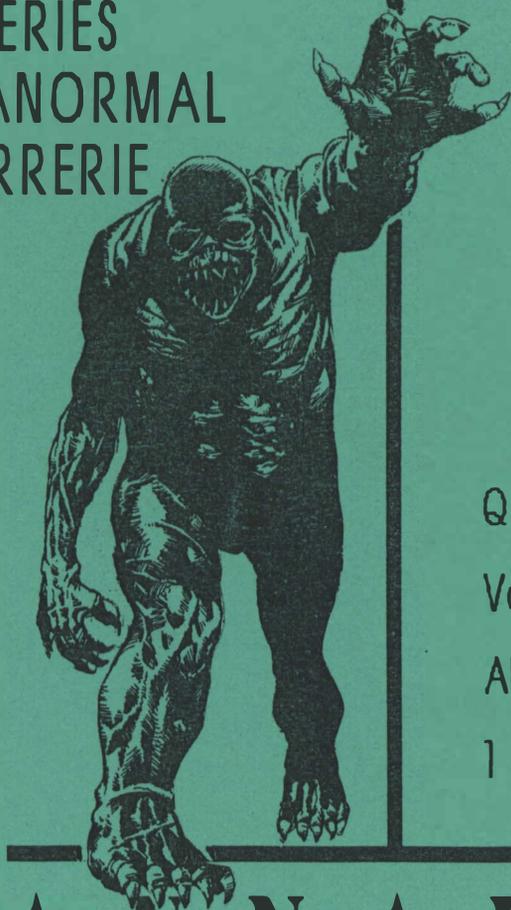


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**A N N A L S**

O F T H E E N Q U I R I N G

# ANNALS OF THE ENQUIRING

VOL 4 -- NO 2

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in the form of articles,  
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etc is always welcomed  
and, if used, will be  
acknowledged  
accordingly.

The opinions and views  
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endorsed by the Editor.



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# FIRST WORD

EDITORIAL

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There is more than a touch of the green about this issue that extends beyond the colour of the cover. Following a visit to Ireland late last year I made a number of contacts and secured some interesting contributions - a few of which I have included within.

In February and March I travelled with my wife through Egypt's South Sinai desert, following a trek across the Negev desert of Israel. And if ever there was a post-deluge landscape, the Negev certainly comes close to mirroring it. No space in this issue to acquaint you with some interesting accounts of UFO activity in such a sparsely populated region of the Middle East. The next issue of Annals will carry a number of them.

Sky News recently screened the first of a proposed series of UFO Specials. For openers they attempted to deal with the defence significance aspect of reported incursions into Britain's airspace by unexplained aerial phenomena. In spite of contributions from the likes of Timothy Good, Jenny Randles, Ralph Noyes and others, I felt the producers failed in their efforts to tackle such a complex subject in anything other than a lightweight manner. The enormous implications arising out of events, such as was highlighted by the incident at Bentwaters, became simply another poke among the available facts. Perhaps I expected too much but when are programmers going to deal with a subject that has been on the public agenda for nearly fifty years in a more investigative and constructive way?

I felt it was high time you saw just who you are dealing with. In consequence I have had my head mounted at the top of this page. I am sure you will all understand that it is a typical passport photo and, as such, bears only a passing resemblance. **G/L**

## Mystery Of The Phantom Army

JOHN MACKLIN

FROM HER BEDROOM window, Anna Martens could see moonlight glittering on the distant River Meuse. It was a hot August night and the countryside around the French-Belgian border was silent and still.

As Anna, a school teacher in her late fifties, wondered why she should suddenly have woken at 3 am, her bedroom door opened and her sister, Maria, came in.

"I suddenly woke up," said Maria, "with a strange feeling that something is about to happen." "How odd," agreed Anna. "I have just woken up, and I feel the same thing."

What the two highly respectable spinsters claimed happened next was to plunge them into the middle of a fierce controversy which has never been resolved.

For Anna and Maria Martens were to claim for the rest of their lives that on that August night they watched an eerie "action replay" of the retreat from the Battle of Mons, which had actually taken place nearby - exactly 40 years earlier.

Maria, a retired civil servant, was to remark later: "Neither of us have vivid imaginations. We are both down-to-earth people and have always scoffed at those who claim to have seen ghosts.

"But we are both prepared to swear that we saw what must have been hundreds of soldiers retreating from the First World War Battle of Mons. Some experts suggested that we may have slipped into another dimension of time. It all sounded highly improbable to us - but what explanation is there?"

The sisters even agreed to tell their story under hypnosis, and the facts were unchanged. Dr Jean-Jacques Laporte, a member of the French Society for Psychical Research, said after investigating the incident: "I am convinced that the sisters did actually see what they claim to have seen.

"Their honesty cannot be disputed. Certainly it is one of the most remarkable psychical mysteries of the century." Historical records confirmed that what the sisters claimed to have seen was all technically correct.

In independent but matching statements, Anna and Maria Martens said that after they had inexplicably woken up at the same time, Maria volunteered to make them a drink.

While Maria was downstairs in the cottage's kitchen, Anna suddenly heard the sound of marching feet. She later recalled: "At that moment, Maria came back into the room with two cups of hot chocolate, and she heard the noise too. We looked out of the window and were astonished by what we saw.

"By the light of the moon we could see long columns of soldiers coming up the road past the house. Many of them were wounded and being helped by comrades. They wore strange, old-fashioned uniforms and the weapons they carried seemed old-fashioned, too.

"They were caked in mud, dispirited and apparently very tired. We couldn't believe our eyes. Over the hills we could see the flash of gunfire and hear muffled explosions.

"We must have stood there for over a minute. We were obviously watching a retreat - mules were pulling guns and carts containing baggage and equipment. There were stretcher parties, too.

"It was the most heart-rending thing I have ever seen. Some of the soldiers were little more than boys. Some had lost limbs, and some, being guided by other soldiers, had obviously been blinded."

Maria Martens told an identical story: "I felt as though I was watching an old film," she remarked. "Then suddenly, as we watched, everything just faded away - the noise and the people - and the road was once again completely empty and silent. I wondered if I had dreamed it all, but my sister confirmed that she had seen exactly the same thing."

Research carried out by Dr Laporte revealed that what the sisters had seen tallied perfectly with details of the withdrawal of French troops from the Battle of Mons, on August 22, 1914, after suffering heavy shelling from German artillery. But could the clock really have turned back 40 years?

Dr Laporte wrote later in a French psychical magazine: "There have been other examples of what we call a time-warp, during which incidents of past or future have apparently become misplaced. This could explain what the sisters saw."

