

**L**IGHTS coming out of the ground, floating about in the air, frightening walkers, confusing mountain rescuers — just the stuff of myth and legend, not to mention extra-terrestrials.

Light phenomena are seen too frequently to be just imagination.

July 21, 1977, Peak District, 1 am: a former policeman sees a "white flare" rising behind Shire Hill between Glossop Low and Hurst Moor on the western end of Bleaklow.

April 1983, Bleaklow: two doctors, a husband and wife walking the Pennine Way, see a silver-blue sphere moving towards them over Torside Clough, keeping close to the ground.

January, 1978, Cononley and Carleton Moors, near Skipton: Police Sgt Tony Dodd and PC Alan Dale see a bright incandescent glow on the road in front of them, and it then passes overhead.

March 10, 1981, Carleton Moor near Skipton: two policemen see a large glowing oval shape moving slowly over the moor.

October 24, 1982, Elslack and Carleton Moors, early morning: three policemen observe a small object zig-zagging a few feet above the ground across Carleton Moor. At 5.15 a series of strange lights pass directly over the police car.

March 14, 1983, Carleton Moor, 3.15 am: Police Sgt Tony Dodd sees two lights passing over the moor.

February 29, 1984, Skipton-Grassington road, night-time: two policemen see a large white glowing light in the sky over Bordley Moor.

October 29, 1983, on the A59 at Summerscale, 4.30 am: two policemen see large glowing object hovering in the sky.

And so it goes on . . . and on and on.

These and numerous other sightings are reported in a new book\* by an American researcher, Paul Devereux, using information collected by two Yorkshire investigators, Andy Roberts and David Clarke. Devereux was also helped by Paul McCartney, a geochemist who teaches at Eltham College, London.

Clarke and Roberts got some of their information about mysterious lights in the Peak District from Phil Shaw, Accident Record Officer of the Peak District Mountain Rescue Organisation, within which are seven mountain rescue teams.

Speaking to the Yorkshire Post, Mr Shaw said that between them, the Peak District rescue teams were called out at least once a year by people who saw lights in the hills and assumed someone was in trouble. This had been going on for at least 20 years, but no-one had ever been found.

Another informant is Margaret Drabble, who was married in 1970 to Ken Drabble, the Peak Park warden. In that year she was driving late at night towards Crowden Youth Hostel alongside the reservoirs on the A628 when Bleaklow Hill was lit up all the way from Shining Clough to Black Hill. She said: "Afterwards I asked local farmers if they had seen anything, but they wouldn't admit to seeing it and did not want to even discuss the matter."

A year later, at the same place, there was another light phenomenon. Mrs Drabble told Dave Clarke that this time several local farmers did admit they saw it, but still refused to discuss it. Persistence on her part



## Certain areas, many of them isolated and some of them in Yorkshire and Derbyshire, give rise to an inordinate number of UFO sightings. Either they are attracting visitors from outer space or there is some other explanation. STEPHEN BISCOE reports

however, found evidence that the area had a long history of mysterious lights, stretching back at least 100 years. The local population appeared to think they were "best left alone."

Paul Devereux's two Yorkshire-based assistants have had many years' experience investigating UFO sightings — and any inexplicable light in the sky is generally regarded as a UFO. Andy Roberts, 33, is a project worker at a residential hostel for homeless people; Dave Clarke, 28, is studying Archaeology and Medieval History at Sheffield University. As schoolboys, both were obsessed by aliens and flying saucers, and they both yearned for the conclusive evidence which would prove they exist.

It was an obsession which led them, as it has others,

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into investigating reported UFO sightings. And as one incident after another failed to produce the concrete evidence they wanted, so they were drawn to the unpalatable conclusion that while many people were indeed seeing lights, spacecraft were rarely, if ever, involved.

Various factors have contributed to their disillusionment, one of them being a lack of consistency visiting spacecraft, it seems, come in all shapes and sizes. According to what people say, they have seen not one but numerous advanced species from outer space flocking to Earth, and practically all of them chose to investigate the same remote upland areas.

Abductions of human beings — invariably accompanied by "lost time" — frequently occur, but not a single alien artefact has been brought back. Clarke says: "Special pleading can convince some people this doesn't matter, but to me it does. Since the Fifties hundreds of people have claimed they've been abducted, and we still have no tangible evidence."

Modern abductions have an ancient parallel with long-standing traditions in some areas of travellers being taken into a "hollow hill" by fairies. "Lost time" is invariably associated with such legends. A growing body of evidence, say Clarke and Roberts, points to the possibility that abductions, lost time and mystery lights have a natural rather than a bizarre explanation.

It turns out that areas where abductions have occurred and lights are seen, and have been seen for centuries (giving rise to distinctive place names, such as Shining Clough, and a tradition of "holy" hills, such as Pendle Hill in Lancashire and Glastonbury Tor) share certain geological characteristics. Fault lines abound, and the rocks are igneous, such as Dartmoor granites, or sedimentary, such as the Pennine grits.

That earthquakes produce lights, balls of light, sheets of light, search-light beams and mountain-top beams is no longer disputed; what Paul Devereux and his colleagues argue is that small earth tremors are also capable of producing a light phenomenon, christened Earth Lights. In 1983 he and Paul McCartney crushed Cornish granite in the laboratory and produced a brilliant orange light.

Andy Clarke believes that the lights and the conditions they generate could cause temporary amnesia, thus providing an explanation for the experiences of "lost time." For him, tectonic tension being the source of lights is an exciting possibility; it would account for numerous mysteries, from Will-o-the-Wisps, Jack-o'-Lanterns, Corpse Candles, Fairy Lights and a percentage, at least, of UFOs.

Traditional UFOlogists, however, are not pleased. Two of the three principal UFO magazines in this country have never even referred to the possibility of Earth Lights. Andy Roberts said: "A lot of these people think we are heretics. They really hate us."

Of more serious concern, however, is the reluctance of British scientists to take Earth lights seriously. "Because of the UFO connection," said Clarke, "it is a tainted subject. Andy and I are only investigators, we are not scientists. What the subject needs in this country is serious scientific study."

\* Earth Lights Revelation by Paul Devereux with David Clarke, Andy Roberts and Paul McCartney, published by Blandford Press.