been hardened by charring in fire. Even better than the wooden stake treatment, was the procedure of cutting off the fiend's head, filling his mouth with garlic, and burning his corpse.

If one were truly suspect about that chess player or that gallant young man who was so intent on dancing out on the terrace, one could lure him in front of a mirror just to be sure. A vampire cast no reflection.

Even at the dawn of the scientific age, clergymen, scholars, and laymen were convinced of the vampire's existence. In the eighteenth century, a Benedictine monk, Dom Calmet, turned his skillful pen to the subject of vampires and tried to offer a "scientific" explanation.

"Chemical substances of the soil may conserve corpses indefinitely. By the influence of warmth, the nitre and sulphur in the earth may render liquid coagulated blood.

"The screams of the vampires (caused, no doubt, when vampire vigilantes went about driving stakes in the breasts of suspect corpses) are pro-



duced when air passing through their throats is stirred by the pressure which the stake causes in the body. Often people are buried alive, and certain dead, such as the excommunicated, can rise from their tombs; but it is not possible to leave the grave bodily without digging up the soil, and none of the stories about vampires mention that their tombs were disturbed."

Today we recognize a vampire psychosis wherein the individual may become convinced that his life depends upon drawing fresh blood from human victims. The psychotic may, in extreme cases, actually believe himself to be dead.

For almost a week in February, 1960, women in the town of Monteros in Argentina were terrorized by the nocturnal attacks of a "vampire." At least fifteen women were victimized by the midnight marauder, who crept into bedrooms through windows left open because of a heat wave. Hysterically, they told police of savage teeth biting deeply into their throats and drawing blood.

When officers finally tracked the vampire to his lair, they found a young man sleeping in a coffin which he had secreted in a cave on the outskirts of the city. He lay swathed in a black cloak, his eyes closed in deep sleep. On his lips was the blood of his most recent victim.

In police custody, the real-life "Dracula" identified himself as Florenico Fernandez, 25, a stonemason. He was at a complete loss to explain his sadistic attacks.

A classic case of vampirism was that of Vincent Verzeni, who terrorized an Italian village during the years 1867-1871. Verzeni's method of attack was to seize a victim by the neck, bite her on the throat, then suck her blood. He eventually murdered two women

and victimized several others before he was apprehended.

Fritz Harrmann, the famous Vampire of Hanover, was credited with upwards of fifty murders—though he was officially charged with twenty-four. The newspapers noted, however, that during the year 1924, when his morbid murders came to light, over six hundred young boys had disappeared in Hanover, then a city of about 450,000.

The Reverend Mr. Montague Summers, persistent witch and vampire hunter (*The History of Witchcraft, The Geography of Witchcraft, The Vampire: His Kith and Kin*), declared Harrmann a "genuine vampire," and thought it no small coincidence that he was ordered beheaded, a traditional manner of disposing of practicing vampires.

John Geoge Haigh, the British vampire whose grisly case is well known, took the Biblical injunction to "drink water out of thine own cistern and running waters out of thine own well" as direct commandment to drink human blood. It is said that Haigh acquired his taste for blood by accidentally tasting his own while sucking a scratch. Intoxicated by the act of drinking blood, he was soon "tapping" the jugular veins of his victims so that he might indulge both his perverse thirst and his religious fanaticism.

Upon examining the "spark of truth" behind the legend of the vampire, we discover that the "myth" disguises a very morbid reality. Although Count Dracula flitting about in the form of a bat is the product of a creative imagination utilizing the supersitious lore of previous centuries, the Verzenis, the Harrmanns, and the Haighs are very real. Murderously real.



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