Not surprisingly, cynics said that the sisters had imagined the whole thing, but until their deaths in 1969 and 1976, Anna and Maria steadfastly stuck to their story. "We saw what we said we saw," Anna insisted. "We leave it to others to say what it meant."

Then, in 1960, another dimension was added to the intriguing mystery. Pierre Pantages, a veteran of the Battle of Mons, and by then a retired Paris banker, read about the Martens sisters, and wrote to Dr Laporte.

"I was in the column of infantry retreating from the battle and I remember going along the road on which the sister's cottage stands.

"I also remember vividly, although it's so long ago, two young girls watching us from a bedroom window of that cottage as we slowly straggled by ..."

## PSYCHICS PINPOINT ANCIENT EMERALD

A JEWEL LOST at sea 250 years ago has been found off the coast of Florida. The Isabella Emerald, which is nearly 1,000 carats and dates back to the 16th century, was pinpointed in a wreck 12 miles off Cape Canaveral with the help of two psychics.

Each was sent an untitled map of the area where the wreck was thought to be. And although one lived in California and the other in New York they independently came to nearly identical conclusions.

'It was absolutely mindboggling,' said Victor Benilous, a Palm Beach restaurateur and the man who found the 7oz, four-inch stone which is believed to be worth £2million.

Benilous, who also heads an archaeological discovery company, said he found the emerald last June but waited until now to announce it because he wanted confirmation that he had the Isabella, which was unearthed in the 1500s. It is currently on display in his restaurant before being sold on behalf of the Argentinian family who commissioned its search.

The explorer Cortes promised the stone to Queen Isabella of Spain, but she died in 1504 without seeing it. Years later, a wealthy South American family bought it and put it on a transport ship for Spain. But the vessel sank in a storm and the story of the great emerald became the stuff of legend.



Travis Walton today

## 'Fire In The Sky' Movie Based on 1975 UFO Abduction

THE ALLEGED UFO abduction of Travis Walton on November 5, 1975, in Arizona was one of the decade's most controversial. Now Paramount Pictures has recently released a film of the incident, entitled 'Fire in the Sky'.

Walton, a logger at the time, was part of a team of seven young men busy thinning out scrub in the Sitgreaves National Forest. He disappeared for almost a week and it was while he was missing that the authorities began to suspect foul play on the part of the others.

His companions claimed he had been abducted by a UFO after he had jumped from a truck for a closer look at the glowing object that appeared nearby. Terrified, they watched as suddenly he was struck by a beam of greenish-blue light that threw him to the floor. It was then the men took off leaving him.

It was November 11, when Walton telephoned his sister from a booth some 12 miles from the place where he had disappeared. He was weak and in a confused state but was later able to recall what had happened to him during the previous five days.

His story was a fantastic one in which he claimed to have awakened in a low-ceilinged room surrounded by three small entities with large, bald, domed heads. He later met human beings and eventually, after passing out, regained consciousness back on the road.

Travis was ridiculed by many but in 1978 wrote a book about his experience. Eventually he was to resume a relatively normal and quiet life, marrying and raising four children. It was just two weeks after he got a telephone installed that writers from Paramount contacted him with their ideas to turn his story into a film.

### UFOs MAY COME UNDER EC SCRUTINY

A ROW HAS broken out over a EC plan to set up a European Observation Centre for Unidentified Flying Objects.

The scheme, proposed by Italian Socialist MEP Tullio Regge, wants monitoring of sightings.

Labour Euro-leader Glyn Ford, a former senior research fellow at Manchester University, tried to get the plan thrown out before it could be debated, but he failed.



Banner headlines around the world.

### BRAINIAC

A UFO zooms between two planets at 525 parsecs per hour. It returns over exactly the same distance at 600 parsecs per hour. What is the average speed for the whole journey?

Answer on page 23

## THE MAN THEY COULDN'T HANG

By William Mount

OVER HALF A century has passed since that superb film "The Man They Couldn't Hang" was screened to a vast audience in our local cinema. But time cannot erase or dim the memory of that unique film, the true story of an unusual and bizarre event that occurred in the late 19th century.

The central figure in the film was John Lee, a frail man of twenty years, who was employed as a gardener and general handyman by elderly Miss Whitehead Keyes, who lived on the Devon coast.

On a winter night in 1884, Miss Keyes was found dead in the pantry of her home. Her head was badly gashed, with what appeared knife wounds. Later detectives found a blood-stained garden knife, that the gardener had been in the habit of using. And Lee, who slept in a small storage room near the pantry, was arrested and charged with the murder of his employer.

During the trial, Lee vehemently protested his innocence. But in evidence it was revealed that Miss Keyes was harsh with her employees. Particularly so with Lee, working him for long hours with scanty food and a paltry weekly wage. Relying mainly on circumstantial evidence, a jury found Lee guilty of murder and he was sentenced to death by hanging, without a recommendation for mercy. Lee remained very calm during his trial and when asked by the judge if he had anything to say, he replied: "I am not guilty of murder, my lord. Almighty God knows I am innocent."

On the morning set for his execution, Lee told a warder: "I dreamt last night I was standing on a scaffold, with a hood over my head and a rope around my neck. I heard the hangman pull a lever and I felt the bolt being withdrawn beneath my feet. But the trapdoor failed to open. I feel sure I will not be hanged."

A short time later, Lee was taken from his cell in Exeter Prison to the scaffold. A hood was put on his head and a rope placed around his neck. The lever was pulled and everything happened as he had dreamed. For Lee remained standing on the trapdoor, the door having failed to open. The hangman and officials were nonplussed. But Lee showed no emotion and remained very calm. He was then moved from the trapdoor and immediately the doors fell open, as if activated by some unseen weight, to the amazement of all present.

The condemned man was then returned to his cell, while the officials tested the drop several times and every time everything worked smoothly and perfectly.

Again Lee was brought back and he took his place on the scaffold for the second time. Everything was set as before, the lever was pulled. The sound of the bolt being withdrawn was heard, but nothing happened and Lee did not fall through. The entire procedure was repeated for the third time, with the same results, and Lee remained in the land of the living.

The officials were about to try for a fourth time, when the Prison Chaplain stepped forward and said: "Three times you've tried to hang this man and three times you've failed. I feel it's God's will that he should not be hanged. I ask you in God's name, do not try a fourth time."

The Chaplain was taken at his word and the Governor ordered that Lee be taken back to his cell. A special report was prepared and sent to the Home Secretary in London. Eventually, Lee's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He spent the next twenty years in gaol.

## IT'S A STRANGE WORLD

A WOMAN KEPT the mummified body of her husband in their home for six months, police revealed in March. Thomas Handley, 46, of West Bromwich, died from heart trouble last September but his 62-year-old wife Paula was unable to come to terms with it.

She left him fully dressed on the sofa until police officers found the body after a call from worried relatives. Detective Sergeant Roy Meddings said: "We were contacted by Mr Handley's relatives who said they had not seen him for some time." [Source: Bristol Evening Post - 18 March 1993]

THE AMAZON JUNGLE town of Envira is being besieged by bloodsucking ants, which are killing animals and attacking children, Brazilian officials have reported. [Source: Ceefax 22 March 1993]

STUNNED DOCTORS WHO operated on Florence DeCicco for stomach cancer discovered her tumour was . . . a bingo token! Fun-loving Florence, 74, of Cape May, NJ, who plays bingo four or five times a week, said: "I must have put my sandwich down on a token. I eat while I play." [Source: The People - 21 Feb 1993]

STATES IN AMERICA'S Deep South have been hit by a strange outbreak of exploding watermelons. The fired-up fruits have blown up in fields, stores, fridges and kitchens, leaving a soggy mess. Experts reckon a bacterial disease may be causing a build up of gas which makes the fruits explode.

[Source: The People - 21 Feb 1993]

A MAN IN China was reluctant to pay medical fees for a neighbour's baby girl who was injured in his house. So he killed her and fed her remains to his pigs and dogs. [Source: Teletext 3 - 10 March 1993]

GENETIC SCIENTISTS WORKING in Britain have produced the world's first "pig with a human heart". Cambridge-based research group Imutran, in conjunction with Papworth Hospital, have altered the genetic make up of pigs so their organs will not be immediately rejected by the human immune system. It's a process known as xenografting.



Farmers around Chinnor, Buckinghamshire, were put on alert in February after a golden eagle killed a new-born lamb

and attacked a pet dog. The massive bird swooped on the day-old animal and plucked it from a field.

Then it tried to snatch a Jack Russell terrier being taken for a walk. The eagle grabbed the dog and sank in its talons before the animal's owner kicked the eagle away.

[Source: The Daily Mail - 22 Feb 1993]

## TIME AND TIDE . . .

YOU AREN'T IMAGINING it - the days really are getting longer, British astronomers claim.

The astronomers, who have been studying ancient Babylonian and Chinese data, said the Earth's spin has been slowing over the past 2,700 years. They estimated the days were gaining 1.7 milliseconds for every 100 years.

The main cause of the slowdown is friction from tides in both the ocean and the solid body of the Earth. Even at this tiny rate of change, an accurate clock started then would now be five hours off.

Richard Stephenson, of Durham University and Leslie Morrison, astronomer at the Royal Greenwich Observatory, presented their findings at a Royal Astronomical Society meeting at Leicester University. "Sixty million years ago the day would have been a quarter of an hour shorter than it is now," Morrison said.

[Source: South China Morning Post - 2 April 1993]

## BRAZILLIAN NUT CRACKED AT LAST



ARCHAEOLOGIST Franz Joseph Hochleitner has just ended years of work in Brazil by cracking the code by which Maya Indians of Central America measured time. Apparently they used a symbol of a rain god to represent 20 years, and small dots and dashes for months and the days.

The Mayan calendar may be distantly related to the Chinese calendar which also uses figures - of animals - to denote years. The Chinese calendar has a cycle of 12 years - a time suspiciously close to the sunspot cycle, which is now about 11 years. Sunspots are believed to be behind climatic fluctuations. It is possible the Mayans based their 20-year period on fluctuations of rainfall.

Our own calendar was influenced by Roman corruption. Between 150BC and 50BC, politicians had shortened the years to hasten the end of various officials' terms of office. The confusion ended in 43BC when Augustus fixed the months, creating August as he did so. [Source: Daily Mail - 3 April 1993]

## Bigfoot Wins Kissing Contest

DOZENS OF CONTESTANTS had their hopes of fame and fortune dashed as Bigfoot outlasted them to set a new world record for non-stop kissing.

The necking neanderthal took the \$25,000 prize with an 18 hour 25 minute liplock. His lucky partner, Heidi Goseck, a wildlife service inspector said Bigfoot got the idea from a newspaper discarded by a camper.

"He's gentle for such a big guy, but he kisses real different," said Goseck, who will spend her half of the prize on reconstructive dentistry, "sort of like a warm, wet coconut."

After his hair-raising victory dance, the pucker-prone found the strength to kiss all the judges and most of the journalists. For a finale, the smooching Sasquatch jumped straight up to the ceiling and hung by his lips for a full five minutes.



[Source: Fur Breeder - 1 April 1993]

# DISERT CLAY

BY NARD EGAN

*It banishes Irish rats!*



St Colmcille prayed and blessed the mound and invoked the Good Lord to give curative powers to the clay. He told the people to take home a small quantity of the clay and keep it in the house. Sure enough, the rats disappeared and ever since the people believe in its power. The present custodian tells that he has given the clay to people of all classes and creeds, from near and far, and that its power will last for all time.

Disert is a small raised graveyard with signs of an early stone church, enclosed by a low grass-covered wall. There are a number of small uninscribed rough headstones, and four stone cairns which indicate burials. It was used until recently as a "cilleen", a burial place for unbaptised children.

There was no particular day set aside for doing the "turas"; it could be done any day. Firstly the pilgrim made the Sign of the Cross at the blessed well, and did a round of the cairns. Next he went through a stone door three times, rubbing his bare back on the centre stone each time. This was a means of curing backaches and pains in the spine, and slipped discs.

A semi-circular flag, thirteen inches in diameter with a hole in the centre, was placed on an altar-like bench of stones, and on each side of it was a cylindrical smooth stone, and the pilgrim was obliged to carry the stones, one in each arm, around the altar-like cairn, and then looking through the hole with each eye. This was repeated three times, and this station cured or prevented blindness or other eye ailments.

THE WORD DISERT means a desert or wilderness, and in ecclesiastical sense denotes a hermitage, a secluded spot which early monks selected as a place of solitude, penance, fasting, praying and meditating with God. Disert is indeed a lonely place located on the slopes of the Blue Stack Mountains in the valley of the Eaneybeg River, and towering over it is a high mountain spur called Canaween, which contains a cave associated with Diarmuid and Grainne.

It was a hermitage even before Colmcille's time. Tradition tells us he visited Disert, and blessed a well. While here, the people approached him to tell him of a plague of rats which invaded the homes and haggards and were very troublesome.

## 'JINXED' MOVIE ENDS IN DEATH

IN WHAT APPEARS to have been a freak accident on a North Carolina film set, Brandon Lee, son of the late martial arts star Bruce Lee, was killed when a gun which was supposed to shoot blanks fired a "projectile" into his stomach.

The incident was a culmination of many inexplicable incidents involving injuries and damage to those participating, which had caused the making of the movie, *The Crow*, to have been dubbed a jinx. In it Lee was in the middle of playing a murdered rock star who comes back from the dead with supernatural powers to avenge his slaying.

It was on July 20, 1973, that Lee's father Bruce died mysteriously at the age of 32. He was working in Hong Kong on a film when he died of a cerebral haemorrhage, said to be a reaction to a headache tablet ingredient (although more malicious rumours have circulated since his death). But Brandon put the whispers about his father's death "on the same level as Elvis sightings at the local MacDonald's".

[Source: South China Morning Post - 2 April 1993]

## GHOST MAKES WITHDRAWAL FROM BANK

THE QUEEN'S BANK has secretly enlisted an exorcist after four receptionists complained of seeing a headless figure in Elizabethan costume wandering through the atrium, leaving a deathly chill in its wake.

The 300-year-old buildings, belonging to Coutts in The Strand, could be the home of the very late Earl of Essex who was beheaded for treason not far from the spot in 1601.

Retired civil engineer Eddie Burks, 70, who is now a psychic consultant, says the apparition, aged around 40 and dressed in a dark doublet and hose, would not identify himself but did provide a few clues.

"I've practised the law," the nobleman apparently told Mr Burks, "I would not bend to the Queen's command. I could threaten Her Majesty, so a case of treason was trumped up and I was beheaded not far from here on a summer's day, which made me loth to depart."

The ghost has not reappeared since the exorcist's visit last August, but a leading historian trying to unravel the mystery believes it could be the Earl of Essex. He was victorious against the Spanish navy in 1596 and lost his head five years later after turning against Queen Elizabeth.

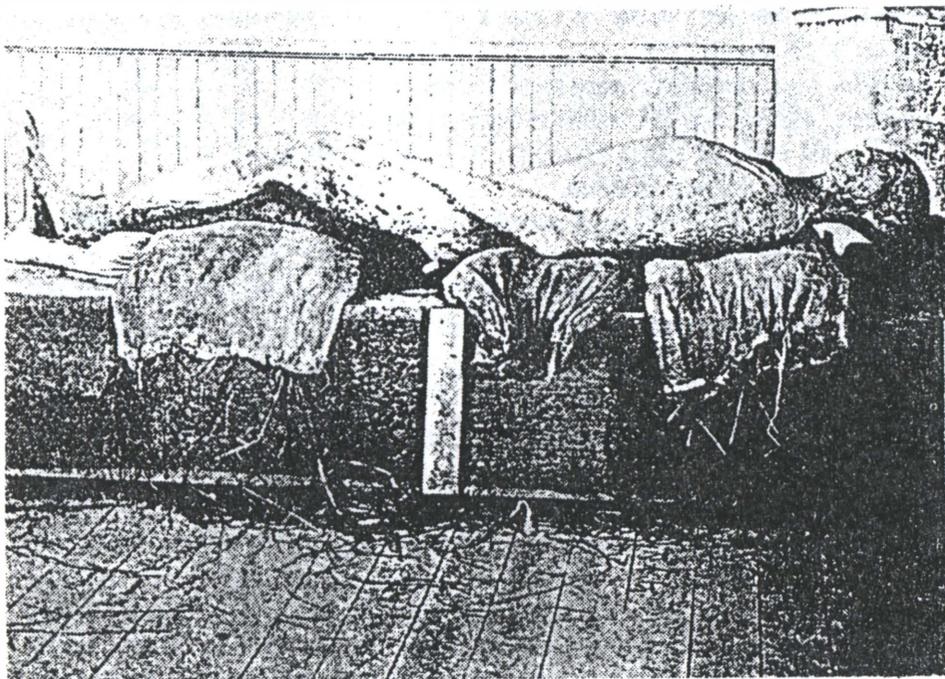
"He was executed after riding up and down the West End trying to get together a popular rebellion," said Paul Slack, fellow of Exeter College, Oxford. "I think he is by far the likeliest man."

Former Coutts archivist Veronica Stokes said: "I have only ever heard of one ghost and that was Angela Burdett Coutts, grand-daughter of Thomas Coutts who made the bank what it is today. She used to be seen walking into the building." [Source: Daily Mail 22 Feb 1993 • others]



-Suspect: Earl of Essex

*116 years ago hundreds of people who paid to view a petrified giant were amazed to see that he had a tail!*



# Saga of Solid Muldoon

By Mae Leonard

HE WAS DISCOVERED in southern Colorado near the town of Pueblo. They called him Solid Muldoon, after a character in a popular Irish ballad of the era. Over seven feet tall, this petrified giant weighed in at five hundred pounds.

In March, 1877, William Conant, an ex-stage entertainer working then as a railroad agent, explained in *The Colorado Springs Gazette*:

"I discovered the curious stones or toes protruding from the ground. Carefully removing the dirt from them, I soon discovered the shape of a human foot. Calling to my son to bring the shovel from the wagon, I proceeded to remove the soil until the limbs of a human being were exposed, and finally the full figure."

Unfortunately, Mr Conant severed the head of Solid Muldoon when trying to dig out the figure, but it was stuck back on somehow and the complete object put on public display.

Hundreds of people came and paid to view and be amazed. And the greatest source of their amazement was the fact that Solid Muldoon was not merely giant-sized but he *had a tail* which protruded a few inches from his lower spine.

Enter Phineas Taylor Barnum, of showbusiness fame, who just happened to be in Colorado giving a lecture on Temperance. He looked at Muldoon and announced: "We have found the missing link which Darwin claims connects mankind with the beast creation. It is certainly the petrified body of a man *with a tail*."

William Conant and Barnum became partners in a grand tour which gathered huge audiences in Omaha, Cheyenne and Denver. News of the discovery was brought to the attention of Charles Darwin himself. A photograph of Solid Muldoon was sent to him, but he found that he could not pass judgement without actually seeing the object. He said: "It seems to be that there is a strong probability that the whole thing is an imposture."

By now the petrified giant was in New York City on exhibition for several weeks, earning something like \$20,000 for its exhibitors, Messrs. Barnum and Conant.

Meanwhile back in Pueblo a curious newspaper man visited the supposed discovery site, but found nothing there to prove that any kind of excavation work at all had taken place.

Here one E J Cox enters the story. As you can imagine, it wasn't easy to transport Solid Muldoon around the country without some kind of assistance. E J Cox was appointed as transport manager. A dispute arose between himself and his employers about his share of the takings. Having failed to get an increase, he did as he had threatened and went to talk to a New York Tribune reporter. The huge hoax was finally exposed in February 1878.

The Solid Muldoon true story really begins with George W Hull, a prankster who took on board Darwin's controversial theory of *The Descent of Man* and decided to get himself out of bankruptcy by creating Solid Muldoon. He leased a farm in Pennsylvania and set up a laboratory in the icehouse. For a while his son-in-law served as a lower body model for the giant figure, until he got fed up of standing naked with his legs in plaster! He walked out of the job and Hull then hired a New York sculptor, and used his own body for upper body moulds.

It was while E J Cox worked in Hull's tobacco shop that he became part of the secret doings in the icehouse in Pennsylvania. And they were strange doings, in which a few well-placed human bones were planted within Solid Muldoon, should any experts wish to drill into the fossilised giant.

Even though the cement used to cast the creature cost less than twelve dollars, George Hull was fast running out of funds. He needed another partner urgently. In March 1877 he contacted P.T. Barnum, who expressed an interest in the venture and Muldoon was shipped to Connecticut to him for approval. Barnum gave the ruse his imprimatur and he wired Bill Conant, who also happened to be a former employee. It was agreed that he would be "The Discoverer."

Colorado was chosen as the discovery site, the state being just one year in existence. It was the perfect location for a prehistoric find, because it was relatively unexplored. Solid Muldoon was loaded into a crate and dispatched by rail. His inventor, Hull, included a concrete fish and turtle to make his discovery more authentic.

The New York Tribune went to town on the story, while all the other participants of *[cont page 14]*

(continues from page 13)

the fraud headed for the hills. William Conant went back to his railroad work in Albuquerque, Hull left no trail and Barnum played down his part in the fraud.

And Solid Muldoon? Nobody can throw any light on his whereabouts, but maybe he's out there somewhere waiting to be rediscovered!

## THE MYSTIQUE OF IRELAND'S DOLMENS

by  
*Gearoid O Broin*

OVER 1,300 MEGALITHIC tombs are still to be found in Ireland. They are most numerous in the seventeen maritime counties. A type common to the eastern seaboard is known as the portal dolmen. This is a single compartment entered between two high, matched uprights. The heavier and higher end of the capstone rests on the tall "portals", and the body of the slab slopes downwards towards the back of the chamber. The entrance faces east.

Outstanding examples of this type are located at Brennanstown, Co.Dublin; Proleek, Co.Louth; Knockeen, Co.Waterford, and "Leacan Scail", Co.Kilkenny. Worthy of special mention is a smaller box-shaped type which abounds in Co.Clare, as seen at Ballyhickey, belonging to the Bronze Age (950 BC-700BC).

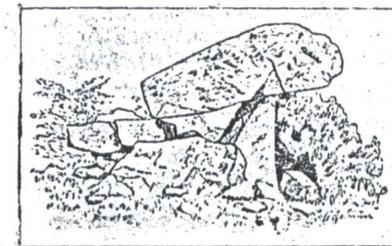
The Portal Dolmen at Brennanstown, Co.Dublin, stands on the bank of a stream which flows through Glendruid Valley. It is acknowledged as a splendid example of a Megalithic Tomb. Roofed with a huge capstone, its chamber and portico are very well preserved. Its entrance faces eastwards. Another, at the Golden Ball in Kiltiernan, is known locally as "the Giant's Grave". Its enormous capstone is supported by four huge upright stones. It consists of a single compartment entered between two uprights. The heavier and higher end of the covering stone rests on its taller portals, and the body of the slab slopes downwards towards the back of the chamber.

Two other Dublin specimens worthy of note are located near the Chapelized entrance gate to the Phoenix Park and in the Demesne of Howth Castle. The latter is identified locally as "Aideen's Grave", and has an immense capstone 14 ft long, 21 ft wide and 6 ft thick, weighing 70 tons, it is estimated. It marks the reputed grave or burial place of Aideen, comely wife of Oscar, grandson of Finn McCool, who died of "grief and a broken heart" when her husband was killed in the Battle of Gabhra, in Co.Kilkenny, in 284 AD.

The Phoenix Park Dolmen stands on a hill overlooking the Chapelized entrance gate. It was only "discovered" by workmen of the "Commissioners of Woods and Forests" in 1838. Capped by a great horizontal stone 6 ft long, 3 ft wide and 1 ft thick, it is supported by four rough stones with a space between each. A record preserved in the Royal Irish Academy, reveals that two well-preserved male skeletons, and the femora of a third, were found within, as well as an arrowhead (which served as a knife), a small fibula bone, and an urn containing human bones and ashes (now preserved in the

National Museum, Dublin).

Perched on the slope of Cratlieve Mountain at Logananny, near Ballynahinch, Co.Down, is an unusually tall dolmen which encloses a "tripod chamber tomb", from which a magnificent view of the Mourne Mountains may be had. Further north, at Ballynahatty, six miles from Belfast, is a dolmen known as the "Giant's Ring". It was erected within a "prehistoric ritual enclosure" which covers seven acres of ground. Its capstone rests on five huge rocks. Several Bronze Age burials were unearthed nearby.



At Proleek, near the inner creek of Dundalk Bay, close to Ballymascanlan, Co.Louth, is a Neolithic-Bronze Age dolmen sometimes called the "Giant's Load". It is regarded as a fine example of the "tripod" class of portal dolmens. Its huge capstone is supported by only three slender uprights, two of which are matched to form portals. Within 90 yards of it is a wedge-shaped Gallery grave of Para Bui Mor Mhac Seoidin, a Scottish giant who came there to challenge the famous leader of the Fianna, Finn McCool.

The maritime county of Waterford can boast of having three contrasting dolmens - a large portal type at Knockeen; a megalith at Gaulstown, consisting of six orthostats (or upright stones) with a single capstone; and a wedge-shaped Gallery type of the Bronze Age, consisting of ten orthostats supporting three capstones, at Matthewstown.

But the All-Ireland record for having a capstone weighing 102 tons or so is held by Co.Carlow. The dolmen at Browne's Hill a few miles outside Carlow town, is ever a source of wonder and conjecture, as to how such a heavy mass of stone was raised aloft on its four supporting granite rocks. It is not only the heaviest in Ireland, but in all Europe, it is claimed. At Moylisha, in nearby Co.Wicklow, is an early Bronze Age wedge-shaped dolmen on a hilltop. It is known as "Labbanasighe", and was excavated in 1937. In neighbouring Co.Kilkenny, a very large portal dolmen stands in the village of Kilmogue. It bears a steeply-sloping capstone, and has the distinguished Gaelic name of "Leac an Scail".

At Slievenaglasha is a large wedge-shaped tomb of the "Clare dolmen type", the stones of which were split by fire during the mid-19th century. It was traditionally associated with the old Gaelic tale of "The Pursuit of Diarmuid and Grainne", the renowned Fenian lovers who were menacingly pursued by Finn McCool. It is referred to locally as "Diarmuid and Grainne's Bed". There are only two known dolmens in Co.Wexford.

Ireland's dolmens are certainly impressive monuments of pre-historic times. They were never intended to be so exposed to public view, however. They are very familiar landmarks nowadays, and a great source of curiosity and interest to tourists and passers-by. Indeed, it was our cross-channel neighbours, the Welsh, who identified them as "Cromlechs".

The giant flat capstones, usually above a polygonal chamber, are invariably inclined towards the east, and are believed by some to have been used as sacrificial altars dedicated to the ancient worship of the Sun God "Crom".

## From The ANNALS

### HIGH ON THE . . .

**FIVE DAYS EARLIER** a man had a large fat hog which he intended to have butchered in order to supply roast pork for himself and his friends. He saw it sick and immediately called the butcher to kill it and the latter hung the animal in the usual manner in order that he might carry out his task.

As soon as the butcher's blade pierced the belly of the hog there burst out from the animal a flame of fire. It continued for some considerable time, surprising everyone present. At length it was extinguished but on the butcher opening it up, its body was scorched as to render it unfit for man or dog.

Now all this was imputed to the Diabolical Art of an old woman in the neighbourhood who a few days before had asked for the guts of the hog in that she might make knottings. The owner of the animal had spurned her request.

[Source: The Loyalist Mercury 7 June 1723]

### UP THE CREEK . . .

**A FEW WEEKS** since, as some workmen were digging a well in St James's parish, Shaftesbury, they discovered (after cutting through a stratum of solid rock nearly 8ft thick), in a bed of sand, an instrument resembling a paddle. It is made of British oak and in the best state of preservation. A crust of spongy wood covered it.

It is 4.1/2ft long, 3.1/2ft the handle, of the ruder workmanship and it is now in the possession of the worthy Recorder, Charles Bowles, Esq. The instrument has excited much curiosity but no antiquary has yet given an opinion as to how and when it could have been placed where it was found.

[Source: Salisbury & Winchester Journal 12 Aug 1826]

### LAND AHOY . . .

**THERE IS NOW** to be seen in a ditch in Broadmoor, at the foot of Brimscombe Hill in Cheddar, near Weare, part of the hull of a sunken ship of large dimensions. Some elderly folk say they can remember the time when a broken mast could be seen at the spot.

[Source: Salisbury & Winchester Journal 9 Sept 1826]

### MANY HANS MAKE LIGHT WORK . . .

**MR GOLDHAMMER** RECENTLY astonished the citizens of Berlin by his experiments with his so-called "electric sun". One night last week he placed his apparatus on the balcony of the Hotel de Kussie and directing the rays on the museum distant 350 yards, lit up the whole vicinity, so that it was easy to read small print by the refulgent light.

[Source: WSM Gazette 3 Oct 1853]

## GHOSTLY HORSES FORETOLD DEATH

**ON A SEPTEMBER** day in 1875, in the upper bedroom of secluded Longfield House, Boherlahan, about five miles north of Cashel, Co Tipperary, lay Charles Bianconi dying. Once a penniless boy who during the early part of the century had arrived from the Lombard region of Italy, selling religious pictures around the Irish countryside. Suddenly, those around the bed heard the sound of galloping horses on the gravel courtyard beneath. The clatter of hoofbeats was deafening, then it got lighter and then louder again.

The Bianconi family, very disturbed at the intrusion into the death chamber, sent a servant to investigate. There were no horses near the house. No gates near the house were opened and none of the family horses had broken loose. Bianconi passed away that evening - so it was fitting that his death should be associated with the ghostly manifestation of horses, the animals that he loved all his life.

Bianconi's travels around Ireland made him realise that some form of transport was badly needed and he decided to try and fill this need, so he started off with a "side car" and one horse. By 1845 he owned over 2,000 horses and 400 coaches.

The strange manifestation at Longfield House on the day of his death is therefore very acceptable. His beloved horses paid their last respects to their beloved master.

b y M A I O ' H I G G I N S

## A BLOOMIN' MIRACLE

**EXPERTS** around the world were celebrating the blooming of a magnolia that came back from the dead during April.

The timewarp tree developed from a 2,300-year-old seed found 11 years ago in an ancient tomb near Hiroshima, Japan. It had been harvested centuries before the birth of Christ or the Roman invasion of Britain - and long before anyone in Europe had heard more than vague rumours that Japan even existed.

Professor Hiroshi Utosonomiya of Yamaguchi University soaked the seed in water, sowed it with loving care - and nature took its course. By October last year, the seed was a 7ft tree with several buds. And during early April one opened to reveal a delicate white flower with eight petals.

John Simmons, curator at Kew Gardens, was equally impressed, once he was convinced the Japanese don't play April Fool jokes. He said ancient seeds had been discovered before, in places such as Tutankhamun's tomb, but they had been 'totally dead'. [Source: Daily Mail - 6 April 1993]

### SHORT FORT

**EARLY ON THE** morning of Saturday June 30, 1849, a shower of rain red as blood fell near the village of Bonvilstone and extended thence in a westerly direction over Lantrithy, Flemingstone toward Lantwit-Major. [Source: Cambrian]

## DOGGED BY GOOD LUCK

**AN ISRAELI COUPLE** who had their ailing dog given a lethal injection and then buried her returned home to find their longtime pet at their doorstep - alive and healthy.

The story began when Ze'ev and Haya Rotem found their 10-year-old basset hound Donna's foot was swollen. Ze'ev took Donna to a local vet who suggested either amputating the dog's foot or having the animal put down.

Rotem agreed to the latter and returned an hour later to collect the body, wrapped in a plastic bag. He then went to a nearby orchard to bury Donna.

Six days later the Rotems returned home to find Donna sleeping next to the house gate, alongside the family's other dog. "The dog recognized her and we let her in," Haya said. "She came back after six days, very skinny and with her leg okay."

The Rotems aren't certain how the dog lived through the ordeal. They assume the injection wasn't sufficient to kill the dog and that Donna managed to escape the untied plastic bag. Haya said her husband was so distraught at burying the longtime family pet that he dug a shallow grave from which the dog could have emerged. [Source: The Jerusalem Post - 2 March 1993]

## NUFON CORRECTION

CAN YOU HEAR the sound of one hand smacking? My cranial implant must have twitched as I prepared the last issue of Annals and I welcome the opportunity to correct an error I made regarding Northern UFO News in my Check Out review column.

The editor of that worthy magazine, Jenny Randles - who once taught at Cheshire Middle School from 1972 to 1974 and couldn't I just tell (Oops another twitch) - was quick to point out that "NUFON is a wholly independent publication formed in 1974". It is not, as I stated, "Affiliated to BUFORA." Glad to do that Ma'am.

## GLOWING 'MAN' IN CHINA SKY

**WAS IT AN angel? Or was it a giant flying mushroom? The sky over Shanghai city was filled with a strange UFO for more than an hour on Tuesday, the Xinmin Evening News said, in an edition received in Beijing yesterday. It quoted witnesses who saw an orange-coloured man-shaped object move and stop in the sky starting from 7:05pm. After 20 minutes, the man's head shot off red light and his body glowed with a yellow aura as it sent out green tendrils. Slowly the man transformed himself into a giant mushroom which hung in the northeastern corner of the sky.**

[Source: Egyptian Gazette - 5 March 1993]

## JACK : ANOTHER LIKELY LAD

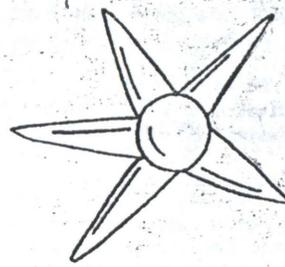
**HE LIVED ONE** hundred years ago and the infamy of his diabolical deeds survive to this day. Jack the Ripper was a monster who slaughtered six women in London's notorious East End in the period between August 7 and November 9, 1888. He was never captured or identified and his trail of butchery and terror ended as suddenly and mysteriously as it had begun.

The legend of the Ripper led to accusations that maybe Royalty was involved. Some believed that a likely candidate was in fact the eldest son of Edward VII, the Duke of Clarence. Fairly strong evidence linking him to the murders was assembled and his death in a private asylum was mysterious.

Now Publishers Smith Gryphon and TV documentary maker Duocraze claim to have examined a 64-page manuscript, discovered two years ago, allegedly written by the real Ripper. They say experts have authenticated the work of a man, known only among his circle of family and friends.

Smith Gryphon, who will be publishing the document's contents later this year, have released the concluding line from the diary: 'I do give my name that all know of me, so history do tell, what love can do to a gentle man born. Yours truly, Jack The Ripper.'

## FILE-O-FORT



"ON Friday, August 6 on this Estate, 8 miles from Eldoret on the Kapsaret road, at 5pm, there occurred a rather singular fall of hail which I thought might be of interest to you, though it may be quite familiar to you.

The sky became very dark and large hailstones fell, but in the shape of stars similar to those of snow crystals in shape (when seen under a microscope). They nearly all measured 1.1/2 in. in width. They consisted of large ice balls the size of a very large pea with fine radiating arms of ice. Some of these landed on their sides and stuck sideways on in the grass. These soon gave way to rain. Some were of a squarish shape but these were not perfect."

[Source: Mrs P O Bickford, Kapsaret Estate, Eldoret, Meteorological Magazine Feb 1949 #920 Vol 78]

## THE RETURN OF JACK

**IN OCTOBER 1991,** Princess Diana's ancestral home was exorcised after the family became convinced that the ghost of her grandfather Jack was affecting the health of her father, Earl Spencer. The Earl's condition began deteriorating after a stroke, so his wife Raine called in a clergyman to drive Jack's spirit from 16th century Althorp House, near Northampton.

Diana's brother Charles revealed that a Church of England vicar performed the ancient exorcism ritual in secret. The stately home was temporarily 'cleansed of evil' and the Earl recovered. But the ghost was seen again just weeks before Earl Spencer died from a heart attack last year.

Charles said: 'The exorcism was to get rid of my grandfather. His ghost was seen as a negative force which might have something to do with my father's illness.' [Source: Daily Mail - 26 Feb 1993]

### Total Eclipse



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# CHECK

# OUT

AN OCCASIONAL LOOK AT SOME OF THE PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED IN EXCHANGE AND AVAILABLE THROUGH SUBSCRIPTION TO THE READER.

**ENIGMAS** - A substantial bi-monthly whose editor is unafraid to tackle any subject covered by the term 'Strange Phenomena'. Consequently readers have an opportunity to draw their own conclusions on the many personal accounts submitted to SPI. Based in Scotland, the magazine has a unique north of the border viewpoint, which is quite refreshing.

♣ 40pp - 5 issues pa - £2 ea / £10 yr - Eu £13 / USA \$19 bills - Editor: Malcolm Robinson, 41 The Braes, Tullibody, Clackmannanshire, FK10 2TT, Scotland.

**THE GATE** - Covers the gamut of the paranormal, along with UFOs, Bigfoot etc. As well as a worldwide selection of newsclippings, each issue always contains some worthwhile articles by American contributors. Stan Gordon of PASU reports regularly on strange events in his home state of Pennsylvania.

♣ 18pp - 4 issues pa - \$2 ea / \$8 yr - \$10 O'seas - Editor: Belh Robins, The Gate, P.O. Box 43516, Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143, USA.

**ANOMALY** - Published by ASSAP, this is a well written and produced journal recording the results of its membership's study into all that is covered by the term Anomalous Phenomena. Issue #11 includes an interesting account of one man's experiences with coincidence. Is it indeed as rare as we perhaps think?

♣ 36pp - 2 issues pa - £2ea. Membership/copies: Hugh Pincott, ASSAP Sec, Saint Aldhelm, 20 Paul Street, Frome, Somerset BA11 1DX.

**THE CROP WATCHER** - It cuts through the corn and regularly gets to the root of reality as far as many contemporary crop circles go. Editor Paul Fuller always manages to uncover the real story behind the story and we get it all - blow by blow.

♣ 36pp - 6 issues pa - £1.50 ea / £9 yr - Editor: Paul Fuller, 3 Selborne Court, Tavistock Close, Romsey, Hants SO51 7TY.

**THE UFO DEBATE** - With a sub heading of 'Beyond the final frontier' this A5 size magazine lives up to its statement and, indeed, often plumbs the depths of alternate views in Ufology. If your perception of the subject can allow you to entertain such thoughts, and surely it must, then add this publication to your list.

♣ 28pp - 6 issues pa - £1.40 ea / £8 yr - O'seas on application - Editor: David Barclay, 46 Prospect Walk, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 2LR.

**NORTHERN UFO NEWS** - Straightforward reporting of events and happenings not only on the British UFO scene but also those worldwide. Very current and issue #159 includes a well-deserved smack from editor Jenny Randles for that useful watchdog, 'The British and Irish Skeptics'.

♣ 16pp - 6 issues pa - £1.25 ea / £7 yr - Editor: 37 Heathbank Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 0UP.

**GEM** - A change to large format as of issue 15 and a dynamic duo in the driving seat. Its boundaries extend beyond the Earth Mysteries of Gloucestershire as does subject matter. A nice blend with the current issue including topics on Leys, Ufo's, Feng Shui and even Crop Circles - remember them?

♣ 20pp - 3 issues pa - £2.25 sample / £5.75 for 3 - Gloucestershire Earth Mysteries, PO Box 258, Cheltenham, GL53 0HR.

**THE CEREOLOGIST** - Professionally produced and edited by John Michell, it's a forum for theorists and the practical who argue the case for hoaxing against those who point to natural or supernatural forces at work among the crop fields.

♣ 28pp - 3 issues pa - £2.50 ea / £7.50 yr - Subscription: SKS, Saint Aldhelm, 20 Paul Street, Frome, Somerset BA11 1DX.

IT IS ONE of the greatest of mysteries. Is the piece of cloth kept locked away from public scrutiny in a silver casket above the altar of Turin Cathedral really the shroud of Christ or a medieval work of art and the world's greatest spoof?

# Turin Shroud

## THE SOMERSET CONNECTION

Many believe the shroud to be the burial cloth of Christ for it bears the faint image of a crucified man, and an image created by no proven method. The modern controversy over the image began in 1898 when a photographer was startled to find that on his negative plate the faint shadow on the cloth was transformed into a striking image of the torn body of a crucified man. But is it of Christ? It has been claimed that the Turin Shroud was in the possession of the Knights Templar throughout the 13th century, that a reproduction of a head found at the Templar preceptory in Templecombe, Somerset, bears a striking resemblance to the head on the shroud, and that the Templecombe head has been linked with the severed head of John the Baptist; some writers suggest that the Templars were 'infected' with the Johannite heresy which denounced Christ as a 'false' prophet and acknowledged John as the true Messiah.

Only rarely has the Turin Shroud been removed for examination, and very few people have seen it. The results of the forensic and radiocarbon tests, pollen analysis and image enhancements carried out on NASA equipment, plus historical, artistic and religious evidence and artifacts, have dated the shroud to 1260/1390 - a Templar forgery? Will we or shall we ever know the truth?

### WHAT IS - ONCE WAS

Reaping machines were used nearly 2000 years ago. Pliny the Elder described one that he saw in Gaul in the first century. He says: "In the extensive fields of the lowlands of Gaul, machines with projecting teeth on the edge are driven through the standing corn by an Ox yoked in a reverse position."

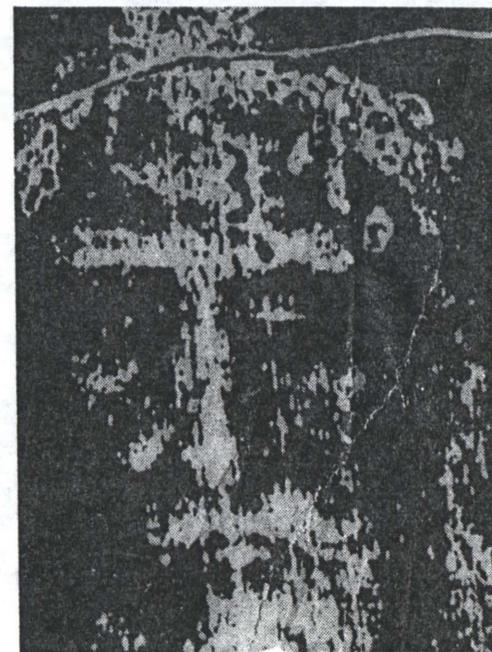
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## A Universal Panacea

# MUMMY

THE WORD "MUMMY" immediately conjures up pictures of wrapped and bandaged bodies from an Egyptian tomb. Although the Egyptians themselves left little literature in the papyri on the subject of mummification (embalming), two classical authors, Herodotus in the mid 5th century BC and Diordorus

Siculus in the later 1st century BC wrote quite detailed accounts of the process in so far as they could discover what was, after all, a highly important religious ritual.

But mummies has been discovered throughout the world, for there are other ways of naturally preserving bodies so that organic tissues do not deteriorate - by desiccation as sometimes found in Egypt, deep freezing, as with the mammoths found in Siberia, and by saturation, evidenced by the bodies from the peat bogs of Jutland and Britain.

Mummies have been discovered in North and South America. As early as 1560 the Peruvian mummies in Lima were a source of wonder to the early Spanish chroniclers. Even Australia and Melanesia have their mummies and so to does Japan and China.

Closer to home are the mummies to be found in Palermo, Sicily, also the Canary Islands and a remarkably preserved body in the vaults of a Dublin church. Visitors there are invited "to shake hands with the Crusader". The fleshy arm of the body is remarkably supple after probably a couple of hundred years at least.

In 1856, the mummified remains of two men were discovered in Texas. One was found clad in clothing complete with belt and a solid gold buckle.

In medieval times mummies became not only a possible source of material wealth from the objects amongst their bandage wrapping (if an intact one could be found), but also a universal panacea. Sir Thomas Browne wrote in *Urn Burial* (1658), "Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds and Pharoah is sold for Balsams". Crushed and powdered mummy taken in an appropriate liquid could cure almost every ailment it was said, especially by those who were making a fortune out of them.



Mummy of a priest found at Tetsuryukai, Japan.



### SHORT FORT

On Wednesday morning last a beautiful sheet of plate glass, occupying the whole front of Mr Mechis new establishment in Regent Street, was broken in a most mysterious manner. Not the slightest sound being heard at the time by any of the employees.

[Source: WSM Gazette - 21 April 1855]

### BRAINIAC

Answer from page 6:  
560 parsets per hour

## NEXT ISSUE

Vengeance Of The Werewolf - UFO's In The Desert - High Filers - Mystery Of The Weeping Madonna ... And More

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